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Internationalization of Regional Higher Education in China: A Critical Policy Case Study of A Transnational Double-Degree Program

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education

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Abstract

While internationalization is omnipresent in the Chinese universities' policy rhetoric and internationalization initiatives have been widely carried out, current research of China's higher education internationalization mainly concentrates on the top research universities. This dissertation shifts the focus to study the internationalization of higher education in regional universities in China. Situated in the critical policy analytical framework, this study used the qualitative case study approach to investigate national and institutional level perceptions of higher education internationalization in the Chinese context with a focus on a specific internationalization initiative, a double-degree program (SNZDD), in one regional public university (RU). Stier's ideologies of internationalization and Bourdieu's concepts of field and capital were also used. The dissertation examines how the internationalization of higher education is conceptualized in the policies at national and institutional levels, the forces that has driven RU to engage in the process of the internationalization of higher education, how the SNZDD program has benefited RU and the students associated with the SNZDD program, and the challenges associated with the SNZDD program at RU.

This study found that the internationalization of the Chinese regional university has been mostly driven by an instrumentalist ideology (political and economic purposes) and partially driven by an educationalist ideology (academic purpose). The institutional internationalization ideology is consistent with the national internationalization ideology. A gap in understanding

about internationalization between the higher university leaders/administrators and instructors has led to an imbalance in policy making involvement between these two groups. This study also found that market-based higher education internationalization may generate inequality in the long run.

This study recommends including university administrators, instructors and students in internationalization policy making and implementation.

Keywords: China, Higher Education, Regional Universities, Internationalization Policy, Case Study, Bourdieu

Summary for Lay Audience

While internationalization has become popular in the Chinese universities' policy rhetoric and internationalization initiatives have been widely carried out, current research of China's higher education internationalization mainly concentrates on the top research universities. This dissertation shifts the focus to study the internationalization of higher education in regional universities in China. Situated in the critical policy analytical framework, this study used qualitative case study approach to investigate national and institutional level perceptions of higher education internationalization in the Chinese context with a focus on a specific internationalization initiative, a double-degree program (SNZDD), in one regional public university (RU). Stier's ideologies of internationalization and Bourdieu's concepts of field and capital were also used. The dissertation examines how the internationalization of higher education is conceptualized in the policies at national and institutional levels, the forces that has driven RU to engage in the process of the internationalization of higher education, how the SNZDD program has benefited RU and the students associated with the SNZDD program, and the challenges associated with the SNZDD program at RU.

This study found that the internationalization of the Chinese regional university has been mostly driven by political and economic purposes, and partially by academic purpose. The driving force for institutional internationalization is consistent with the national driving force for internationalization. A gap in understanding about internationalization between the higher university leaders/administrators and instructors has led to an imbalance in policy making

involvement between these two groups. This study also found that market-based higher education internationalization may generate inequality in the long run.

This study recommends including university administrators, instructors and students in internationalization policy making and implementation.

Keywords: China, Higher Education, Regional Universities, Internationalization Policy, Case Study, Bourdieu

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List of Acronyms

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRI	Belt and Road Initiatives
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CEAIE	China Education Association for International Exchange
CFCOS	Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools
EU	European Union
IHE	Internationalization of Higher Education
LOI	Letter of Information
MME	Metallic Material Engineering
MOE	Ministry of Education
NZU	New Zealand University
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RU	Regional University
SNZDD	Sino-New Zealand Double-Degree
TNE	Transnational Education
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WCU	World-Class University
WTO	World Trade Organization

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The Higher Education Program of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) launched the project Managing Internationalization in April 2011. This program aimed to explore the interwoven relationships between the internationalization strategies of governments and higher education institutions so as to help them face the range of challenges associated with internationalization (OECD, 2011). Although the internationalization of higher education (IHE) has gained popularity since the 1980s, the launch of this program is evidence that internationalization has become a worldwide phenomenon and a key feature of higher education institutions in today's world.

The understanding and practice of internationalization of higher education have developed from outcome-oriented international activities and strategies associated with the IHE to process-oriented integration of international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of secondary education (de Wit & Hunter, 2015), and to e-mobility during the recent global pandemic. The past twenty years have seen expansions of the internationalization of higher education even amid global crises (Garcia, 2020), because internationalization has reached to “the heart of the very meaning of ‘university’ and into every facet of its operation, from teaching and education to research and scholarship, to enterprises and innovation and to the culture and ethos of the institution” (Foskett, 2010, p. 37).

This doctoral dissertation, *Internationalization of Regional Higher Education in China: A Critical Policy Case Study of a Transnational Double-Degree Program*, aims to understand the IHE in the Chinese context, specifically, how the IHE in China is conceptualized in policies at national and institutional levels, the driving force for a Chinese regional university to engage in the process of the IHE, how a transnational education (TNE) program operated in one regional university has benefited the university and its students, and the challenges associated with the TNE program.

In this introductory chapter, I begin by sketching out the research context where neoliberal globalization has significantly influenced higher institutions worldwide. I then elaborate on the research problems, the aims and objectives of the study, the research questions, an overview of the study methodology and theoretical framework before presenting the researcher's positionality and the organization of the dissertation.

Research Context: The Internationalization of Higher Education

In the past three decades, global economic, cultural, and social forces have significantly influenced higher education all over the world. In response to these factors and forces, many higher education institutions have begun to engage in internationalization. Briefly stated, the internationalization of higher education means “the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society” (de Wit & Hunter, 2015, p. 283).

Under the context of neoliberal globalization, higher institutions have widely engaged in international strategies and initiatives to compete for talented students, world renowned scholars and various educational resources in order to internationalize institutions at home. At the same time, higher education institutions are compared through global ranking systems according to how international they have become (Larsen, 2016). And higher education internationalization policy making now crosses national borders given the involvement of international organizations, such as the World Bank and the OECD (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Tarc, 2009).

As a result of these various forces and factors, the internationalization of higher education has become high on the agenda at institutional, national, regional, and international levels, and it has gained attention from both policy researchers and policy makers in the domain of education across the world (Altbach, 2002; de Wit, 2006; Egron-Polak & Hudson, 2014; Knight, 2004; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Yang, 2014). As Knight (2018), a long-standing scholar on the IHE has explained, internationalization has evolved “from a marginal and minor component to a global, strategic, and mainstream factor” in higher education (p. 2).

Research Problems

This is a study about the IHE in China. The Chinese government has attached increasingly great importance to education in the past three decades. For instance, *the Outline of China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development 2010-2020* released in 2010 by the State Council stipulates that China's national strategy is to prioritize education in order to turn China into a country rich in human resources. In order to realize this

strategic goal, China has gained a significant development in the IHE in recent years (Yang, 2014). For example, a report released in 2015 by the China Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE) showed that among all the universities and colleges in China, 93% have formulated an internationalization development plan (CEAIE, 2015).

Internationalization has become an indicator of what it means to become a world-class institution for China's research universities (Yuan, 2011). Believing that world-class universities are reflections of the strength of a nation, the Chinese government has been significantly investing in its top universities in terms of teaching, finance, and school administration (Huang, 2015; Liu & Metcalfe, 2015; Yang & Welch, 2012). Taking Tsinghua University, one of China's top research universities, for example, its recent fast development can be attributed to its integration as a partner into the prestigious national programs, such as "Project 211" and "Project 985" (Yang & Welch, 2012). Another top research university in China, Beijing University, received research funds from 31.9 million RMB in 1990 to 630.3 million RMB in 2005, with a percentage of national sources increasing from 28% in 1990 to 80% in 2005 (Hayhoe, Zha, & Yan, 2012).

Project 211, initiated by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in 1995, was purposefully designed to manage 100 high-level universities for the 21st century that are responsible for enhancing research capability and socio-economic development. Currently, there are 116 institutions approved as members of the Project 211 (MOE, 2011). Project 985 is another national project that allocates funding to the selected universities to build research centres, improve facilities, hold international conferences, attract world-renowned faculty, and help

Chinese faculty attend conferences abroad. The title derives from the time of the announcement of the project, May 1998, namely the fifth month of the year of 1998. Nine top research universities were selected as members at its early stage, including Beijing University and Tsinghua University. In 2011, the total members were up to 39, ending up with no new members to be accepted in the group (MOE, 2011).

By 2017, China's higher education institutions totalled 2914, among which Project 985 and 211 universities accounted for 5% of the total (MOE, 2017). According to the MOE, 72% of the total governmental investment was distributed to the two groups of elite universities during the five years from 2009 to 2013. One of China's highly strategic policies is to help top elite universities speed up to become world-class universities through internationalization (Mohrman & Wang, 2010; Hayhoe, Zha, & Yan, 2012; Yang, 2014). Through this strategy, the Chinese government hopes that China's world-class universities could become internationally competitive and mark China's achievements in higher education (Song, 2018).

As most internationalization initiatives have focused on national elite, not regional, universities, this has had a negative impact on regional universities. Statistics shows that the gap of expenditure per student between national elite universities and regional universities increased from 3,708 Yuan RMB in 1998 to 8,196 Yuan RMB in 2006 (Fang, 2012). This dissertation, which focuses on internationalization at a regional university in China, focuses on this problem and shows the ways in which internationalization has and can be taken up at a smaller, regional university.

Furthermore, among all the internationalization strategies, establishing TNE programs is an important one, and the focus of this study. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/OECD (2005) defines a TNE program as “higher education that takes place in situations where the teacher, student, programme, institution/provider or course materials cross national jurisdictional borders” (p. 9). TNE programs can present in various models – student and staff mobility, curriculum mobility, program mobility, and institutional mobility (Knight & McNamara, 2017). In the context of China, TNE programs refer to the collaborative programs between Chinese institutions and their international partners which are designed to deliver education service to Chinese students within the territory of China (MOE, 2013).

Since ‘importing excellent foreign educational resources’ has been considered as a means to enhance the quality of China’s higher education, carrying out transnational education programs has become high on the agenda of China’s higher education institutions. By the end of 2017, there were totally 65 transnational institutions and 930 individual transnational education programs, however, only 181 of them were assumed by the Project 985 and the Project 211 universities, leaving 82% of the transnational institutions and programs carried out by regional universities (MOE, 2017). It is clear that China’s regional universities play a major role in the expansion of higher education, but the limited budget has imposed restrictions on their teaching and research improvement (Fang, 2012).

Current literature shows that studies of China’s higher education internationalization mainly concentrates on top research universities (Mohrman & Wang, 2008; Song, 2018; Xie & Yang,

2015; Yu, 2010), and studies of China's regional universities regarding how the internationalization of higher education is conceptualized in policies at regional universities and their driving forces of internationalization remain rare. This study examines a transnational education program jointly operated by a Chinese regional university and a university in New Zealand. I refer to this joint program as the Sino-New Zealand Double-Degree (SNZDD) program. In order to protect the privacy of both universities, I use pseudonyms - Regional University (RU) and New Zealand University (NZU) for each. The SNZDD program is an undergraduate level program in which RU's students in the Metallic Material Engineering (MME) program study on the RU campus for the first three years and on the NZU campus for the fourth year. The students will be conferred two bachelor's degrees from both the universities when they successfully complete all the academic requirements.

Through examining the SNZDD program, this study attempts to provide a critical policy analysis of why and how RU has engaged in internationalization and who are excluded during the process of policy making and implementation.

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to elucidate what internationalization of higher education means from the perspectives of RU's administrators and staff and what are the driving forces for RU to internationalize its education. Using critical policy analysis, this study also illuminates how internationalization policies were implemented at RU through examining the SNZDD program, and how this program has benefited the university and the students associated with it. This study

further questions whose voices are missing in the process of internationalization policy-making at RU. By exploring the above issues, this study seeks to achieve the following overall

objectives:

1. To understand what higher education internationalization means within the context of a Chinese regional university.
2. To develop a better understanding of the ideologies that drive internationalization in this regional university.

Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How is the internationalization of higher education in China conceptualized in the policies at national and institutional levels?
2. What has driven RU to engage in the process of the internationalization of higher education?
3. How has the SNZDD program benefited RU and the students associated with the program?
4. What are the challenges associated with the SNZDD program at RU?

To carry out this study, I used the qualitative case study approach that involved the critical policy perspective and Bourdieu's concepts of field and capital as theoretical framework. The critical policy perspective helped analyze how the IHE in China is conceptualized and what has

driven RU to engage in internationalization. Bourdieu's concepts of field and capital helped analyze the benefits and challenges to RU and the students associated with the SNZDD program.

Significance of the Study

First, in research on China's higher education internationalization, most scholars have focused on the analysis of the strategic change of China's education policies (Brandenburg & Zhu, 2007), or on conceptual and theoretical analysis (Yemini, 2015; Byram, 2018), but there is not much with empirical research of specific higher education institutions on this topic.

Responding to Knight and de Wit's (2018) argument that internationalization of higher education is "disconnected from the local context" (p. 3), this study is an attempt to fill the existing research gaps of the literature, scholarship and knowledge with a focus on the ideologies that drive internationalization (Stier, 2004), the implementation of internationalization policies and challenges associated to the internationalization practice in a real context.

Second, although most of the regional universities have formulated internationalization development plans or have carried out internationalization initiatives, the literature review will show that current research about China's higher education internationalization mainly concentrates on top research universities, leaving out the regional universities which account for 95% among all Chinese universities unattended.

Third, methodological limitations exist in double-degree program research. Most studies have been conducted under traditional positivist epistemology based on quantitative methodology, which have potentially missed in-depth understandings and limited theory

development (Naidoo & Hollebeek, 2016). Using a critical policy approach, this study generates findings and analyses which are of interest and value to both scholars and stakeholders.

Hopefully, this study can provide experience and clues to future study in the higher education internationalization or provide reference for policy makers.

Positionality

In critical policy analysis, considering the positionality of a researcher is about “who is doing the policy analysis and for what purpose, and with what context” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 46). I have long been living in and working with traditional Chinese communities before I started working for the International Office of a regional university in Northern China in 2003. Since then, I started to connect with international teachers, mostly from western countries, and get information about the universities and higher education systems of their countries. Their stories aroused my interests in comparisons of curriculum, teaching and learning, education policies, and educational outcomes between different countries.

The early 21st century saw a great prosperity of higher education internationalization in China. My university was also going with the tide, seeking various collaborations with international partners. I was personally involved in the applications for and management of three transnational double-degree programs with universities of Australia, Korea, and New Zealand. Although I used to have chances to visit a few universities in the United States, and my deep involvement in the transnational education programs of my university has offered me some knowledge of western higher education, these could not stop my yearning for a ‘true’ higher

education experience in western countries. I finally selected Canada to realize my dream. Here in Canada, I completed my MA and then began pursuing my PhD study as an international student. My passions on China's internationalization of higher education and the internationalization initiatives of Canada's higher education have triggered my reflection on the policies of China's internationalization of higher education from the perspective of comparative and international education which I am engaged in.

I situate my doctoral dissertation *Internationalization of Regional Higher Education in China: A Critical Policy Case Study of a Transnational Double-Degree Program* within the field of education internationalization policy study, specifically focusing on a transnational double-degree program between my previous university and a New Zealand university. Previously a coordinator of a transnational double-degree program at a Chinese university and currently an international doctoral student in higher education internationalization, I have identities of both *insider* and *outsider*. This positionality shapes why I am engaged in this study and how I look at and understand the research event.

Firstly, as an insider, I share similar experiences with my interviewees, so I can understand their thinking and acting from their point of view to gain a better understanding of my study. On the other hand, I can apply my professional knowledge in higher education internationalization to translate their language into my own in a more accurate way (Collins, 1986). Second, since I am no longer a staff in the regional university, the research site, I am an outsider too. As an outsider is not subordinated to any groups or individuals under study, there can be a balance between the strengths of his/her professional training and the lived personal and cultural experiences (Collins,

1986). Accordingly, there can be a greater degree of objectivity in observing the research site and collecting data (Mullings, 1999).

Organization of the Dissertation

This study consists of seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the research background and context, the research problems, the aims and objectives of the study, the research questions, an overview of the study methodology and theoretical framework, and the researcher's positionality. Chapter 2 reviews the literature and scholarship of the internationalization of higher education in both international and Chinese contexts. Based on the review of the literature, chapter 2 presents the gaps in the existing research in the field of Chinese higher education internationalization. Chapter 3 introduces the research methods – the qualitative case study approach - applied in this study. Chapter 4 introduces the main theoretical framework and conceptual approaches which include the critical policy perspective and Bourdieu's concept of field and capital. Chapter 5 presents the main findings of the study which include the findings respectively from reviewing policy documents, individual interviews and online survey. Based on the main findings, Chapter 6 presents a discussion of the research questions. Chapter 7 concludes the dissertation with a summary, discussion of the research limitations and some recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

As noted in the introduction to this dissertation, the internationalization of higher education (IHE) has become widespread since the 1980s; however, there was not much research into this area in its early stage. Some early research was sporadic and unsystematic (Teichler, 1996), and studies with serious theory and methodology were only first conducted from the early 21st century (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

Over the past two decades, studies about the IHE have attracted researcher and policy maker's attention as internationalization has developed into a key subject in higher education (Knight & de Wit, 2018). Many researchers have reviewed the existing literature of internationalization from different aspects. Khoo (2011) indicated that literature on the IHE demonstrates market-driven and ethically driven discourses. After reviewing publications between 2010 and 2015, Larsen (2015) found that the emphasis of the IHE activities during that period was on four themes: internationalization of the curriculum, international students' experiences, student and faculty mobility, and north-south partnerships. In her later book, Larsen (2016) noted that higher education institutions could internationalize through program and provider mobilities, such as double-degree programs and branch campuses. According to Kim and Sondhi (2015), causes of international student mobility, international students' future plans, and international student transitions have become popular research topics as well.

Further studies in the IHE show that more themes can be added to the above lists. The first theme I have explored is the conception of the IHE. As the IHE has become a worldwide phenomenon, the definition of internationalization has been evolving as the scope and scale of internationalization have expanded (Knight, 2008; Knight, 2016a). The second theme is rationales, namely, why internationalization has been conducted. Although the research into the IHE has entered a stage where “the why and what have been taken over by the how”, it is still important to go back to the basics and look carefully at the rationales of the IHE in the current global knowledge economy (de Wit, 2011, p. 246). In addition, some scholars have researched internationalization in a critical way, investigating benefits and challenges of internationalization (Stier, 2006; Abdi & Shultz, 2008; Andreotti, 2013).

Based on the research questions of this study, this chapter reviews current literature on the IHE. The first section provides an overview of research on the IHE, including definitions, myths and misconceptions. The second section reviews research about the main rationales and strategies of the internationalization of higher education. One of the many ways that higher education institutions are internationalizing is through the development of transnational programs, such as double-degree programs, which is the focus of this doctoral study. Thus, the third section reviews research on double-degree programs, specifically within the context of China. This chapter concludes by discussing gaps in the existing research literature in order to provide a justification for this study. Through the chapter, I show how the content and literature are aligned with the goals and research questions of the study.

Definitions, Myths and Misconceptions of Internationalization

First, I trace the evolving definitions of internationalization. In the 1980s, an activity-oriented approach of internationalization prevailed (de Wit, 2011), and much research mostly concentrated on internationalization initiatives at the institutional level and on the social and academic experiences of international students (Sanderson, 2011). Since the 1990s, a more integral process-based approach has been taken as the mainstream of IHE to enhance their international cooperation and economic competitiveness. Around this time, Knight (1994) developed a definition of internationalization as a process of “integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research, and service functions” (p. 7). Although this definition has been widely used, its weaknesses are that it has limited goals, namely it does not say to it in the definition in relation to the public good, and it has excluded the international activities at the institutional sector level and national level (Van der Wende, 1997).

In 2003, in response to some of these criticisms, Knight expanded her definition of internationalization as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education” (p. 2). This definition focuses on the internationalization of post-secondary education, and that it is a dynamic process of institutional change.

While the internationalization of higher education has prospered, the driving forces vary from institution to institution and from nation to nation and have become more complex and changing as internationalization develops (Knight, 2004). Many have argued that the IHE is now

driven primarily by economic rationales, a topic that I explore below. In response to the economic, for-profit emphasis on internationalization, some scholars have focused on defining internationalization as “any requirements and challenges related to the globalization of societies, economy and labour markets” (Van der Wende, 1997, p. 8), which has led higher education from one that used to focusing on the public good, cooperation, human democracy and democratic citizenship to an intensive and extensive competition in international markets by aggressive marketing strategies (Turpin, Iredale, & Crinnion, 2002). De Wit (2011) argued that “increasing competition in higher education and the commercialization and cross-border delivery of higher education have challenged the value traditionally attached to cooperation, such as exchanges and partnerships” (p. 242).

Higher education is a field where a public good and democracy have traditionally been cherished. Although current higher education mode has been criticized, many scholars still believe that higher education should play a role to foster justice and democracy (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). In fact, building on Knight’s definition outlined above, authors de Wit and Hunter (2015) developed a broader concept of the IHE, which is “the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society” (p. 283). This definition delivers the messages that internationalization needs to be more inclusive, with the goal to achieve the public good and support justice and democracy.

With the growth in research on the IHE, there has developed a number of myths and misconceptions about internationalization. Knight (2011) summed up five “myths” or misconceptions about internationalization. The first myth is that internationalization can be equated with increasing numbers of international students, and that foreign students are agents of internationalization. The second myth is the belief that the quality of a university is determined by high international levels of curriculum, faculty, students, and research. The third myth rests on the perception that a plurality of on-paper agreements with international partners is more important than implementing fewer agreements. The fourth myth is that some institutions base their quality on international recognition, using the number of international accreditations as an indicator. The fifth myth is mistaking the pursuit of international standing for the goal of internationalization.

Consistent with Knight (2011), de Wit (2011) also noticed some prevalent misconceptions in the IHE. He concluded that some institutions equate programs in the English language with internationalization; for example, some students believe that any kind of studying or staying abroad is equivalent to internationalization; similarly, institutions equate internationally-based programs and having international students with internationalization; some researchers believe that international is inherent to the nature of universities, no guidance is needed; and finally, international activities are considered the goal of internationalization.

Different understandings of the IHE can derive from different rationales for internationalization. As noted in the introductory chapter, I agree with de Wit, Hunter, Howard and Egron-Polak (2015) that higher education internationalization should be inclusive of all

students and staff and should aim at achieving the public good. However, rationales for the IHE vary from institutions to institutions and contexts to contexts when “universities are guided by divergent understandings of the term ‘internationalization’ as well as by diverging or even contradictory ideologies” (Stier, 2004, p. 83). Thus, it is important that research into the IHE be conducted across a wide range of universities, especially those outside the West (the focus of much internationalization research) in order to identify the different ways that internationalization has been adopted across different higher education institutions.

Next, I review the literature on the rationales and strategies of higher education internationalization. Stier (2010) indicated that the ideas about internationalization include “a set of principles, underpinnings, goals and strategies which structure and permeate the actions and beliefs of educators, groups, organisations or societies”, therefore, the term ‘ideologies’ is broader and more complex than ‘rationales’ which refers to “educational visions, foci and goals and underscore educational policies” (p. 340). The main purpose of this study is to investigate why and how a Chinese regional university implements its internationalization policies through conducting an international double-degree program. For a consistency with the main purpose of this study, I will also review the driving forces and strategies conducted in the internationalization of higher education, beginning with Stier’s work.

Stier’s Ideologies of Internationalization: Idealism, Instrumentalism and Educationalism

Stier’s ideologies of internationalization include idealism, instrumentalism and educationalism. When Stier refers to ideologies of education internationalization he is talking

about the driving forces that transform “the spirit of internationalization” into “educational practice” (Stier, 2004, p. 84). According to Stier, people who hold the ideology of idealism believe that higher education internationalization tends to create “a more democratic, fair and equal world” (p. 88). In this ideology, international cooperation is considered an approach for progress and improvement of the human society. In contrast to the idealist assumption, instrumentalists take international cooperation as a way to realize the purposes of economy and politics, such as making profits and spreading national ideologies. In the context of globalization, this approach is pragmatic since higher education has been considered a commodity and a means to enhance the national and global position, the degree of influence and the capacity for competitiveness in the field of education.

Different from the other two ideologies, educationalists focus purely on the professional or academic purpose of education, believing that international cooperation can provide learners with a set of skills or academic experiences through life-long learning. Stier (2004) believed when exposed to a culturally and academically different setting, a learner benefits from experiencing the unique culture and academic system.

Stier (2004) noted that the three ideologies on internationalization are ‘ideal-type constructs’ (p. 88). For example, the ideology of idealism was presumed being rooted in a ‘pre-global’ era when there was a belief of creating and developing civilization. However, as higher education internationalization has become more widespread in the context of globalization, the motives of internationalization are becoming more complex (Knight, 2012). Although the three

ideologies are fundamentally different, they sometimes overlap. These overlaps can be used to investigate how universities carry out internationalization (Stier, 2010; Stier & Börjesson, 2010).

In this study, I apply Stier's ideologies of education internationalization to analyze the driving forces for the regional university to carry out the SNZDD program and how has the university implemented its internationalization policies. Another way to consider these driving forces is to examine the rationales for the IHE.

Rationales for Higher Education Internationalization

An increasingly globalized, knowledge-intensive and multi-cultural world has sped up universities in their internationalization of teaching (Altbach, 1998; de Wit, 2018; Stier, 2010). The rationales for internationalization activities and strategies have changed over time, vary from institutions to institutions, and are driven by various factors. Blumenthal, Goodwin, Smith, and Teichler (1996) classified rationales for higher education internationalization by political, economic, educational, cultural, or by academic, scientific, and technological. Similarly, Knight (2003) categorized rationales for higher education internationalization into political, economic, cultural, and academic dimensions. More recently, Maringe, Foskett, and Woodfield (2013) extended this notion to include the economic, political, educational, sociocultural, technological, and pedagogical dimensions. Although Maringe et al.'s classification is clear in describing strategies and purposes of each dimension, there exists an overlap between educational, technological, and pedagogical dimensions. Knight's (2004) framework offers overarching taxonomy to understand the rationales of the IHE. In the next section, I use this taxonomy to

categorize the rationales of the IHE into political, economic, and educational and cultural dimensions.

Political Dimension

Internationalization reflects a world order where national states control social and economic process beyond the borders (Huang, 2007), therefore, national governments are one of the main drivers of internationalization (Teichler, 2004). Under such context, the IHE is sometimes seen as a political objective to fulfil ideological goals, such as spreading desirable intention of governments (Groves, Montes, & Carvalho, 2017; Stier, 2004; Stier, 2010). As one of the key actors in internationalization, higher education institutions have become ‘international’ in response to political imperatives (Wihlborg & Robson, 2018). For instance, higher education has been involved in either cooperation and exchange or competition between countries (de Wit & Adams, 2010).

Research on the political influences on higher education internationalization centres on two aspects. Some researchers have focused their research on the geopolitical influence on internationalization (Fischer & Green, 2018; Gong, 2010; Leask & Bridge, 2013; Li, 2004; Robson, 2016; Teichler, 2009; Wihlborg & Robson, 2018; Wu, 2018; Wu & Panthaki, 2017; Yang, 2012). The geopolitical influence on internationalization vary from country to country and region to region. For instance, Australia has taken the IHE as its foreign aid program from the 1970s with zero or little tuitions charged from international students (Coates, Dobson, Goedegebuure, & Meek, 2014).

Geopolitical influences also have shaped the IHE on a regional level. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has initiated regional educational collaborations among the ASEAN members to connect their universities to the global knowledge-based economy (Gong, 2010; Li, 2004; Oleksiyenko & Li, 2018; Yang, 2012). In order to meet the demand of its internal labour market and political integration, the European Union (EU) has conducted the ERASMUS+ program that aims at providing the EU citizens best practices in education policy at the national and regional levels. (Altbach & Knight, 2007; European Commission, 2019; Ritzen & Marconi, 2011). These strategies serve to optimize the geopolitical interests of the nations and their regions (Wang, 2014; Wu, 2018).

China has also actively engaged in the geopolitical internationalization activities. Its massive ‘Belt and Road Initiative’¹ (BRI) strategy which coordinates policymaking in higher education, economy and infrastructure across Eurasia and eastern Africa reflects its ambition to reshape or even dominate the regional and international order (Jones & Zeng, 2019).

Some researchers’ foci centre on soft power enhancement through culture exporting (Kitano, 2014; Li & Tian, 2016; Popa, 2014; Romi, 2018; Trilokekar, 2009; Wu, 2018; Yang, 2012; Yang, 2014). The term “soft power” was first used by Joseph Nye of Harvard University in his 1990 book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, where he referred soft power to “intangible power resources such as culture, ideology, and institutions” (Nye, 1990, p. 166-167). Public diplomacy, such as cultural diplomacy, is one of the critical

¹ The Belt and Road Initiative is a global development strategy adopted by the Chinese government in 2013 involving infrastructure development and investments in nearly 70 countries and international organizations in Asia, Europe, and Africa.

approaches of soft power establishment (Nye, 2008). Through establishing cultural collaborative programs, such as attracting international students, propagating culture and ideology, and translating national policy into actions, higher education institutions have become an actor to help a nation to build its soft power (Peterson, 2014; Richmond, 2003; Wu, 2018). Below, I return to this topic when reviewing literature on the internationalization of Chinese higher education

Economic Dimension

The current context of globalization has seen global capital significantly invested in higher education worldwide, attracting the interest of multilateral organizations like the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Bank (Altbach & Knight, 2007). The involvement of international organizations, such as the World Bank and the OECD, has made higher education internationalization policy making surpass national borders (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Tarc, 2009). In the context of neoliberal globalization, higher education internationalization has been utilized for economic and political purposes (Knight, 1997; Marginson, 2016). As a result, of these economic trends, education is now considered a commodity and is included in the General Agreement on Trade in Services (WTO, 2010).

For the traditionally developed education service providers, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia, the economic rationale is the primary rationale for higher education internationalization (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Fischer & Green, 2018; Murray & Leask, 2015; Rizvi & Lingard, 2006; Stier, 2004; Wihlborg & Robson, 2018). On one hand,

the IHE equips university graduates with the knowledge and skills needed for knowledge economies (Hammond, 2016). On the other hand, higher education institutions recruit talented and wealthy students (Knight, 2004; Marginson, 2006) and establish entrepreneurial and research capacity (Stier, 2010), so as to establish their institutional reputation (de Wit, 2011; Gibbs, 2011; Knight, 2008; Maringe et al., 2013).

In the context of neoliberal globalization, higher education is viewed as a business of billions of dollars, as international higher education has shifted from being a public good to a world-wide tradable commodity for those who can afford it (Altbach, 2012; Altbach & Knight, 2007; de Wit & Adams, 2010; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). For some institutions, higher education internationalization is viewed as a means to generate revenue through the recruitment of high fee-paying international students, for example (Fang, 2012; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). Some research-intensive institutions internationalize their education to become 'world-class' universities through attracting more research funding and international researchers and training labourers for the international labour markets (Blackmore, Blackwell, & Edmondson, 2016; Gunn & Mintrom, 2013; Ritzen & Marconi, 2011; Song, 2018; Yang, 2014; Wihlborg & Robson, 2018).

The IHE is also a field where nation-states compete for the regional or global economic interests (Hammond, 2016; Marginson, 2006). Countries like the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman have connected the higher education expansions to their national development and regional and global positions, and other countries, such as China and Japan, have deep state involvement in the IHE to pursue nationalist agendas (Portnoi, et. al., 2010). Aiming at such

situations, some scholars argued that a more cooperative rather than competition-oriented pattern of internationalization could help establish the mutual understanding which is important for cooperation regionally and globally (Byun & Um, 2014; Hammond, 2016).

Economic driven higher education internationalization is not a phenomenon restricted to countries in the global north. Countries in the Global South, such as South Africa and Brazil, are also active in internationalizing their higher education institutions. Although as recipients of most internationalization programs, developing countries internationalize their higher education mostly for earning income, like their developed peers (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

The economic rationale for higher education internationalization is not only applied to individual countries, but also applied to entire regions. The massive European initiative called ‘the Bologna Process’ was designed in 1999 to restructure their higher education systems within the 45 member countries of the European Union to enhance their competencies and employability for the labour force (Commission of the European Communities 2003; Stier, 2010). Because of increased global connectivity, more mobility of students and faculty has created a global labour market for highly skilled workers and scientists (Allen & van der Velden, 2011; Castells, 2000; Sanderson, 2011).

Educational and Cultural Dimension

de Wit and Hunter (2015) argued that the purpose of internationalization should be enhance the quality of higher education. Due to the increasing demand for international education, the past years have seen new strategies that can enhance the educational and cultural relevance of

higher education. These internationalization initiatives include internationalization of the curriculum (Garson, 2013; Hanson, 2010; Odgers & Giroux, 2009; Urban, Navarro & Borron, 2017), international research collaboration (Eduan, 2019; Kolesnikov, Woo, Li, Shapira, & Youtie, 2019), faculty mobility, international branch campuses (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012), studying abroad and international service learning (Larsen, 2015, 2016; Miller, Kennedy, Cusiyupanqui, Cusiyupanqui, & Ann, 2018). While most researchers focus on international mobility of faculty, students or curriculum in higher education internationalization, Robson, Almeida and Schartner (2017) centred their attention on internationalization at home, which aims at offering social, intercultural and global learning experiences to the nonmobile majority of students and staff.

Although some international education programs are market-driven, there is still involvement of non-profit universities in international education. Instead of making economic profit, these universities internationalize their institutions to enhance research and knowledge capacity or to promote cultural understanding, such as a branch campus established in Nigeria by Netherlands Business School and the African Leadership Forum, a non-profit organization as well as some universities established in South Africa and Kenya (Altbach & Knight, 2007). In this sense, Rizvi (2011) argued that it is wrong to view the IHE as a totally market-driven phenomenon, and it should be viewed as a combination of the traditional, more democratic values of education and a discourse of educational markets concerned with revenue generation.

With thirty years in development, internationalization has significantly influenced the higher education landscape worldwide and changed itself (Knight, 2012). Although current research on

rationales for higher education internationalization mostly centres on economic, political and educational/cultural dimensions, there is a need to find approaches to address “new types of challenges and their implications for internationalisation strategies” (Wihlborg & Robson, 2018, p. 10). From this perspective, this dissertation is poised to investigate whether there are any other rationales or motivations, besides the ones reviewed above, for a Chinese regional university to conduct internationalization. The following section reviews the rationales for and strategies of China’s higher education internationalization.

Rationales for China’s Internationalization of Higher Education

The IHE is not a phenomenon exclusively happening in Western countries, but a global trend arising in contexts outside of the West (Egron-Polar, 2012; Stier, 2002). Chinese higher education is not immune to this global trend. Here I focus on research literature on the IHE in China. In contrast with other countries, China’s IHE features the intensive involvement of the national government in policy making (Marginson, 2011). The fact that the Chinese government has acted as a major policy maker, program designer, and funding provider has compelled the higher education institutions to implement their internationalization practices within a fixed framework (Li, 2016).

Researchers studying the IHE in China have noted the strong role of the government in shaping and driving internationalization policies. Yang (2012) in writing about China’s internationalization strategies, indicated that education has been considered a resource to enhance the nation’s strengths in the economy, national competitiveness, and international

influence. Similarly, Hammond (2016) found that the Chinese government has been trying to establish China's national identity through economic competition and exportation of Chinese knowledge via the internationalization of higher education.

To research the strategies for competitiveness enhancement, a large number of researchers have looked at China's policy of cultivating world-class universities (WCUs) (Chan & Lo, 2008; Cheng & Wang, 2012; Fang, 2012; Ngok & Guo, 2008; Rhoads, Shi & Chang, 2014; Yang & Welch, 2012; Yuan, 2011). The notion of 'world-class universities' has become popular in recent years, but there isn't an exact definition. This notion is related to the international university rankings (Deem, Mok & Lucas, 2008). The improvement of rankings of universities are believed to bring benefits to the universities, such as international visibility, and increased student recruitment (Cremonini, Westerheijden, Benneworth & Dauncey, 2013). The top research universities in the Western countries are frequently applied as models as WCUs by Chinese universities (Birnbaum, 2007; Song, 2018). In order to forge its own world-class universities, the Chinese government has significantly invested in China's top research universities through two national projects: Project 211 and Project 985 (Huang, 2015; Li & Tu, 2016; Xie & Yang, 2015). Through large investment, the Chinese government is hoping that its top universities can stand out among their international peers (Yang, 2014). According to the requirements of the *Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Educational Development of the People's Republic of China* (State Council, 2017), China's world-class universities should represent a world level in a series of nation-wide urgently-needed subjects that are associated with the national security and

interests. These subjects cover the fields in engineering and technology, natural science and social science.

In spite of China's significant achievements in the internationalization of higher education, doubts and criticisms over its internationalization model are audible. Some researchers criticized that the fact that the Chinese central government takes a leading role as a top designer has put Chinese institutions into a situation of dual identities as both an academic unit and an enactor of the governmental strategies and policies (Li, 2016; Yang, 2014). This situation has led to inefficacy in research and the internationalization strategies as well as a damage to academic freedom and intellectual atmosphere (Yang, 2014). Yang blamed the lack of academic freedom as one of the reasons for "a considerable distance" between China's universities and their world-class competitors (p. 160). Other researchers have focused on China's another strategy – to exercise soft power (Oleksiyenko & Li, 2018; Wu, 2018; Yang, 2014). As noted above, according to Nye (2004), soft power is a nation's ability to shape the goals and interests of other nations.

China's education system has been significantly influenced by the Western model, but recent years have seen China actively conducting an outward-oriented approach of internationalization to increase its soft power (Wu, 2018). This approach includes culture exporting, such as the Confucius Institute program (Li & Tian, 2016; Wu, 2018; Yang, 2010; Yang, 2014), regional collaborations in higher education, such as the educational collaborations with the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Gong, 2010; Li, 2004; Yang, 2012), connecting its research universities to the global knowledge-based economy

(Oleksiyenko & Li, 2018), and increasing international student recruitment at the institutional level (Olson, 2016; Song, 2018; Welch, 2010; Wu, 2018; Zhao & Ma, 2018).

On the other hand, some researchers have looked at the result of China's competition model of internationalization (Hammond, 2016; Vickers, 2007; Yonezawa et al., 2014). Since China's ultimate purpose of creating WCUs is to enhance its global competitiveness, regional cooperation and integration of higher education may be damaged (Byun & Um, 2014; Hammond, 2016). Given the potential damage to the Chinese higher education, some researchers challenged the validity of the competition model of WCUs strategy, and even appealed to revoke this model (Kirby, 2014; Li, 2015).

China's internationalization of higher education includes different strategies. Given the dominant status of English language in global economy, politics, and science, English language education has been treated as a basic and critical access to China's national modernization and development (Hu, 2007; Pan, 2011). Although China has initiated exporting internationalization programs, such as the Confucius Institute program, importing internationalization programs are the most conducted ones. For instance, China's universities have adopted foreign curricular models, and established foreign branch universities and transnational education programs (TNE) (Huang, 2003; Mohrman, 2008). Among all the internationalization initiatives, the double-degree programs in the TNE programs have attracted researchers' interest due to the popularity of these programs among China's universities and students. In the following section, I review literature on double-degree programs in detail.

Double-degree Programs

The last decade has seen significant development in higher education providers crossing nation-state borders to offer education programs in foreign countries, which has brought about various forms of transnational education (TNE) programs (Knight, 2016b). According to Knight (2016b), TNE programs include double-degree programs, twinning programs (franchise programs), distance education programs, international branch campuses, and franchise universities. While other TNE programs continue to expand, a growing number of double-degree programs have been established in higher education institutions and have gradually become a global trend (Obst & Kuder, 2012). According to Knight (2016b), a double-degree program is offered by two partner institutions in different countries, delivering jointly designed curriculum and granting two separate certificates to its students upon completion of the program requirements.

Although double-degree programs have become globally accepted, research on these programs remains limited given its short history (IIE, 2011; Knight, 2011). A survey involving 245 HEIs in 28 different countries shows that, so far, most of the double-degree are at the Master's level (Marianne, 2016). I will summarize here the key findings from the literature on double-degree programs.

Since double-degree programs have both local and foreign institutions involved in the joint curricular design and delivery, the perspectives, motivations, impacts and policies of conducting double-degree programs are different between the delivering countries and the host countries

(Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). In recent years, concerns about the legitimacy of double-degree programs have increased (Kuder, Lemmens, Obst, & Scully, 2014) because that defects in quality assurance, recruitment processes and policy development have been noted in some double-degree programs, resulting in some of these programs being viewed as ‘discount degrees’ (Knight, 2016b; Xiang & Mishra, 2002). Therefore, Knight (2016b) has called for further research on improving the quality of double-degree programs to defend their reputation.

A number of researchers have looked at double-degree programs from the perspective of brand alliances (Bennet & Kottasz, 2011; Kuder, Lemmens, Obst, & Scully, 2014; Naidoo & Hollebeek, 2016). Given the potential disadvantages existing in double-degree programs, for instance, low acceptance due to poor fit between both constituents (Fischer, 2012), the collaborative partners need to ensure providing quality program so as to establish brand trust among the students (Naidoo & Hollebeek, 2016). At the same time, the healthy development of double-degree programs requires balanced contributions from both sides to support the international commitment (Tarazona, 2013).

Some researchers have focused on student motivations of selecting a double-degree program (Crosier et al., 2007; Knight, 2011). Research show that some students have selected double-degree programs due to the added value of obtaining a foreign degree at a lower cost (IIE, 2011). Some students believe that double-degree programs would enhance their competitiveness in both the domestic and the global labour markets (Crosier et al., 2007).

Compared to the delivering countries, less attention has been given to the host countries in the studies of double-degree programs (British Council and German Academic Exchange

Service, 2014). With the rapid development of transnational double-degree programs hosted by Chinese higher education institutions, more and more scholars have put their attention to the programs hosted by the Chinese universities (Fang, 2012; He, 2016).

Double-degree Programs in China

In China, double-degree programs are included in the project called the *Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools* (CFCOS) (Zhongwai Hezuo Banxue Xiangmu 中外合作办学项目). Since the 1978, the Chinese government started searching for ways of CFCOS programs but ended up with disorganized development due to a lack of unified regulations (Guo, 2009). With China's economy increasingly arising and education internationalization expanding in the 1990s, various CFCOS programs gained great attention (Zhang & Liu, 2013). As such, the Chinese government issued *the Temporary Regulations on the Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools* and *the Notice of Strengthening the Degree Management in the Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools* between 1995 and 1996, to provide a guide for the operations of the CFCOS programs (MOE, 1996).

As China joined the WTO in 2001, China's international education collaborations have become more active. In response to this trend, the Chinese government issued the *Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools* in 2003, and then an amendment was made in 2013 to this policy document (MOE, 2013). According to the 2013 Amendment, joint school operating programs refer to any collaborative programs between Chinese institutions and their international partners which are designed to deliver

education service to Chinese students within the territory of China (MOE, 2013). These joint programs have already become one of the most effective drivers of the internationalization of higher education in China, with growing attention to and research on double-degree programs (Fang, 2012).

Since 2000, the State Council and the MOE have issued a number of policy documents in order to standardize and support the implementations of double-degree programs. For example, in 2013, the MOE, jointly with the National Development and Reform Commission and the Ministry of Finance, issued *The Ideas of Further Graduates Education Reforms* which mentioned that the nation supports Chinese universities work with high-level foreign universities to operate the double-degree programs and joint-degree programs.

As a result of these policy developments, a great number of China's higher institutions, especially the public elite higher institutions, have established double-degree programs at bachelor, master and doctoral levels, and the double-degree programs at the bachelor's level are currently the most popular programs (Zhang & Liu, 2013). As of 2020, there are totally 435 double-degree programs in operation (MOE, 2020).

Like Knight (2016) and Kuder et al. (2014), some Chinese researchers have looked at the quality assurance mechanism of double-degree programs (Huang, 2017; Lin, 2015; Lin & Liu, 2014). These researchers have focused on this issue from the policy implementation perspective. According to Huang (2017), quality has been evaluated based on the following factors: whether the subjects are the ones that the country urgently needs; whether the final enrolment number aligns with the proposed one; whether there are enough foreign teachers; and whether a certain

program can make a profit. It is important to point out that the teaching outcomes and student experiences are excluded from the quality evaluation criteria. Very few researchers have focused on curriculum design so as to guarantee the quality of double-degree programs (Wang, 2013).

Policy development is also one of the main research foci. Some researchers have reviewed the contemporary national policies regarding double-degree programs and found that some policy items do not keep pace with the development of higher education. Those policy items are not applicable or even contradictory to other policies (Wang & Li, 2013; Zhang, 2013; Zhang & Liu, 2013). For example, the Ministry of Education (MOE) of China only recognizes foreign degrees from the institutions that have registered with and been approved by the MOE. As such, a degree may fail to be recognized only because it is conferred by an unregistered foreign university (Zhang & Liu, 2013). Huang (2017) argued that this situation has had a negative impact on the development of China's double-degree programs, and therefore, certain policies and regulations need to be improved.

Some researchers believe that collaborations with high-ranking foreign universities may enhance the teaching or research quality of local universities (Wang & Li, 2013; Zhang & Liu, 2013). These researchers have argued that most foreign universities in the existing double-degree programs are not high-ranking universities on the world ranking lists, and this situation is not in alignment with the original purpose of these double-degree programs – to bring in high-quality foreign educational resources (MOE, 2010). They have suggested a 'selective approach' for the local universities when choosing their foreign partners, so as to achieve a strengthened collaboration.

Although more and more studies on double-degree programs have been conducted in recent years, research in this area is still weak. Based on a masters-level double-degree program, Qiu (2018) identified misperceptions about double-degree programs and lack of enthusiastic engagement as the key issues for Chinese higher education institutions. He suggested that the local universities must realize their own characteristics and advantages in program design and delivery, and in so doing the joint programs could develop in an equal and sustainable way.

Despite the above insights, the research about Chinese double-degree programs remains weak. Based on a bibliometric analysis of 248 papers about double-degree programs issued between 2005 and 2015 in China, Guo (2015) found that only 27 papers focused on the bachelor level programs, and five papers focused on master level programs. The rest are general studies about policy environment, school operating systems, and education resources, without focusing on any specific institutions, programs or cases. Therefore, further in-depth studies in this area are imperative.

Research Gaps and Limitations

According to the review of the current literature, there remain important research gaps in the subject of this study. First, in term of the rationales of the internationalization of China's higher education, most Western scholars have focused on the analysis of the strategic change of China's education policies (Brandenburg & Zhu, 2007; Li, 2017), or on conceptual and theoretical analysis (Yemini, 2015; Byram, 2018), and have focused less on empirical research of

specific higher education institutions. In other words, there has been less attention given to how a Chinese university conducts internationalization in a real context.

Second, research on Chinese double-degree programs has generally concentrated on national policies at the macroscopic view, teaching methods, quality assurance, management and operation, and talent training, but rarely on specific institutions or programs (Guo, 2015; Zhang & Liu, 2013). Again, there has been little empirical research of the development and implementation of double-degree programs in Chinese higher education institutions.

Third, most case studies made by Chinese researchers concentrate on the top-tier research universities, such as Beijing University and Tsinghua University, leaving research of most of the regional universities untouched. In addition, most studies have been conducted from the policy-maker's perspective, neglecting the other actors (administrators and instructors) or stakeholders (students)' actual reactions to the internationalization policies of China's higher education (Gornitzka et al., 2005; Sin, 2014).

Fourth, methodological limitations exist in the research of double-degree programs. A number of studies have been conducted under traditional positivist epistemology based on quantitative methodology (Fang, 2012; Naidoo & Hollebeek, 2016), which have potentially missed in-depth understandings and limited theory development, which can develop from the qualitative case study research.

This study attempts to address the above gaps. First, Knight and de Wit (2018) argued that the internationalization of higher education is “disconnected from the local context” (p. 3). Responding to the call to connect to the local context, this study focuses on a transnational

double-degree program hosted by a Chinese regional university. I investigate the international dimension of this higher education institution in the local context. Second, the research draws upon the qualitative, case study methodology with the aim to collect in-depth empirical data to better understand the specifics around one double-degree program at a regional university in China. And lastly, using a critical policy research lens, this study examines different group of the policy actors' and stakeholders' perceptions on this program for a better understanding about why a Chinese regional university has conducted internationalization and how the internationalization policies have been enacted, as well as what challenges it confronts.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This research is a case study of a transnational double-degree program (SNZDD) between a Chinese regional public university and a university of New Zealand. This chapter presents a detailed description of the research design. It starts with a statement of the research goals and research questions. Then, it discusses the research methodology which consists of the rationale for using the qualitative case study approach with survey data support, research site, data collection, and data analysis. Finally, it discusses the validity and reliability.

Research Goals and Research Questions

This research aims to reveal the driving forces for a Chinese regional public university through comparing the conception of higher education internationalization at national and institutional levels and investigating the implementation process in operating the SNZDD program at the Chinese regional public university. This research also aims to understand the benefits associated with the SNZDD program and challenges to the regional university. The existing literature does not provide enough information on the implementation processes of transnational double-degree programs at regional universities and the benefits and challenges associated with operating a double-degree program. In order to fill these research gaps, this research examined relevant national and institutional policy documents and analyzed the influence of internationalization on the university and its students by looking at the SNZDD program.

This study was guided by the following questions:

1. How is the internationalization of higher education conceptualized in the policies at national and institutional levels?
2. What has driven RU to engage in the process of the internationalization of higher education?
3. How has the SNZDD program benefited RU and the students associated with the program?
4. What are the challenges associated with the SNZDD program at RU?

Research Site

This study was conducted at an institutional level by focusing on a Chinese public university - Regional University (RU) which is situated in the capital city of a Northern Chinese province. An engineering-oriented comprehensive university, RU was established in the 1950s and currently is one of top-ten universities in the province. For the academic year of 2019-2020, the total student population was 22,000 including undergraduate students, graduate students and international students.

Responding to the national call for the internationalization of higher education, RU has actively taken internationalization as one of its three development strategies since the year of 2010. RU released two policy documents regarding internationalization to regulate its internationalization development. The two policy documents are reviewed in the Findings chapter. Among all its internationalization initiatives, transnational education programs (TNE)

have played a leading role to fulfil its development strategies. As of 2020, RU has established five TNE programs in engineering. RU hopes that these programs will help improve its faculty's academic capability and increase student enrolment through building networks with prominent foreign universities, recruiting renowned foreign scholars and setting up an international profile.

The Sino -New Zealand Double-Degree (SNZDD) program is a representative program among all RU's TNE programs for its earlier establishment, large numbers of students enrolled, smooth operation and social prominence. The SNZDD program is an undergraduate level program in which RU's students in Metallic Material Engineering (MME) study on the RU campus for the first three years and on the New Zealand University (NZU) campus for the fourth year. Graduating students are conferred two bachelor's degrees from both the universities when they successfully complete all the academic requirements. The SNZDD program is not only a TNE program, but also a platform which demonstrates how RU exercises policy implementation.

Qualitative Research Method with Survey Data Support

Qualitative Research Tradition

This study is situated within the qualitative research tradition. The past few decades have seen an increased popularity of qualitative research methods in the field of educational research (Creswell, 1998). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) indicated that “qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world”, and “qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 3).

Constructivism is a paradigm in qualitative research which was advocated by Egon Guba, Yvonna Lincoln and Norman Denzin. Constructivism suggests that social reality is constructed by the people who are involved in it, so social realities are constructed differently by different individuals (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996), and the individual mind is “active exclusively in the meaning-making activity” (Lee, 2012). The Construction of knowledge is the product of social interaction, interpretation and understanding (Vygotsky, 1962). Rooted in the constructivist epistemology, qualitative research method understands the meaning people have constructed through a series of interpretive techniques such as describing, decoding and translating (Merriam, 2009). The objective of qualitative research lies in exploring complex social phenomena. Since one of the main purposes of this study is to explore the perceptions of internationalization by different policy actors, namely, administrators, deans and instructors, I imbedded the study in the epistemological paradigm of constructivism, so as to obtain a holistic understanding of the internationalization of higher education by different policy actors in the Chinese context.

Taking ‘multiple realities’ as their ontological belief, qualitative researchers are committed to an in-depth understanding of the phenomena they are studying, and thus focus on participants’ subjective conceptions in particular contexts. This leads qualitative researchers to present findings which are rich in participants’ subjective meanings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In order to achieve the goal, qualitative researchers use “multiple sources of information and data collection to develop a holistic account of the subject under study” (Creswell, 1998, p. 39). In this study, I collected qualitative data from reviewing historic national and institutional policy

documents and interviewing seven policy actors. These information-rich data helped answer the research question regarding how the internationalization of higher education is conceptualized in a holistic and in-depth way.

Qualitative research methodology is a broad and complex category that covers various kinds of methodological strategies, such as grounded theory, ethnography, phenomenology, and case study (Creswell, 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Given that the purpose of this research is to explore the perceptions of higher education internationalization policy at institutional level in the Chinese context and its impacts on a regional public university, I apply the case study approach to the research. The introduction of the case study approach and the rationale for using this approach will be elaborated in the following section.

Case Study Approach and Rationale for Using Case Study Approach

In this study, I apply the case study method to address the research questions. Merriam (1988) defined a case study as “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit” (p. 21). In a case study, a case can be a person, a group of people, an event, or a social phenomenon (Stake, 2000; Yin, 2009). As a research method, case study is commonly applied to deep examinations of individual-involved activities with support of wide-ranging data within a period of time or a specific space (Creswell, 2012). The case of this study involves different individuals associated with a real-life transnational double-degree program – the SNZDD program, and these individuals are believed to be information-rich, which provided a better understanding of the phenomenon under study.

The SNZDD program was established based on a few national and institutional internationalization policy documents which have a framework in social, economic and political factors. Reviewing and analyzing the relative policy documents through this case study helped obtain empirical and holistic knowledge within an authentic, real-life and complex Chinese context in which China's social, economic, and political factors exert influences on the SNZDD program (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Huckvale & Riper, 2019; Stake, 2000).

Case study is considered suitable for policy research because it has a direct impact on policy making and implementation (Merriam, 1998). Furthermore, rather than concentrate exclusively on the results, researchers who engage in the case study method pay more attention to the research process, and they are interested in discovering information in different stages of policy production and implementation (Gerring, 2004; Yin, 2006).

In discussing what research questions case study research method addresses, Yin (2009) indicated that the case study approach is the best research method to address the explanatory 'how' and 'why' questions on the issues about contemporary real-life events, because the goal of the case study, no matter what type it is, is to examine a case by illuminating why a decision was made, and how the decision was carried out. Along these lines, this research aims to reveal how the internationalization of higher education is conceptualized at national and institutional levels. It also aims to reveal how the SNZDD programs has benefited the regional university and the students associated with the program. Therefore, the case study approach is suited for answering the research questions.

However, this does not mean that case study does not address the exploratory ‘what’ questions. The case study approach is description-oriented, and it is suitable to answer “what” questions too (Gerring, 2004). Therefore, the case study approach best answers the other two research questions of this study regarding what forces have driven RU to engage in the internationalization of higher education and what challenges the SNZDD program students are confronting.

Based on the various purposes of research, Stake (2000) categorized case studies into two types, which are intrinsic case study and instrumental case study. In contrast to intrinsic case study, which centres on the interest of the case itself rather than aiming to establish a theory, instrumental case study is employed to build a general understanding or theory about a certain phenomenon. This study is an instrumental case study in aiming to build out theoretical understanding of internationalization in smaller, regional universities within the Chinese context.

Some researchers have criticized case study research for its lack of generalizability, or a sacrifice of generalizability in order for a detailed understanding of a specific issue (Guerin & Guerin, 2007; Stroh, 2000; Wetherell, Taylor, & Yates, 2001). Yin (2009) held the different idea that the goal of the case study method is to build theory generalization, case-by-case. Gerring (2004) also argued that study on an individual case can be extended for a generalization across a bigger set of cases.

By the year of 2017, China has a total of 2914 higher education institutions, around 95% of which are categorized into the second- and third-tier groups (MOE, 2017). The selected regional university for this study is one of the regional second-tier universities. Selecting a case of

transnational education program in a second-tier regional university for study may help achieve a better understanding of the issue facing most Chinese regional universities (Stake, 2000).

According to the basic theories of case study method discussed above, the planned study has a good match with case study method when considering the purpose of study and the scope of the research questions. Hopefully, the findings from this study can add value to research on transnational education programs in Chinese regional universities.

Why Is This Case Unique?

The case of this study is unique because it has distinguishing features in the following two aspects. First, current research of the IHE in China focuses on top research universities but neglects regional universities which covers 95% of the total Chinese higher education institutions (MOE, 2017). This case is about a Chinese regional university, and the contribution of this study would be on providing insights on the often- neglected segment of the Chinese higher education sector.

Second, this case takes into consideration the views of different stakeholders associated with the SNZDD program, namely administrators, faculty staff and students. I had face-to-face interviews with the administrators and faculty staff and conducted a survey of the students. The information retrieved from the interviews and survey provides holistic and empirical knowledge about the perceptions of internationalization at the institutional level and the benefits and challenges of a double-degree program at a regional university.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

Data for this study consist of two categories: qualitative data and survey data. Qualitative data came from policy documents review and individual interviews, and survey data came from an online survey.

Besides examining how the IHE is conceptualized in policies at the national and institutional levels, what the perceptions of the IHE from RU's administrator and faculty staff perspectives are, and how the SNZDD program has benefited RU, this study also interrogates the SNZDD program students' experience with the program. This study is a qualitative study, and qualitative data retrieved from policy document review and participant interviews answer the first three research questions. However, each method has its own weakness to answer questions, and different research methods offer possible solutions for one another's weakness (Brewer & Hunter, 2006). For the fourth question which is about the benefit that the SNZDD program has brought to its student, interviews with the administrators and faculty staff may not include comprehensive answers. Howe and Eisenhart (1990) suggested that the appropriate approach should be determined by the research questions. In order to obtain a better understanding about how the SNZDD program has benefited the students associated with the program, I conducted an online survey of the students associated with the SNZDD program to corroborate the findings retrieved from policy documents review and one-on-one interviews. For this reason, I focus on the qualitative data over the survey data.

When the two groups of data merge, integrate, link or embed, the results of the research are strengthened (Kaplan & Duchon, 1988). Triangulation is one of the main advantages of such research design, because when a range of methods, data resources and participants are combined, a greater degree of validity is achieved (Tashakkori & Teddlle, 1998).

For convenience's sake, I carried out the survey data collection earlier than the qualitative data collection. The survey data collection was made on line in April 2019 when I was in Canada, and the face-to-face interviews were made in July and August when I visited the research site in China. Figure 3.1 shows the data categories and sources.

Figure 3.1. Data Sources



Qualitative Data Collection

The objective of qualitative research lies in exploring complex social phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative data provides me the participants' subjective, information-rich (Patton, 1987), and value-laden conceptions about the research. Qualitative data for this study were from two sources. The first source was documents. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) indicated that "to facilitate an understanding of this policy field we also need a global analysis of contemporary states ... as well as of their specific histories" (p. 43). Drawing on this notion, five national policy documents regarding internationalization were selected to investigate the changing discourse of China's higher education internationalization policy. Three institutional internationalization policy documents and the agreement of the SNZDD program were used to interrogate how the university has enacted national policies and how the real internationalization practice has been conducted at this university.

The national policy documents reviewed were:

1. The Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China (The National People's Congress, 1998);
2. China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development, 2010-2020 (MOE, 2010);
3. The Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools, 2013 Amendment (MOE, 2013);

4. Several Opinions on Promoting Education Opening-up in a New Period (State Council, 2016); and
5. The Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Educational Development of the People's Republic of China (State Council, 2017).

The institutional policies I reviewed were:

1. Regional University's Strategy for Disciplinary Construction and Development, 2010-2020 (RU, 2010);
2. The Agreement of Higher Education Collaboration between Regional University and New Zealand University (RU, 2013); and
3. The Ideas on Further Enhancement of Education Internationalization of Regional University (RU, 2018)

The second qualitative data are from semi-structured interviews (See Appendix 1). In most qualitative research, interviewing is the most used data collection method (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Individual face-to-face and online interviews were conducted in this study. As per the ethics approval process for this research, I drafted the Letter of Information (LOI) for the interview (See Appendix 4) and the Verbal Consent Letter (See Appendix 5), which were approved by the Human Research Ethics, on behalf of Western's Research Ethics Boards (REB). Since I have established connections with all the selected participants associated with the SNZDD program while I was working at RU, I sent an email to each of them with the LOI with

the interview questions attached and requested them to email me back if they agreed to participate in the interview. Seven out of eight selected participants agreed to participate in the interview. Before I interviewed each of them, I read the Verbal Consent Letter so as to make sure that they all had read the LOI – Interview.

The only one who declined my interview request is a deputy president of RU. He has been in charge of internationalization of this university for seven years, but he was not able to take time out for the interview given his busy schedule. To make up for the missing interview, he sent me a policy document which he drafted as the internationalization policy of this university. He believed that this policy document could answer most of the interview questions. This document is listed above as the third institutional policy document.

The semi-structured interviews were useful in collecting firsthand information and knowledge about the participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the IHE in China. In order to select the appropriate participants with rich knowledge and experiences, I used 'purposeful sampling' to select the administrators who are currently involved in the management of the SNZDD program and the instructors who are teaching at least one course in the program. Since Chinese Mandarin is the first language of all the participants, the semi-structured interviews were conducted in Mandarin, which guaranteed that the participants understood the interview questions exactly. The interview questions covered the following aspects: their understanding about the internationalization of higher education, how the internationalization policies were implemented via the SNZDD program, and the benefits of the SNZDD program to the university. The interviews were between 40 to 70 minutes.

Given that the total number of the SNZDD program administrators and instructors is small, I interviewed seven of them: three full-time instructors, one half instructor and half administrator, and three full-time administrators. Table 3. 1 provides the overview of the demography of the participants. In order to protect the privacy of the interviewees, pseudonyms are used for each of them.

Table 3.1 Overview of the Interviewees

Units	Pseudonym	Title/Position/Degree	Time in the Position	Gender
International Dept.	Li	Vice Director/ PhD	4 years	F
International Dept.	Ma	Program Coordinator/ PhD	6 years	F
International Dept.	Ning	Program Coordinator/ PhD	3 years	F
Faculty of Engineering	Wang	Dean/Professor/ PhD	5 years	M
Faculty of Engineering	Yang	Vice Dean/ Professor/ PhD	3 years	M
Faculty of Engineering	Hu	Instructor/Professor/ PhD	15 years	F
Faculty of Engineering	Lin	Instructor/Professor/ PhD	12 years	M

Survey Data Collection

In order to include the voice of the SNZDD program students, with the approval of RU's Faculty of Engineering, I conducted a survey (See Appendix 2) to obtain general data about the SNZDD program from the student perspective. For the protection of the student participants' privacy and anonymity, the survey was on line via *QUALTRICS*, where thirty-three questions

were asked. Students could answer the survey questions anywhere they had access to the internet.

In order for the ethics approval process for this research, I drafted the LOI for the survey (See Appendix 6) for the potential SNZDD program student participants, and it was also approved by the Human Research Ethics, on behalf of Western's REB. Since I did not have any connections with these students, the LOI - Survey was distributed to the students by the SNZDD program coordinator. Students read the letter before they clicked the survey link in the letter and answered the question. A total of 360 students were studying in the SNZDD program when the online survey was conducted in April 2019, and 265 students submitted survey responses, with a response rate of 78%.

In this group, 'convenience sampling' was applied, because no randomizing criteria was used in the selection of participants. These students were available to answer the survey and provided useful information for the study. Data retrieved from the survey were analyzed to explain how the SNZDD program has benefited the students, to identify the challenges the SNZDD program/RU is confronting, and to compare with the results that were obtained from the qualitative data.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is a complex process of data processing, interpreting and reporting, and there is no fixed framework (Ozga, 2000). Rizvi and Lingard (2010) indicated that policy analysis is a "critical deconstruction of the problem as constructed by the policy, and of the context and

history assumed by the policy” (p. 45). In order to have a better understanding of the research questions, I integrated the qualitative data obtained from the document review and individual interviews with the statistics obtained from the online survey.

Based on the research design and the research questions, I applied the text-contextual analysis approach of Rizvi and Lingard (2010) for the qualitative data. The foci were located in “contextual issues, textual issues and implementation and outcomes issues” (p. 52). The main data analysis techniques I applied include transcribing, translating, coding, identifying major themes, categorizing, conceptualization, and analyzing. Through analyzing the data from the policy document review and the individual interviews, the key themes regarding missions, purposes, ideologies, initiatives, policy trends and priorities embedded in perceptions, attitudes and policy statements were revealed and discussed. I read the data several times, and each time I read the data, I developed a deeper understanding about the information supplied by the policy documents and the participants.

In this study, the survey data were used to support the analysis. For the survey statistics, I reported on percentages produced by the program *Qualtrics* regarding the participant student responses to the questions about the SNZDD program. The percentage of strong agreement and agreement were counted and calculated by the formula: the number of strong agreement and agreement divided by the total response number. Since the total number of the student participants that responded to the survey was 265, and the number of the response to each specific question exceeded 230, percentages give readers a sense of scale and proportion.

Consistent with the features of the research design, the qualitative data and the survey statistics were first analyzed separately, and the survey statistics were integrated with the qualitative data as a support when inferences were made.

Validity and Reliability

In case study, researchers need to guarantee the accuracy of the findings and interpretations throughout the process of data gathering and analysis (Creswell, 2012). This is known as the trustworthiness of the study. Researchers must attach importance to “validity ... for descriptions, interpretations, theories, generalization, and evaluative judgements” (Stake, 2005, p. 453). In order to achieve this goal, the following techniques were used in this research.

Triangulation

Triangulation is usually applied to data collection and explanation. Creswell (2012) defined triangulation as “the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals (e.g., a principal and a student), types of data (observational field notes and interviews), or methods of data collection (e.g., documents and interviews) in descriptions and themes in qualitative research” (p. 259). The purpose of using triangulation is to check the consistency and credibility of data retrieved from different sources (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

In this study, I applied participant triangulation. The corroboration of findings conducted by comparing the data from reviews of internationalization policy documents issued by the Chinese government and Regional University, individual interviews and the online survey was able to test

the credibility of data and the consistency of the analysis. The second type of triangulation, participant triangulation, refers to the perceptions from the administrators, instructors and the SNZDD program students. By contrasting the findings based on the perceptions from different groups of participants, this study tested the credibility of the findings.

Member Checking

Member checking is a means for researchers to verify their findings with participants to determine the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2012). In order to increase the accuracy of the findings, I had follow-up interviews with a few participants to evaluate the correctness and comprehensiveness of the interpretations I had made of the data.

Summary

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology and data collection methods for this study. This chapter introduced the qualitative research method and the case study approach that are applied in this study and discussed the rationales for using those approaches. This chapter also highlighted the unique features of this case. I then reviewed the processes of data collection and data analysis. This chapter ended by discussing validity and reliability of this study through using the approaches of triangulation and member checking. Next, I present the theoretical framework of my study.

CHAPTER IV: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework of the study. Anyon (2009) indicates that research without theoretical guidance “yields data, but very little social explanation” (p. 1). If a researcher situates him/her-self within theories and well frames his/her research, they produce knowledge with strong explanatory power (Simon, 1992).

The purpose of policy analysis is to enquire into the ways in which public policies were best developed, implemented and evaluated. Dunn (1994) defined policy analysis as “an applied social science discipline that employs multiple methods of inquiry, in contexts of argumentation and public debate, to create, critically assess, and communicate policy-relevant knowledge” (pp. xiii-xiv). Social science, including policy studies, can be considered as a perspective (Charon, 2010; Li, 2016). A perspective is “a way of looking at the world” (Mertens, 2015). In past decades, a myriad of research on various aspects of policy analysis have been conducted, and different perspectives of policy analysis have been emerged, such as functionalist perspective and rationalist perspective (Spillane, 2004; Supovitz & Weinbaum, 2008). However, Charon, (2010) indicated that a single perspective “limits what one sees, since other perspectives – many of which may also be right – cannot be considered at the same time” (p. 4). Therefore, an analysis of a complex social phenomenon needs to be made from different perspectives. In other words, given the complexity of policy analysis, no single theory can resolve all the issues existing in education policy study (Ball, 1993; Lingard, 2009).

China's internationalization of higher education has been considered part of an integrating process with Western culture (Yang, 2014), however, China's sociopolitical context is greatly different from most Western countries. On one hand, China is highly centralized in policy making and implementation (Zha, 2011; Zha, Wu, & Hayhoe, 2019), and its education policies are purposively and rationally designed to reach its national economic and political expectations.

Introduced to China in the 1970s, Bourdieu's contributions to sociology stimulated Chinese policy researchers' interest (Xu, 2003). With China's fast social and economic development, the issue of equity has become one of the priorities associated with national policy and public debate. Bourdieu's concepts of field and capital have provided a relevant perspective for studying social inequality, including educational inequality in the Chinese context (Shi & Li, 2019).

In order to capture the complexity in the implementation of policy of higher education internationalization in a Chinese regional university, I apply a critical perspective to analyze internationalization policy in this dissertation. I also apply Bourdieu's concepts of field and capital to analyze how the Chinese regional university and its students have benefited from the Sino-New Zealand Double Degree (SNZDD) program through accumulating social capital and cultural capital in the field of higher education internationalization. First, I outline my justification for adopting a critical approach to analyze internationalization policy in the Chinese context and then, in the second half of this chapter, I make my case for using Bourdieu's concepts of field and capital in my study.

Policy Analysis: The Rational Perspective

This study adopts a critical perspective to analyze internationalization policies. Critical policy researchers have critiqued the rational approach to policy analysis. According to the rational approach, organizational policy actions are purpose- and goal-oriented activities (Allison & Zelikow, 1999), and an organizational intervention is viewed as both desirable and necessary for solving social problems and achieving maximum policy outcomes (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Originating from classical models in economics, the rational perspective refers to a “consistent, value-maximizing choice within specified constraints” (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 18). The rational perspective has long been applied to the field of education policy analysis, and it has exerted a strong influence in this field (Shore & Wright, 2011).

A number of main features are embedded in the rational perspective. First, the rational perspective features the ‘top-down’ pattern that emphasizes the personal interest of high-level policy actors, for example, local officials or institution presidents (Spillane, 2004; Supovitz & Weinbaum, 2008). Under such a policy perspective, the principal policy actors decide what policies to carry out and exclude any alternatives that they do not favour. Policy becomes “cast as the instrumental means for achieving the stated ends” (Malen & Knapp, 1997, p. 423). Second, the rational perspective holds an undifferentiated view over policy work (Fischer, 2003; Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2012). With this assumption, rational policy analysts view different policies, institutions and policy actors in the same way, and deny the contextualized and heterogeneous makings of different institutions. The rational perspective is mostly based on

quantitative data and attempt to obtain an optimal outcome through an assumption of neutrality (Colebatch, 2011).

Third, the rational perspective sees policy as a linear process which is considered the “stage heuristic” (Sabatier, 2007, p. 6). In addressing policy problems, the rationalist approach prescribes a number of decisive steps, from an analysis of the policy context and the illumination of a range of policy selections to the processes of policy selection, production, implementation and evaluation (Wagner, 2007). Jenkins (1978) proposed a rational model of policy process which consists of seven stages: initiation, information, consideration, decision, implementation, evaluation, and termination, which are logically designed and “an issue moves through the political system in a processual way from point of entry, through decision and implementation, until a final choice is made to proceed with or terminate a course of action” (p. 17-18).

And lastly, the rational perspective takes ‘value-free’ method to research educational policy (Fischer, 2003; Diem et. al, 2014). The rationalists hold that policy is value-neutral and does not acknowledge the distribution of power in agenda setting and policy making (Ozga, 2002, Rizvi & Lingard, 2010).

Criticisms of the Rational Approach to Policy Analysis

Due to the limitations associated with their policy analysis, traditional research perspectives, including the rational perspective, have been challenged. Since the late 1980s, critical policy analysis started to question “the predominant notion of instrumental rationality” (Torres & Heertum, 2009, p. 233). The rational perspective has been criticized for being

“unrealistic and weak at the examination, explanation, and evaluation of the policy process” (Li, 2016). For example, the fact that the rational perspective situates policy within a linear, top-down and homogenous setting and disregards the complexity in policy research leads to a prescribed policy process as a “closed preserve of the formal government apparatus of policy making” (Ozga, 2000, p. 42). This tradition has “developed a group of taken-for-granted assumptions, norms, and traditions” that has eventually resulted in limited findings (Diem et al., 2014, p. 1068).

In addition, the claim of objectivity and value-neutrality makes the rational perspective unable to explain beliefs, practices, and insights associated with educational policies, as well as power (McDonnell, 2009). As early in the 1990s, Schram (1995) mentioned that the traditional policy analysis approaches are “grounded in a narrow, falsely objective, overly instrumental view of rationality that masks its latent biases and allows policy elites and technocrats to present analyses and plans as neutral and objective when they are actually tied to prevailing relations of power” (p. 375).

Taking aim at this limitation, Levinson, Sutton and Winstead (2009) argued that “in this approach there is effectively no social theory of policy” (p. 768). Similarly, Ball et al. (2012) criticized this approach as “an institutionally and socially ‘thin’ account of policy processes” (p. 4). Because of the weaknesses of the rational perspective, voices for moving beyond rational and functional assumptions to more alternatives for better understanding the rationality and complexity of the process of policy have become loud. These voices reflect a critical perspective in policy analysis, which is the approach taken in this dissertation.

The Critical Perspective

Education in the contemporary context demands engagement with critical theory which is capable of “studying power and challenging prescriptive educational policy” (Anyon, 2009, p. 13), and some researchers called on an open, emancipatory and democratic thinking and practice in educational policy analysis (Gulson & Webb, 2015; Viczko & Riveros, 2015). As such, an increasing number of policy researchers, such as Bob Lingard, Fazal Rizvi, Jean Anyon, Jenny Ozga, Sandra Taylor, and Stephen Ball, have shifted to apply critical policy analysis to investigate the beliefs and insights of education policies (McDonnell, 2009; Diem et al., 2014).

Critical policy analysis is under the umbrella of critical theory (Fischer, 2003; Harbermas, 1971). It contains many perspectives, and the critical tradition is “always changing and evolving” (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005, p. 89). Critical policy analysis tends to integrate social and cultural analysis with interpretation, critique, and social explanation to “extend the analytical, critical – and sometimes emancipatory – power of our data gathering and interpretation” (Anyon, 2009, p. 2).

As per educational policy studies, no matter how much critical tradition changes and evolves, critical approaches generally concentrate on the following themes: the significance of values in the policy process (Blackmore, 1997; Easton, 1953; Fischer, 2003; Prunty, 1985), interrogation of policy processes (Fischer, 2003; Winton, 2013; Diem et al. 2014), historical, political, economic and social contexts (Ball, 1994; Brewer, 2014; Ozga, 2000; Rizvi & Lingard,

2010; Taylor, 1997), distribution of power and knowledge (Levinson et al., 2009), and social justice and inequality (Bernal, 2005; Riddell, 2005; Chase, et al., 2014).

Critical policy researchers view policy as a highly contested notion (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010), and there is no simple definition of it given the overlapping and intermingled social issues. Back in the 1950s, Easton's (1953) view of policy involves "a web of decisions that allocates values" either for the collective or for specific groups (p. 130). Drawing on Easton's view about the role of policy, Prunty (1985) called for 'voices' and 'values' for the dominated groups and stressed that critical policy analysts should pay their attention to "not only whose values are represented in policy, but also how these values become institutionalized" (p. 136). In order to ensure the disadvantaged social groups not to be excluded, policy researchers are urged to concentrate on "procedural policy that would enable the inclusion of oppressed groups" in the process of policy production (Prunty, 1985, p. 135).

Furthermore, in studying educational policies, it is important to recognize that since education is a means through which knowledge or information is spread in an intentional way, values are involved in the whole education process. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) indicated that "public policies in education, in particular, have to deal with a range of values, such as equality, excellence, autonomy, accountability and efficiency, simultaneously" (p. 72). However, in the conventional process of policy production and implementation, what policy is attended to and how policy is practiced were basically subject to the personal values of those in leading roles, such as "local officials" and "lead policy actors" (Ball *et al.* 2012, p. 4). In contrast, critical

policy analysis is the right choice to interrogate the beliefs and values of individuals and groups in all aspects of the policies process (Blackmore, 1997; Fischer, 2003).

Since the 1990s, some researchers, such as Stephen Ball and Sandra Taylor, have made great contributions to critical policy analysis. Ball (1993) appealed to “replace the modernist theoretical project of abstract parsimony with a more post-modernist one of localised complexity” (p. 10), thus policy production and implementation through struggles can be traced and analyzed. Critical policy researchers believe that in order to be strategically and politically useful, policy research should be situated within a broader economic, social and historical context (Ball, 1994; Taylor, 1997; Ozga, 2000). At the same time, policy researchers’ values need to be embedded (Ball, 1994), and the relationship between power distributions and various layers of policy production and implementation need to be explored (Taylor, 1997).

Ball (1993), from the view of Foucauldian post-structuralism, identified two dimensions: “policy as text and policy as discourse” (p. 10). In terms of the ‘text’ dimension, according to Ball, although policy always appears as visible documents, it involves the invisible complex power balancing of policy makers, and interpretations and implementations of policy enactors in certain settings. Policy as ‘discourse’ then is about how policies ‘manoeuvre’ different actors in the process of policy implementation, namely it is about “what can be said, and thought” as well as “who can speak, when, where and with what authority” (p. 14).

Rizvi and Lingard (2010) defined policy as “the actions and positions taken by the state, which consists of a range of institutions that share the essential characteristics of authority and collectivity” (p. 4). They indicated that the purpose of policies is guidance of collective or

individual behaviours. On the one hand, Rizvi and Lingard recognized the importance of the written text which reflects conflicts and reconciliations in social contexts. On the other hand, they also stressed the significance of the processes by which policy is produced and implemented in the forms of “the chronology of an issue coming onto the policy agenda, the construction of a policy text, its implementation and sometimes evaluation” (p. 14).

Although different scholars explained policy from different standpoints, most definitions underscore the connotations “values” and “power relations”. In order to clarify the nature of policy, I am here using the description of the relationship between power and knowledge by Foucault (1980) that “there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterize and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated not implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse” (p. 1980). This notion explains the principle about who makes policy and how it is enacted. And this is also what researchers need to distinguish and analyze in police studies (Ball, 1993).

To reiterate, critical policy researchers view policy as a complex and messy process, brought by forces and interests, and shaped through interpretations, negotiation and compromise (Ball, 1994; Ozga, 2000; Trowler, 2002). Colebatch (2011) argued that rather than an individual action, policy is much more “a complex pattern of continuing activity involving a range of participants” (p. 18). In this process, contextual factors coordinate processes of policy production, interpretation, translation, and implementation.

Although there is an agreement among critical policy researchers that policy research should take 'micro' and 'macro' levels into account, Taylor (1997) suggested moving beyond the micro/macro dichotomy and establish linkages between various levels of the policy process. The past three decades have witnessed significant shifts in education policy development, implementation and evaluation which have occurred in "transnational and globally net-worked spaces" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 22). The widely used term 'globalization' has exerted huge impact on education policy, yet globalization may represent different things to different people. Altbach and Knight (2007) define globalization as "the economic, political, and societal forces pushing 21st century higher education toward greater international involvement" (p. 290). Although there is no univocal definition of globalization, there is a consensus that globalization has transformed the way that public policies are developed, and the historically conceptualized meaning of education as democratic citizenship development has been shifted to a logic of market and trade (Tarc, 2009).

Under the context of globalization, higher education has been affected in the aspects of ways of governance, academic work and identity, and policy making (Vaira, 2004). In response to the influences of globalization, some scholars suggest the use of concepts such as *glocal method* which means blending global tendencies with the local responses (Kellner, 2000), as well as *glonacal method* which means blending global tendencies with the national and the local responses (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). These approaches have attempted to grasp a more complex and multifaceted features and outcomes of the globalized world (Vaira, 2004). Rizvi and Lingard (2010), for example, have analyzed educational policy that has been increasingly

influenced by globalization in specific cultural, historical and political contexts. They argued that education policy study must take national as well as global aspects into consideration.

Some policy researchers view policy as the practice of power and governance (Levinson et al., 2009; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Dye (1992) indicated that policy refers to any actions that governments select to do. Although this notion does not have a foresight of the involvement of non-governmental organizations in policy making, it is concerned about governments' power in making public policy. Governments develop policies and establish authorities to set guidelines for certain events (Fairbrother & Tyler, 2019). However, when governments exert their authority, "hegemonic power" is often hidden (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 11).

Drawing on the logic of critical policy analysis all through its development, I identify the following characteristics as main points that shaped my thinking of the study. Firstly, critical policy analysis considers policy as 'allocation of values' and power relations and attempts to interrogate whose values and interest policy texts and discourses represent. The concept of value-laden policy guided me to examine the perceptions of values of national and institutional administrators, universities staff, and teachers and students within a complex and intertwined context between China's top-down policy system and a globally inter-connected space. It also guided me to critique whose values the internationalization policy of higher education represents, whose values are not represented, and whose voices are missing in the power struggles and reconciliation between the universities and the authorities.

Second, critical policy analysis attaches importance to the process of policy production and implementation. In this study, I tend to explore how political, economic, and social factors have

influenced internationalization policy production, interpretation and implementation at the Chinese regional university.

And third, critical policy analysis in contemporary contexts needs to take the global orientation of education policy into account. Critical policy analysts should not ignore the linkage of global, national, and local realities in their research. In this study, I situate the analysis of internationalization policy implemented at the Chinese regional university in a globalized context to investigate educational policy through a global lens.

Why Does the Critical Perspective Fit This Study?

First, the internationalization policy implemented at RU has been guided by a top-level designed “scientific orientation” toward enhancing the nation’s global position, influence and competitiveness. The application of the critical perspective provides a lens for examining the rational policy implementation process at this university. On the other hand, although highly-centralized policy-making and execution has existed for a long time (Zha, 2011), the implementation of internationalization policy involves values of RU in all aspects of the policies process (Blackmore, 1997; Fischer, 2003), and power conflicts have existed between various policy actors at the institutional level such as university leaders, administrators, instructors and students in the process of policy production, interpretation, translation and implementation. The critical perspective helps address the complex and dynamic process of policy implementation.

Education has been viewed as a key contributor to China’s economic development, social harmony and cultural prosperity (State Council, 2017). Educational policy, therefore, has

become a very important state intervention to enhance economic change through reshaping and redistributing the aggregate cultural capital and social capital – the knowledge, credentials, skills, capacity and connections – of the Chinese people (Guo et al., 2019). In the following section, I elaborate on how Bourdieu’s concepts of field and capital are applied as a part of the analytical framework in this study.

Bourdieu’s Concepts of Field and Capital

In recent years, Bourdieu’s theoretical ‘thinking tools’ - field, habitus, capitals and practice - have received great attention in education policy research. Researchers consider Bourdieu’s work a great contribution to understanding education in the time of globalization and call for research of the relationships between education policy and other social fields (Lingard, Rawolle, & Taylor, 2005; Rawolle & Lingard, 2008).

Among all Bourdieu’s theoretical concepts, ‘field’ lies at the centre (Hilgers & Mangez, 2015), and ‘capital’ functions depending on the ‘field’ (Bourdieu, 1986). The concept of capital can only be obtained when they are discussed within a field (Grenfell, 2009). Rawolle and Lingard (2008) indicated that a study about field should identify various forms of capital that the agents possess within this field. On the other hand, Bourdieu (1986) stressed that it is impossible to understand the social structure and its functions unless all forms of capital are introduced.

I apply the concepts of field and capital from all Bourdieu’s ensemble in this study to examine why a Chinese regional university has carried out internationalization policy through operating a transnational double-degree program, and how this program has benefited the

university and its students in the accumulation of economic capital, cultural capital and social capital.

Field

Bourdieu (1998) defined a field as “a structured social space, a field of forces, a force field” (p. 40). There exist a variety of fields within the social world. According to Bourdieu, a set of laws and power relations function in a certain social field where agents (individuals, groups of actors) have competitions for the specific interest through accumulating and exercising their economic capitals, cultural capitals, and social capitals (Rawolle & Lingard, 2008). Since power relations decide the positions and the practice strategies of the agents in specific fields (Bourdieu, 1998), the competition winners obtain the authority to interpret activities or practices within their fields (Hilgers & Mangez, 2015). The more functional specialization an organization owns, the more power it can exert over others.

On the other hand, Bourdieu sees a specific field relatively autonomous with specific logics of practice (Lingard et al. 2005). When a field becomes more autonomous, the perception of realities is more “subject to the logic specific to the field” (Hilgers & Mangez, 2015, p. 7). In other words, the more autonomy a field obtains, the less social, political and economic constraints it encounters from the external forces of other fields.

Bourdieu (1996) considered education as one of the social fields where agents invest in specific practices, but Bourdieu did not write much about educational policy. Ladwig (1994) suggested that educational policy should be seen as “an additional layer” of education (p. 359).

However, as the World Bank, UNESCO and OECD have increasingly exerted influence on educational policy with focus on economic growth and innovation, the concept of educational policy has fundamentally changed in the structure, scope and function. Therefore, in the context of globalization, the educational policy field can be seen as an autonomous field, multi-layered, beyond the national, and from the local to the global (Lingard et al., 2005).

Although each field has relative autonomy, not all fields are clearly partitioned off (Rawolle, 2005). Since education has been considered as a significant impetus to technological advancement, economic growth and global competition, the field of educational policy is particularly interrelated with the economic and political fields. For instance, the field of educational policy has been developed to provide data that are used as national economic or social indicators to be compared globally.

In this study, I position the SNZDD program in the field of educational policy and investigate how the regional university has enacted its internationalization policies while interacting with factors of the economic and the political fields.

Capital and Conversions of the Three Forms of Capital

Bourdieu's (1986) concept of capital refers to "a force inscribed in the objectivity of things" (p. 241), which can be appropriated exclusively by its holders for producing profit and reproducing capital itself. Based on different fields, Bourdieu (1986) categorized capital into three fundamental forms: *economic capital*, *cultural capital*, and *social capital*. Different forms of capital are convertible into one another with economic capital usually first converting into

other forms of capital, and ultimately the other forms of capital converting into economic capital (Bennet & Silva, 2011).

According to Bourdieu (1991), capital is connected to power, and the volume of capital ownership decides the agent's status and power in a field. The holders of capital in its different forms become the elites of a specific field and are capable of exercising legitimate explanations for the activities within this field (Hilgers & Mangez, 2015). Therefore, holding capital in different forms may bring more success for the actors within a specific field.

Bourdieu (1986) argued that the operation of society can be explained only through a comprehensive understanding of capital in all its forms. In this study, I interrogate how a Chinese regional university exercises cultural capital and social capital to develop and secure its academic and social status through conducting a transnational education program. I also address how students' cultural capital and social capital that are accumulated in a transnational education program provide them with increased opportunities in future job hunting.

Cultural Capital

According to Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital refers to capital that derives from cultural, scholastic, and academic investments. In contrast, when discussing the profit from educational investment, the functionalist analysis approach only takes monetary elements into consideration but fails to explain the contributions of cultural capital.

Due to cultural, scholastic, and academic investment, cultural capital can be institutionalized as an "academic qualification" as well (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248), and can be

transformed as scarcity or high-status knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Perez, 2009).

Therefore, cultural capital is able to help its holders to increase competitiveness in job markets, status, and social mobility through transforming cultural capital into other capitals that fit the specific fields.

Bourdieu (1986) divided cultural capital into three states: the *embodied* state, the *objectified* state, and the *institutionalized* state. The embodied state comes from a process of embodiment through which external elements, such as cultural attitudes and practices, are accumulated and integrated in a person to become a distinctive quality. The objectified state refers to ownership of material or symbolic properties that are related to cultural capital. The institutionalized state refers to a person's cultural capital that is "academically sanctioned by legally guaranteed qualification" (p. 248), usually academic qualifications.

The embodied state of cultural capital does not exist in an economic form, but it can be seen as "symbolic capital", and they are "recognized as legitimate competence" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 245). Symbolic capital is a distinctive characteristic which exclusively belongs to a specific class or a group and produces profits to the owners. On the other hand, when agents obtain symbolic power, they obtain the power to define activities with their own logic (Bourdieu, 1991).

Cultural capital has been used to investigate the relationship between the education system, education outcomes and the occupation-based class structure (Bennett & Silva, 2011). In this research, cultural capital refers to the benefits that students can earn from a transnational education program. I will interrogate how cultural capital indicators benefit the students in a transnational education program.

Social Capital

The concept of ‘social capital’ has been widely used in most analyses of social life. Social capital can be understood as the networks for social support (Giddens, 2000), or the ability to secure benefits in social networks (Portes, 1998). In this study, I take Bourdieu’s (1986) definition of social capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (p. 248). Bourdieu stressed that social capital comes from a network which is based on mutual recognition over a long period. Social capital is related to every aspect of our society where a group of members with shared networks, norms, and trust act together and mutually benefit from the aggregated social resources from the relationships of a network, be it a common name which is socially recognized by the members who share the name, or an activity which certain members undergo (Grenfell, 2009).

Since social capital is rooted in mutual acknowledgment of a network, the capability of appropriating social resources by the members of the network decides the volume of social capital, therefore, a strategy to expand social capital lies in producing and reproducing social relationships that are immediately and endlessly usable (Bourdieu, 1986). In the context of globalization, social capital has become integrated to the knowledge economy where individuals realize personal values through social connections (Giddens, 2000).

In this study, social capital consists of two levels – the institutional level and the individual level. Social capital at the institutional level refers to the connections and support of RU and

NZU that mutually operate the SNZDD program, for instance, the presence of the names of the two universities in the SNZDD program enrolment brochures. Social capital at the individual level refers to the visible and invisible benefits the SNZDD program students have obtained through studying in the SNZDD program. The benefits include the networks between the SNZDD program students and the NZU professors and students, the networks between the SNZDD program students and the RU professors, and the networks between the SNZDD program students themselves. I will examine how social capital has benefited RU and the SNZDD program students in my discussion chapter.

Conversions of the Three Forms of Capital

Although capital exists in various forms, the different forms of capital are convertible to each other, with all the other types of capital built on a foundation of economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). In the process of conversions, economic capital is “translated first into varied forms of social, cultural and symbolic capital whose possession provides the key to occupational preferment and thus for conversion back into economic capital” (Bennett & Silva, 2011, p. 429). Bourdieu’s explanation of the convertibility of different forms of capital contributes to a better understanding of the interrelationships between wealth and power (English & Bolton, 2016).

Bourdieu’s concept of capital makes sense only when it is discussed within a specific field, because the concepts of capital and field are interrelated (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). In the field of the internationalization of higher education, cultural capital and social capital are embodied in specific agents, for instance, special school culture, the original edition of the

textbooks, specific knowledge, international academic certificates, and connections with foreign schools and professors. For the universities that conduct transnational higher education programs, and for the students who are in these programs, their cultural capital and social capital can eventually be converted into economic profits due to their previous investment in time, attention and effort being involved in the SNZDD program.

Summary

This chapter started with an introduction of the theoretical framework of this study - the critical policy approach. Since China's policy process is a top-down and "scientific orientation" pattern, the rational perspective was applied to interrogate the rationale of the linear and well-designed policy process. On the other hand, China's higher education internationalization is a highly centralized system which involves the national level and institutional level. The critical perspective provides a critical lens to interrogate the significance of values, the distribution of power and knowledge, and the production of social justice and inequality in policy implementation. The critical perspective also situates policy analysis in the complex societal, political and economic contexts. This chapter continued to discuss Bourdieu's concepts of field and capital. In recent two decades, the issue of equity, including educational equity, has become one of the priorities of the public debate in China (Shi & Li, 2019), Bourdieu's sociological thinking tools help elaborate on, in the field of internationalization of higher education, how universities and students establish social capital and cultural capital, and how these two forms of capital eventually transform into economic capital.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS

Introduction

In this chapter, I summarize the findings of this study. This chapter focuses on examining 1) how higher education internationalization is conceptualized in the policies at the national and institutional level, 2) the rationales for Regional University (RU) to engage in internationalization from the perspectives of administrators and faculty, 3) how the Sino-New Zealand Double-Degree (SNZDD) program has benefited RU and its students associated with the SNZDD program, and 4) what are the challenges associated with the SNZDD program.

The findings were obtained through the analysis of the following data sources: 1) interview data with seven administrators and instructors based at RU, 2) the feedback on the survey completed by 265 students, and 3) eight national and institutional official policy documents. Specifically, the national policy documents reviewed were: a) Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China (National People's Congress, 1998); b) China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development, 2010-2020 (MOE, 2010); c) The Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools, 2013 Amendment (MOE, 2013); d) Several Opinions on Promoting Education Opening-up in a New Period (State Council, 2016); and e) The Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Educational Development of the People's Republic of China (State Council, 2017). Finally, the institutional policies I reviewed were: a) The Regional University's Strategy for Disciplinary Construction and Development, 2010-2020 (RU, 2010); b) The Agreement of

Higher Education Collaboration between Regional University and the New Zealand University (RU, 2013); and c) the Ideas on Further Enhancement of Education Internationalization of Regional University (RU, 2018).

Based on the research questions of the study, I organize this chapter into four sections: 1) the conceptualizations of internationalization at national and institutional level, b) the ideologies of RU to engage in internationalization, 3) the implementation of the internationalization policies through the establishment of the SNZDD program, and 4) the challenges associated with the SNZDD program at RU.

The Conceptualizations of Internationalization at National and Institutional Levels

In this section, I summarize the findings regarding the understanding of (and approach to) the internationalization of higher education for the Chinese national government and Regional University. These findings are based on official policy documents at national and institutional levels as well as the perceptions of the participants I interviewed for this study.

Stier (2004) categorizes the ideology of higher education internationalization into three dimensions: 1) idealism, which means that higher education internationalization is carried out to realize a world of democracy and equity; 2) instrumentalism, which means that higher education internationalization can be an approach to increase economic growth and pass on governments' ideologies; and 3) educationalism, which is for an academic purpose of learning skills either for a short or life-long period. Drawing on Stier's notion, I summarize the understanding of (and approach to) the internationalization of higher education for the Chinese national government

and Regional University from the aspects of democratic development, academic development, economic growth, global influence, and political need.

Internationalization and the Chinese Central Government

China has operated a market economy to regulate its social life since 1980s when the policy of opening up to the outside world was adopted, however, China still features centralized in policy making and execution (Zha, 2011). According to the *Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China* which was promulgated in 1998, the governance system of Chinese universities follows a pattern of presidential responsibility and accountability under the leadership and guidance of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Regarding the leadership and guidance of the CCP, the *Higher Education Law* stipulates that:

State-run higher education institutions should apply the system under which the presidents take over-all responsibility under the leadership of the grass-roots committees of the Communist Party of China in higher education institutions. In accordance with CCP's Constitution and relevant regulations, these committees shall conduct unified leadership over the institutions and support the presidents in exercising their powers in an independent and responsible way. The leadership of the committees consists of the following duties: to adhere to the lines, principles and policies of the CCP, to keep to the socialist orientation in operating the schools, to provide ideological, political and moral guidance in the institutions, to discuss and decide on the internal structure and directors of departments of the institutions, reform, development and basic management systems of the institutions and other important matters, and to ensure fulfilment of all the tasks centering on the training of students. (The National People's Congress, 1998, Article 39)

The Education Law of the People's Republic of China (Promulgated in 1995 and amended in 2015) also regulates that China's higher education shall be administered by the State Council,

and/or the people's governments of the provinces, autonomous regions, or municipalities directly under the Central Government (The National People's Congress, 2015, Article 14). The Ministry of Education (MOE) is responsible for the nation's education affairs under the administration of the State Council. Therefore, the national policies regarding higher education are released by either the State Council or the MOE.

The Chinese central government, dominated by the CCP, has been attaching great importance to the internationalization higher education since carrying out the opening-up policy in the 1980s. In the past three decades, although no single higher education internationalization policy was issued, a few important chapters regarding the internationalization of higher education were included in other educational policy documents. For example, the State Council issued an important policy regarding education: *China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development 2010-2020*. According to the policy, China would carry out "the strategy of rejuvenating the nation through science and education and the strategy of making the nation strong by relying on talents or professionals" (MOE, 2010, p. 7). At the same time, the *2010 National Plan* recognizes internationalization as essential to realize the goal of education reform and development.

Since this study was based on a transnational double-degree program inspired by the *2010 National Plan* and established in 2015 in Regional University, I selected three related policy documents issued between 2010 and 2020 that the double-degree program relied on when it was designed and being carried out. Next, I will review the three policy documents in chronological order.

I. China’s National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development 2010-2020 (The State Council, 2010)

The policy *China’s National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development 2010-2020* was released in 2010 (hereinafter the 2010 National Plan). The *2010 National Plan* took higher education internationalization as one of the strategies to realize the goal of turning China into a country rich in human resources. Internationalization in this stage had three dimensions: 1) student mobility, 2) introducing high-quality education resources from abroad, and 3) integrating cross-cultural awareness into university teaching. The specific internationalization initiatives are shown in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1

Themes, Initiatives and Purposes of Internationalization in *China’s National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development, 2010-2020*

Themes	Initiatives	Purposes
Student Mobility	1. Encouraging Chinese students to study abroad; 2. Enrolling international students, especially from the developing countries.	1. Academic development 2. Global influence
Resources to enhance education quality	1. Establishing joint education programs with renowned universities or research institutes; 2. Attracting world-class experts, scholars, and academic teams; 3. Importing quality textbooks. 4. Conducting mutual recognition of academic credentials.	1. Academic development 2. Global influence 3. Economic growth
Cross-cultural awareness	1. High-quality institutions establishing branches overseas; 2. International exchanges, cooperation and education service.	1. Global influence

The Chinese central government hoped that all these initiatives would be carried out at multiple levels and in a broad scope, and in the end, through cultivating a large number of

talents, these initiatives aimed to enhance the nation's global position, influence and competitiveness in the field of education.

II. Several Opinions on Promoting Education Opening-up in a New Period (The State Council, 2016)

In 2016, the State Council, jointly with the General Office of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee (CCPCC), issued the *Several Opinions on Promoting Education Opening-up in a New Period* (Hereinafter the *2016 Several Opinions*). This document mapped out a goal of education internationalization by the year of 2020 which is to help realize China's great national rejuvenation through improving overall education quality and innovation capability, soft power, and global influence. The *2016 Several Opinions* identified six key internationalization themes in student mobility, introducing quality education resources, forging first-class universities, promoting cross-cultural awareness, strengthening cooperation with various international organizations, and implementing the Belt and Road Education Initiatives. The details are shown in Table 5.2. In this document, a new initiative 'world first-class universities and academic disciplines'² was introduced by the Chinese central government. The Belt and Road Education Initiatives (BRI) was also implemented. Both the two initiatives were designed to increase Chinese universities' academic competence, China's economic growth and global influence.

² World First-class University and Academic Discipline Plan, also known as Double First Class, is an education development initiative aimed at developing elite Chinese universities and their individual faculty departments into world-class institutions by the end of 2050.

Table 5.2

Themes and Initiatives of Internationalization in *The Several Opinions on Promoting Education Opening-up in a New Period, 2016*

Themes	Initiatives	Purposes
Student mobility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Optimizing the study-abroad service; 2. Training top talents in innovation, minority languages, as well as nation and region studies; 3. Establishing the Study-in-China brand. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Academic development 2. Global influence
Resources to enhance education quality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhancing the quality of Chinese-foreign cooperation in school operating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Improving the entry and approval systems; *Establishing the experience share mechanism; *Putting strength on the programs urgently needed by the nation, e.g. natural sciences and engineering; 2. Introducing specialty disciplines from the world-class universities; 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Academic development 2. Global influence
World First-class University and First-class Academic Discipline Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participating in international key science projects and programs; 2. Building high-level international labs and research centres; 3. Introducing teaching and research staff from the world class universities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Academic development 2. Global influence 3. Economic growth
Cross-cultural awareness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishing intergovernmental exchange programs for teachers and students; 2. Expanding the intergovernmental language exchange programs; 3. Spreading the ideology of the Chinese government. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Global influence
Cooperation with international organizations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recommending Chinese candidates to work in various international organizations; 2. Carrying out international educational assistance. 3. Participating global educational governance; 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Global influence
Belt and Road Initiatives (Education)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening personnel training programs; 2. Setting up the Chinese government scholarship; 3. Awarding the individuals, teams, and organizations who contribute to the education development for the BRI. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Global influence

In this document, the Chinese government continued with the policies developed in the first stage on student mobility, introducing quality educational resources, and emersion of cross-cultural awareness. However, the Chinese government upgraded these themes with new initiatives. For example, it encouraged the capable Chinese higher institutions to stablish the Study-in-China brand, gave priority to the joint programs that could greatly help the nation with its science and technology development, and spread the ideology of the Chinese government.

III. The Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Educational Development of the People's Republic of China (The State Council, 2017)

In order to keep pace with the overall development goal set by China's Thirteenth Five-Year Plan (2016-2020), in 2017 the State Council issued another education policy *the Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Educational Development of the People's Republic of China* (Hereinafter the *2017 Outline*) to guide the educational practice. According to the *2017 Outline*, China still emphasizes opening up to the world in general, with concentrations on quality upgrading, structure optimization and fairness.

The *2017 Outline* identified six themes for China's higher education internationalization initiatives. The six themes include Belt and Road Education Initiatives, student mobility, quality education resources, world first-class university, global education governance, and humanity and culture exchanges. Table 5.3 below shows the details.

In this document, the Chinese government upgraded and optimized some policy items stipulated in the *2016 Several Opinions* to achieve its all-round goals in academic development, economic growth, global influence, and political demand. An obvious difference between the

2017 Outline and the previous policy document is the change of the order of the internationalization themes. The Chinese government shifted the priority of education internationalization to the Belt and Road Initiatives, hoping that the education cooperation with the BRI countries would serve the economic cooperation with the BRI countries, so as to enhance its international influence.

The *2017 Outline* specifically put forward to a new strategy which is participating in global education governance. It required the universities to strengthen cooperation with international organizations, recommend capable individuals to work for these organizations, and carry out international educational assistance to the under-developed countries. Among all the initiatives of this strategy, to be ‘deeply involved in international educational rule-making’ demonstrates the ambition of China’s higher education internationalization. Through this strategy, China would have more say or rule-making power in the international education field. The following is the detailed arrangement:

Strengthen the study of various significant education rules, take advantage of various international organizations and actively advocate novel proposals and plans for the global educational development agenda.

In order to speed up building its world first-class universities, the Chinese government gave significant investment to the disciplines associated with China’s national security and interest and to the universities with independent innovation capacity and core competitiveness.

Responding to its Double First-class Plan, in September 2017, the Ministry of Education released

Table 5.3

Themes and Initiatives of Internationalization in *The Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Educational Development of the People's Republic of China*

Themes	Initiatives	Purposes
Belt and Road Initiatives (Education)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jointly establishing the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) educational action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Establishing education community with the BRI countries; *Carrying out various studies about the BRI countries' languages, economy, law, culture, and policy making; *Sharing educational resources and experiences with the BRI countries *Setting up the BRI Chinese Government Award 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Global influence
Student mobility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Optimizing the study-abroad service; 2. Carrying out the Study-in-China plan and building the Study-in-China brand; 3. Establishing the Study-in-China alumni network. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Global influence 2. Academic Development
Resources to enhance education quality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhancing the quality of Chinese-foreign cooperation in school operating; 2. Giving priority to the joint programs in natural sciences and engineering that China urgently needs; 3. Encouraging top research universities to cooperate with the world first-class universities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Academic Development 2. Economic growth 3. Global influence
World First-class University and First-class Academic Discipline Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Speeding up building world first-class universities and disciplines; 2. Giving priority to the disciplines associated with national security and interest; 3. Strengthening top universities to cooperate with the research institutes, industries, and foreign research organizations; 4. Increasing independent innovation capacity and core competitiveness. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic growth 2. Global influence 3. Political need
Global education governance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening multi-lateral education cooperation with various international organizations; 2. Recommending capable Chinese personnel to work for international organizations; 3. Carrying out international educational assistance; 4. Obtaining more say in international education rule-making. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic growth 2. Global influence
Cross-cultural awareness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening the overseas Chinese language promotion; 2. Promoting the intergovernmental language exchange programs; 3. Spreading the ideology of the Chinese government; 4. Optimizing Confucius Institute arrangement; 5. Establishing a complete Chinese language international curriculum system. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Global influence

a list which identified 42 universities and 95 disciplines that the Chinese government would significantly invest in to build China's world first-class universities and disciplines. The Project 985 universities and the Project 211 universities were all included.

Summary

The comparison of the three official policy documents shows that educational internationalization is an increasingly significant national strategy of China. The meaning of internationalization in the past ten years in general has been 'opening up to the outside world'. However, the meaning has not remained unchanged, but has developed with the nation's economic and social development.

In the early 2010s, China's internationalization of higher education took three major forms: dispatching Chinese students and academic staff studying abroad and attracting foreign students studying in China; introducing quality education resources including renowned experts, foreign textbooks, and establishing joint education programs; and integrating cross-cultural awareness into university teaching. Through these initiatives, the Chinese central government hoped to cultivate talents that are imbued with a global vision, well-versed in international rules, and in the end, help to enhance the nation's global position, influence and competitiveness in the field of education.

With China's economic and social development in the mid 2010s, China's higher education internationalization experienced a significant expansion both in its breadth and depth to keep abreast of the times. The Chinese government added a new theme in its second stage: expanding global influence. According to the *2016 Several Opinions*, this theme shall be realized through

operating schools abroad, spreading China's ideology, initiating education cooperation with the BRI countries, and increasing educational assistance to under-developed countries.

In term of the traditional internationalization strategies, the Chinese government did not take a laissez-faire attitude, but instead required universities to enhance their quality and expand scope. For instance, universities were required to establish Study-in-China brand programs to attract more international students; joint education programs could be approved by the MOE only when they were established with the world-renowned universities and in the disciplines that the nation badly needs; universities were encouraged to establish high-level joint laboratories and research centres with their international partners.

Compared with the *2016 Several Opinions*, the *2017 Outline* has more ambitious theme of internationalization and more intensive and extensive strategies. Participating in global education governance is a new theme in this stage. The Chinese government has planned to realize this goal through multi-lateral education cooperation with various international organizations, involvement in international organizations, involvement in international educational rule-making, and educational assistance to the under-developed countries.

In the traditional internationalization themes, the reordering of the themes and strategies in this document illustrates a shifting set of priorities for the Chinese government. For example, taking the BRI Educational Action is listed on the top over all other strategies because the BRI is on high agenda of China's national policy. However, the other strategies are also given enough importance by using the words like "strengthen", "optimize", "promote", and "advance" to increase the quality of different programs.

In summary, the meaning of China's internationalization of higher education is a developing process. Internationalization policies reflect the nation's demands for academic and economic, global influence, and ultimately political demand. At this moment, China's higher education internationalization means international cooperation with various countries, especially with the BRI countries, outward and inward student mobility, introducing excellent education resources and encouraging innovation to build up its own world first-class universities and disciplines, participating in global education governance, and cultural exchanges.

The Rationales of Regional University to Engage in Internationalization

China's higher education system is highly centralized. Although the Chinese government has carried out reforms to decentralize its education system (Qian & Verhoeven, 2004), the CCP has been effectively playing a dominant role over the public higher institutions (Li, 2016), as stipulated in the *1998 Higher Education Law*. As the government authority for all matters pertaining to education, the MOE and the State Council released national policies in different periods to guide the internationalization practice of higher education institutions.

A part of this system, Regional University has been trying to keep pace with the national policy within its capacity. Regional University issued its *Strategy for Disciplinary Construction and Development 2010-2020* in 2010 and issued the *Regulations on Further Enhancement of Education Internationalization* in 2018. In the early 2010s, Regional University joined the growing tide of the international joint education programs and signed *the Agreement of Higher*

Education Collaboration between Regional University and New Zealand University in 2013.

This program started to enroll students in 2015 when it was first approved by the MOE.

In this section, I summarize the findings regarding the understanding of (and approach to) the internationalization of higher education for Regional University by reviewing the above three documents. Based on RU's different priorities of internationalization initiatives between 2010 and 2020 identified through reviewing the policy documents, I divide its internationalization development into three stages, namely the early stage (2010-2013), middle stage (2013-2018), and recent stage (2018-present). Using the critical policy analysis approach, I also elaborate on whose value RU's internationalization represents.

Early Stage (2010-2013)

The *2010 Regional University Policy* is a general policy for the development of the university between 2010 and 2020. This policy was made According to the document, Regional University set itself a goal to be a regional first-class research university. This document has no clear description of an internationalization plan, but some fragmentary internationalization initiatives. For instance, when talking about faculty staff development, the document mentions “dispatching a few numbers of teachers to study at renowned foreign institutes each year.” In the section of discipline construction, the document says:

The university shall encourage faculty staff to participate in various high-level international academic exchanges, carry out practical cooperation with renowned foreign universities, and recruit well-known scholars abroad to teach at the university, so as to enhance the university's academic competitiveness inside the nation and abroad.

As we can see, when this policy was created, internationalization was equated with faculty mobility and international academic exchanges and cooperation with foreign higher education institutions. However, during this period, except its purpose to enhance academic competitiveness, internationalization for Regional University was a simple and vague concept.

Middle Stage (2013-2018)

Although Regional University did not take internationalization as its main strategy, it was inspired by *The Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools* which was first issued in 2003 and amended in 2013 by the MOE. The *2013 Regulations* stipulated that “Chinese-foreign cooperation programs are a part of the educational undertakings of the People’s Republic of China”; and that the nation encouraged Chinese higher education institutions in “carrying out Chinese-foreign cooperation programs to introduce quality educational resources with renowned foreign higher educational institutions” (MOE, 2013, p. 1).

In response to this call for the establishment of cooperative programs with foreign higher education institutions, in 2013, Regional University signed *The Agreement of Higher Education Collaboration between Regional University and New Zealand University* to establish a transnational double-degree program in Metallic Material Engineering. According to the general rule of the agreement, the cooperation program was proposed based on a mutual recognition that the metallic material engineering program is increasingly important to China’s economic development. This agreement also indicates that the program was designed to “carry out China’s

national educational strategy in international academic cooperation” (Regional University, 2013, p. 1).

Since the *2013 Agreement* is Regional University’s only document between 2010 and 2018 which is related to internationalization, it can be concluded that the university’s internationalization strategy focused on Chinese-foreign cooperation programs, specifically, transnational double-degree programs. At the same time, the discipline of material engineering was selected because it is one of the disciplines that the nation needs and supports (MOE, 2010; He, 2016).

Recent Stage (2018-present)

In 2018, RU issued a policy *The Ideas on Further Enhancement of Education Internationalization* which was drafted by the deputy president of the university. This document emphasizes that the internationalization of higher education is “an imperative that serves the national strategic development, an important part of the development of higher educational institutions, and an approach to become a national first-class university” (RU, 2018, p. 1). In terms of RU itself, the 2018 policy stipulates that internationalization is one of the key strategies in the 13th Five-Year Plan period. The university would realize internationalization in terms of student mobility, curriculum, faculty staff, scientific research, and administration. The 2018 policy also stipulates detailed internationalization initiatives as shown in Table 5.4.

Compared with the vague description of internationalization initiatives in RU’s 2010 policy, the 2018 policy saw a great leap forward, and sets ambitious goals for its education internationalization. For RU at this moment, internationalization means introducing excellent

educational resources, talent/teacher mobility, carrying out international academic collaborations, student mobility, and promoting humanity and culture exchanges.

Table 5.4

Themes and Initiatives of Internationalization in *The Ideas on Further Enhancement of Education Internationalization*

Themes	Initiatives
Introducing resources to enhance education quality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Optimizing the current Chinese-foreign cooperative school operating programs; 2. Establishing more Chinese-foreign cooperative school operating programs and institutes; 3. Introducing international curriculum; 4. Recruiting a well-known foreign instructor for each undergraduate program.
Scholar/Teacher mobility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inviting world known scholars to teach or deliver lectures through national Thousand Talent Program; 2. Dispatching Chinese teachers abroad for studying or training.
International cooperation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building international scientific research collaboration platform: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Setting special fund to support teachers to participate in international conferences; *Supporting faculties to hold international conferences; 2. Establishing collaborative connections with world famous universities and research organizations.
Student mobility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encouraging Chinese students to study abroad; 2. Increasing international student exchange programs; 3. Recruiting more international students, esp. from the BRI countries; 4. Setting university scholarships and applying for national scholarships for international students; 5. Increasing bachelor's and master's degree awarding programs to attract international students.
Language and culture exchanges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening the Chinese language teaching program; 2. Applying to establish Confucius Institute.

The second finding is that in many ways, RU's internationalization policy is closely aligned with the national internationalization policy stipulated in *the Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan*

for the Educational Development of the People's Republic of China (MOE, 2013). For instance, except for participating in global education governance, RU take all the other national internationalization strategies as its own: introducing foreign resources to enhance its education quality, teacher/student mobility, promoting international cooperation, and promoting humanity and culture exchanges. However, the most important internationalization strategy is no longer teacher mobility, but introducing quality education resources. This finding is also consistent with what the general rule of RU's 2018 policy indicates that the purpose of the IHE is to serve national strategic development.

One more important finding is that the selection of disciplines for the Chinese-Foreign collaborative program is also under the direction of the national *2017 Outline*. As mentioned in this section, metallic material engineering of RU's SNZDD program is one of the programs that China urgently needs in order to train individuals in careers related to material engineering.

Participants' Perceptions of Internationalization

Since social reality is constructed by the people who are involved in it (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996), the perceptions about internationalization of individuals (the program director, dean, vice-dean and instructors) who are involved in the SNZDD program are also important for this study. Following a brief description of each of the participants' perceptions of internationalization, I then discuss the main themes that we can see emerging from the interviews with them.

For Dr. Li, the director of the international department, internationalization is "a process by which the university's vision and practice take into account an international focus." She stated

that “internationalization is a national strategy. The state government, provincial government, and the university officials have attached great importance to the internationalization of higher education.” Dr. Li talked more about internationalization of the university, explaining that “[s]ince internationalization is a basic function for higher education institutions, our university has taken internationalization as one of our three developmental strategies.” She also noted that currently, RU was engaged in the following internationalization initiatives: “trying to increase the number of transnational double-degree programs, expanding channels to student exchange programs, carrying out collaborative research with world famous institutions and scholars.” Dr. Li stressed that internationalization is not a one-way process, as RU not only dispatched students to study abroad, but also enrolled international students for degree study or language and culture learning.

Dr. Wang, the dean of the host faculty of the SNZDD program, considered internationalization as “an opening up to the outside world”. He has a comprehensive understanding about the national policy about internationalization. He stated,

I would say that internationalization is what stated in Chapter 16 of *China’s National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development 2010-2020*. It focuses on opening-up to the outside world, for example, strengthening international exchanges and collaborations in Item 48, and introducing foreign resources to enhance our education quality in Item 49.

Believing that there exists a wide gap in quality between China’s education system and that of the countries with high quality of education system, Dr. Wang stressed that internationalization is “to learn from the Western countries in education concepts and models, through introducing quality education resources”. Back to the SNZDD program, he believed that

internationalization is introducing professors, curriculum, and textbooks from a renowned foreign university to train their own students.

Dr. Yang, vice dean of the faculty, believed that internationalization means an integration into global technological and cultural trends. He mentioned that “internationalization has set the Western education system as a model. Since China is lagging behind, we should learn from the Western countries and integrate into the global community of technology and culture. This is an approach to realize national prosperity.”

Dr. Hu is an instructor to the SNZDD students. Her perceptions of internationalization were mostly based on her personal experience. Dr. Hu stated,

I don't know much about the national policy. But, as an instructor, I believe that teachers and students need to know the development of the 'outside world' in education and technology. So, internationalization opens a window for us through which we could see the world.

Internationalization to her means “exchanges in personnel, technology, and students with the international institutions. Through this 'window', we know what the outside world looks like”.

Ma, Ning, and Li are instructors of the SNZDD program. They did not talk much about internationalization in general, but stressed that, for Regional University, the most important part of internationalization is introducing high-quality education resources from abroad which would benefit the university. Through the overseas training for the SNZDD program, they saw teachers' expertise increased. They also saw that student abilities in English, analysis, and communication improved.

Compared with the themes and initiatives described in RU’s recent policy document *The Ideas on Further Enhancement of Education Internationalization*, the participants’ perceptions of the IHE seem more practical and focus on what the university is currently engaged in. Based on the interviews with the administrators and instructors, their understandings of internationalization can be categorized into five themes and groups of initiatives as shown in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5
Participants’ Perceptions of Internationalization

Themes	Internationalization for Regional University
International vision	Inviting foreign scholars to deliver lectures; Setting up instructor international training programs.
Integration with the international community	Carrying out collaborative research with world famous institutions and scholars; Expanding channels to international student exchange programs.
Academic capability improvement	Improving education quality through introducing foreign resources: teachers, curriculum, teaching models; Carrying out Chinese-Foreign joint programs and trying to increase the number of the programs.
Teacher/Student mobility	Dispatching instructors abroad for studying or training; Expanding channels to student exchange programs. Enrolling international students.
Humanity and culture exchanges	Delivering Chinese language and culture training programs; Applying for operating Confucius Institute abroad.

According to the interviews, internationalization means equipping teachers and students with an international vision, integrating the university to the international community, and learning from Western countries. These aspirational goals can be met in many ways, but those

interviewed seemed to focus on the value of teacher/student mobility and cultural exchanges. Motivated by these goals, some internationalization initiatives have been carried out at RU, including the Chinese-Foreign education program, dispatching teachers and students abroad, enrolling international students for degree program study or language training.

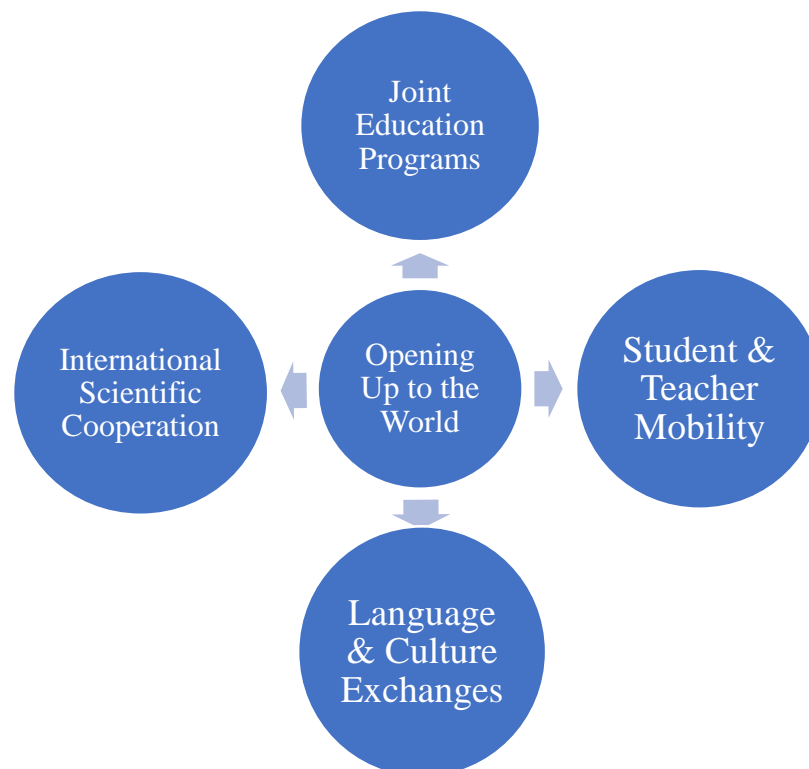
Compared with the overall and ambitious descriptions of the national and university internationalization policies, the university individuals' perceptions of internationalization mostly focused on learning from Western countries. Most interviewees mentioned that China's education is lagging behind Western countries, and introducing resources to enhance education quality, for example, scholars, curriculum, textbooks, and teaching models from the West, may help Regional University catch up with its Western partners in the future.

On the other hand, the university participants also believed that integrating into the global academic and cultural community is a critical part of internationalization. To this end, RU has carried out collaborative research with world famous institutions and scholars, encouraging researchers to participate in international conferences, establishing Chinese language and culture training programs, and Confucius Institutes abroad. While RU's perceptions might seem humble, and their internationalization initiatives are simple, they demonstrate the ways in which RU is on same track with the national internationalization policy. The most important internationalization initiative that RU has embarked upon has been the development of the SNZDD program, which I review next.

Implementation of the Internationalization Policies through Establishing the SNZDD Program

Introducing excellent resources to enhance education quality has been one of China's main internationalization goals in the 2010s. In the year of 2013, the MOE issued the *Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools (Amendment)* to guide Chinese-foreign joint program applications and operations. The *2013 Regulations* stipulates that "Chinese-foreign joint programs are an integral part of China's educational undertaking" (p. 1).

Figure 5.1. The Internationalization of Regional University



According to the *2013 Regulations*, foreign higher institutions of the Chinese-foreign joint programs should provide no fewer than one third of the courses to be delivered; dispatch

lecturers to teach no fewer than one third of all credit hours associated with the qualification; provide the teaching resources for the program, including the curriculum, and recommended textbooks and teaching materials. Given these expectations, most Chinese universities have viewed establishing Chinese-foreign joint education programs as the most important way to access international quality education.

The SNZDD program, which was proposed in 2013 and approved in 2015, is the university's key initiative to introduce international quality educational resources to students at RU. Here, I describe the processes associated with establishing the program.

The *2013 Regulations* specifically requires that all joint education programs should locate in the “national urgently-needed disciplines”. In term of the selection of an urgently-needed discipline, the university leaders had in-depth discussions about potential disciplines over the competence of teaching staff, teaching facilities, and the coupling with the provincial economy, and finally decided to select one of its strong disciplines, metallic material engineering, as the target joint program. Dr. Wang, the dean of the faculty stated, “Our province is strong in steel industry, and metallic material engineering is an old and well-established brand program of our university. In order to continuously train well-educated talents for the provincial steel industry, we need a transition and upgrade with our disciplines. We believe that introducing advanced curriculum, faculty, textbooks through a Chinese-foreign joint program is the fastest and most efficient way”.

Item II of the *2013 Regulations* stipulates that “the nation supports Chinese higher institutions to establish joint education programs with renowned foreign higher institutions”.

In term of renowned foreign higher institutions, RU targeted the universities in the main English-speaking countries, such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. As Dr. Li, the director of the International Office, explained, “English is a global language. The universities in the main English-speaking countries represent the highest level in scientific research and talent training. Therefore, our university is sure to benefit from the cooperation with individual universities of these countries.”

To most Chinese scholars, the position in the world university ranking systems, such as QS World University Rankings³ and U.S. News Rankings⁴, is the most important indicator regarding whether a university is renowned or not. When talking about the New Zealand University, Dr. Wang said, “the ranking of New Zealand University in QS was 300 in 2013, and it is in the 266th place this year. Its ranking has been rising up It happened that this university was seeking Chinese partners too, and its material engineering is very strong. This has laid a perfect foundation for our cooperation.” Along the same line, Dr. Hu, one of the early founders of the SNZDD program and expert in metallic material engineering, noted that “the New Zealand University’s material engineering is internationally certificated.”

With a few rounds of discussion, the two universities decided to establish the SNZDD program. The *2013 Regulations* requires that the Chinese-foreign joint program should set up a

³ QS World University Rankings is an annual publication of university rankings by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS). The QS ranking is viewed as one of the three most-widely read university rankings in the world, along with Academic Ranking of World Universities, Times Higher Education World University Rankings and the U.S. News Rankings.

⁴ The U.S. News Rankings refers to the U.S. News’s Rankings of American and International Colleges and Universities which is among the most used college rankings, along with QS World University Rankings, Academic Ranking of World Universities and Times Higher Education World University Rankings.

board consisting of at least five members with no less than half of the Chinese members for the management and coordination of the program. The two universities first set up a joint academic team to develop a complete teaching plan for the future joint program. Then set up the Joint Program Collegium (JPC) with three members from each party to establish the detailed operations plan for the program. The JPC was responsible for approving the teaching plan, assessing procedures and materials for respective courses in the program, and monitoring the administration, invigilation and marking papers. The JPC was also responsible for notifying one party if the other party would change assessment procedures. RU attached great importance to this opportunity, as evidenced by the fact that the university president acted as director of the JPC, with other Chinese committee members including the RU director of the International Office, the dean of the host faculty, and the director of the Office of Academic Affairs.

When the earlier preparations were completed, the two universities signed the *Agreement of Higher Education Collaboration between Regional University and New Zealand University*. The Agreement stipulated the rules in detail, which include cooperation project principles and objectives, program operations, responsibilities for both universities, financial management, dispute resolution, duration of cooperation and termination.

Since RU's original intention for the SNZDD program was to introduce educational resources in alignment with the expectations outlined in the 2013 Regulations, the responsibilities for New Zealand University (Party B) included:

1. Party B provides Regional University (Party A) with no fewer than one third of the courses to be delivered;

2. The credit hours taught by Party B's staff should represent no fewer than one third of all credit hours associated with the qualification;
3. Party B provides the teaching resources associated with the part of teaching undertaken by Party B, including curriculum, teaching plan, recommended textbooks and teaching materials as stipulated in the jointly designed teaching plan;
4. Party B invites the teaching staff from Party A in this program to receive a specified period of training at Party B. Party B may provide a tuition scholarship to one staff member from Party A that meets the admission requirements determined by Party B to enrol in an agreed qualification of Part B.
5. Participate in the program management and ensuring teaching quality.

Other contents included that the program would be carried out on the campus of RU; it would be a 4-year full-time undergraduate program; up to 90 students were to be enrolled per academic year in the program in China; and that if the number of students entering the second year remained below 60 following for two consecutive years, Party B reserved the right to terminate the program.

RU submitted a set of documents which include the application report, cooperation agreement, teaching plan, the education certifications of the two cooperative partners and the legal representative certificates of both partners to the Chinese Ministry of Education. The application report specified the general provision of the program, the details of the project objectives, the size of student enrolment, the level of the program, facilities for the program, program administration, and funds sources and management. The application for the SNZDD

program was approved by the MOE in 2014. The program was commenced from September 2015 and will end in August 2026 unless the two universities agree to renew.

The Opportunities and Challenges Associated with the SNZDD Program at RU

The Expected Benefits

According to *the Agreement*, the SNZDD program was expected to provide the students with a solid foundation in metallic material engineering and ensure they gain mastery of the basic skills and recent developments in the subject area, to enhance Chinese students' English language ability and critical thinking, and to develop their study and working opportunities both at home and abroad. Thus, the graduates could possess good practical skills in the subject area and could be able to meet the demands of the domestic and international labour markets. On the other hand, the program was expected to supplement and enforce RU's teaching and administration of the program.

The Benefits to RU

Interviews with administrators and faculty staff, as well as the survey on students show that the SNZDD program has benefited Regional University in various ways. Here I will outline the benefits first from the perspective of the administrator and faculty staff; and then from the perspectives of the students in the program.

- 1) Benefits from the administrator and faculty staff perspectives (See Table 5.6)

Table 5.6 Benefits of the SNZDD Program from the Administrators and Faculty Staff's Perspectives

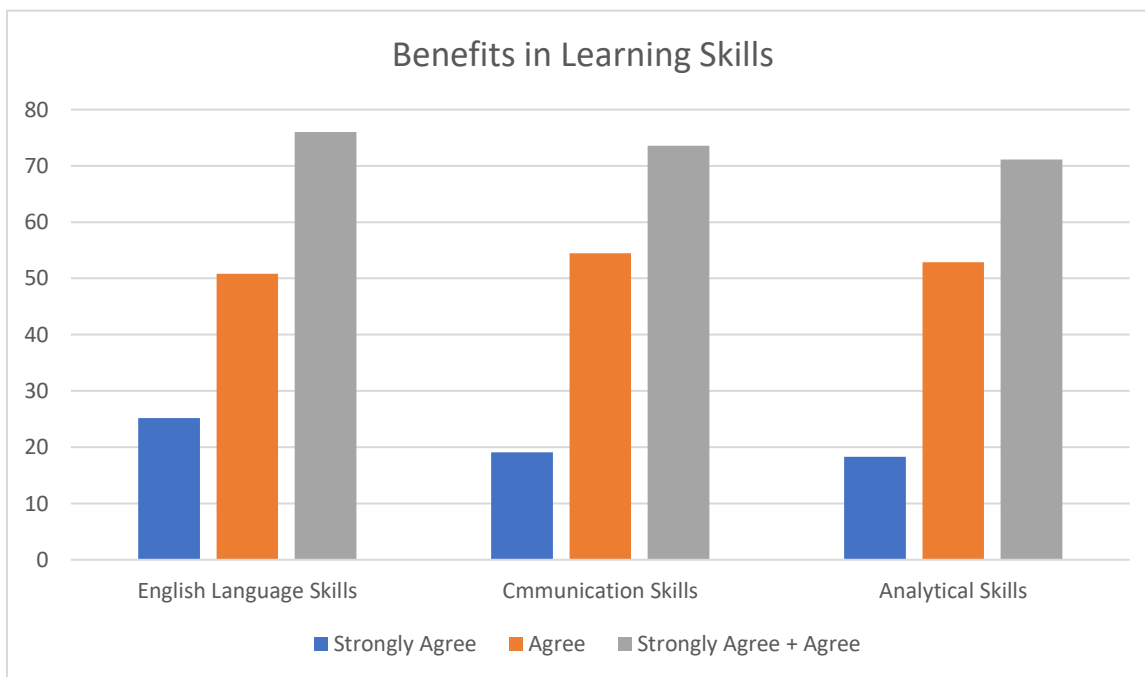
Benefits	Details
Resources to enhance education quality	World renowned university Teaching plan Foreign courses Textbooks Teachers of professional courses and English
Faculty development	Opportunity to get trained abroad Opportunity to pursue higher degrees abroad
Student development	English proficiency Cutting-edge technology/information International vision Connections with foreign professors
International/domestic visibility	More international teachers applying to teach in the program; More students applying to study in the program Jointly hosting international conferences
Upgrading of teaching facilities	More investment to the program
Multi-cultural campus	More international events

Benefits from the Student Perspectives

According to the design of this study, the qualitative interviews with the university administrators and instructors could not provide the SNZDD program students' perceptions of the benefits they have obtained from the program. In order to achieve this goal, I use the data drawn from an online survey as a tool to examine the similarities with and disparities from the findings drawn from the qualitative data. The combination of the two groups of data help to generate a thorough and in-depth understanding of the research questions.

Eleven questions in the online survey are related to the benefits the SNZDD program students perceived. According to the survey, the benefits of the SNZDD program include enhancement of the students' English ability through access to original English-version textbooks or articles and enhancement of their communication and analytical skills. According to the students, the program has also provided them with access to cutting-edge technology and up-to-date scientific information, connections to foreign scholars and chance to study abroad. In addition, the students noted that the program has enabled them to be more competitive in domestic or international job markets and would provide them with greater opportunities to access to graduate study. Findings about the benefits of the SNZDD program to its students are shown in Figures 5.2-5.4:

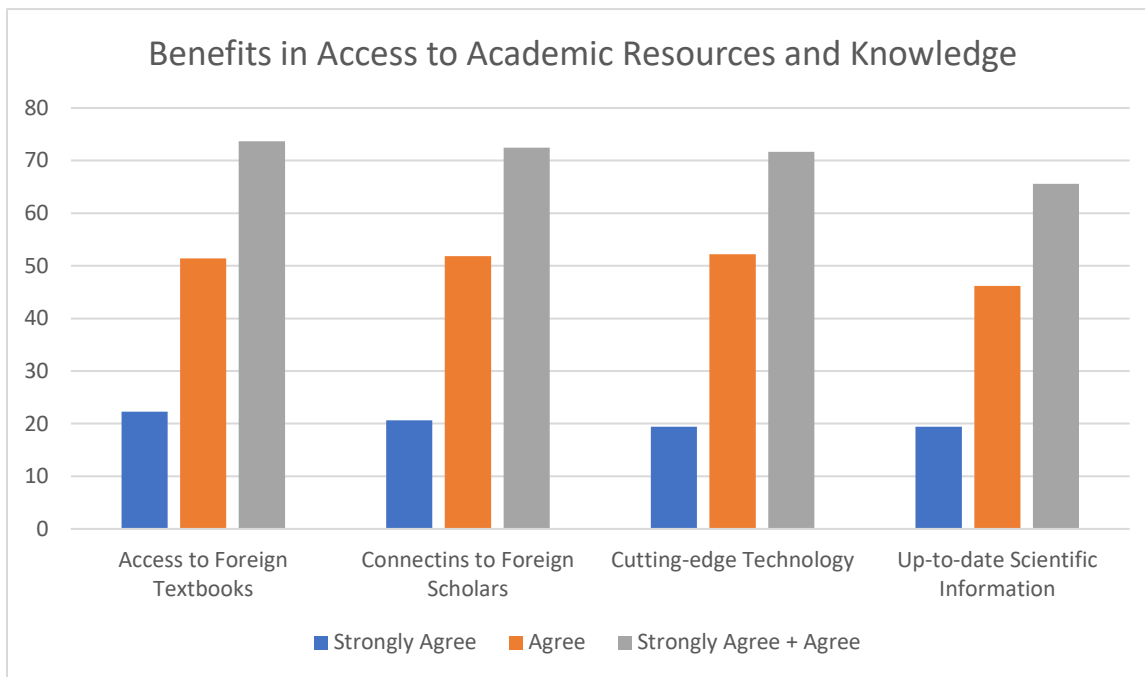
Figures 5.2 Benefits of the SNZDD Program to the Students in Learning Skills



According to the survey, most students agreed that they have benefited in learning skills from the SNZDD program. For instance, nearly 80% of the students agreed that their English language skills have increased through English language immersion learning. Over 70% of the students agreed that their communication and analytical skills have increased thanks to the special teaching and studying methods provided by the SNZDD program.

Figures 5.3

Benefits of the SNZDD Program to the Students in Access to Academic Resources and Knowledge



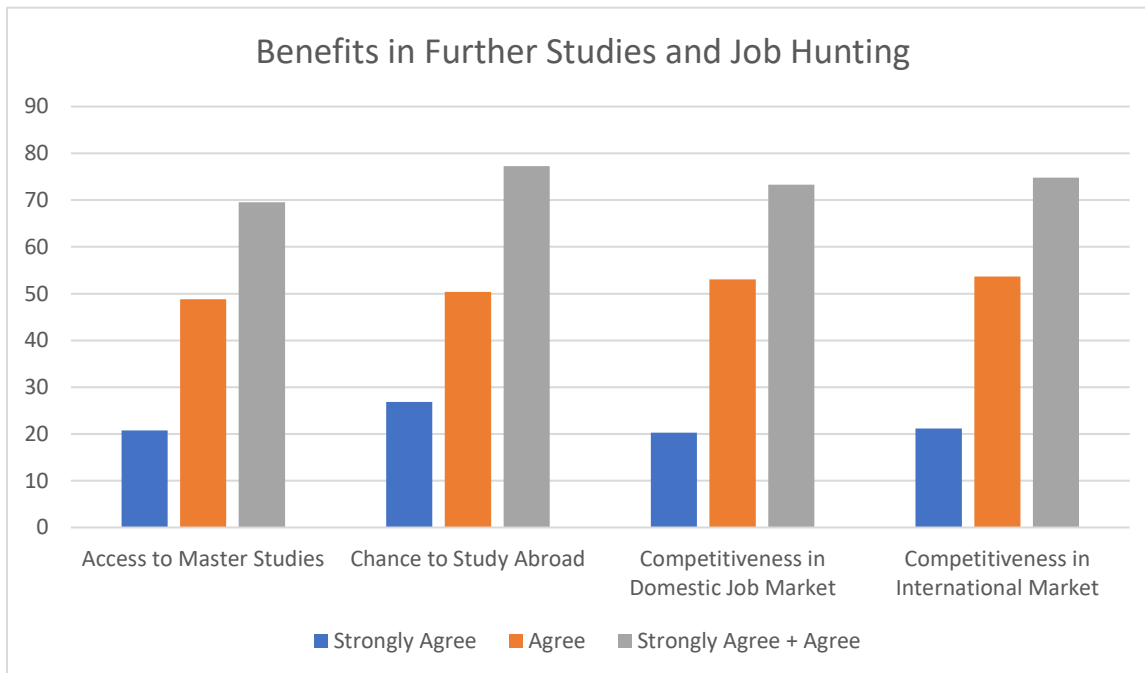
Based on the survey, over 70% of the students agreed that the SNZDD program has provided them with access to the original foreign textbooks and connections with foreign scholars, which is what non-TNE programs cannot provide. About 70% of the students agreed

that they have benefited from the SNZDD program in the access to cutting-edge technology and up-to-date scientific information.

In terms of their future study or employment prospects, Figure 5.4 shows that nearly 70% of the students agreed that the program is a preparation for pursuing a master’s degree in the future. About 80% of the students agreed that the SNZDD program has provided them a chance to study abroad in the future. Over 70% of the students believed that the program would help them

Figures 5.4

Benefits of the SNZDD Program to the Students in Further Studies and Job Hunting



increase competitiveness in both domestic and international job markets. Since most students agreed that they have benefited from the SNZDD program, the rate of those who would recommend the program to others was more than 72 percent.

Challenges to the Students

The student survey included questions about their challenges associated with the SNZDD program. Among all the participants, 87 (34%) students believed that the program needs to be improved in certain aspects. Table 5.7 summarized the main findings.

Table 5.7 Aspects that the Students Hoped to Improve in the SNZDD Program

Aspects	Details	Total
Curriculum Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * No chance to select different courses; * No chance to apply the knowledge learned in class; * Less practical (job-oriented) courses; * Less course-related activities; * Inappropriate Course arrangement (unsystematic courses; too many exams). 	N=16
English Proficiency Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Less support on student English proficiency. 	N=10
Communications between Faculty and Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * No chance to communicate with the faculty; * Lack of respect to the students; * No class interactions between the faculty and students. 	N=10
Teacher efficacy / Teaching Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Information not accurately conveyed; * Reading out the textbook; * Hard to understand individual teacher's strong accent. 	N=9

According to the survey, the curriculum setting ranked the top among all the aspects that the students thought need to be improved. For example, some students argued that the program provided limited courses, so they had no chance to select what they were interested in. Students had no chance to apply the knowledge to practice as the courses were not practical but more

theory-oriented and thus, according to the students, less job-oriented. There were few course-related activities; and the courses were not systematic. Other main aspects that the students believed needed to improve include less support on English proficiency assistance and fewer opportunities to communicate with the faculty.

Summary

Through reviewing the national IHE policy documents, I identified that the IHE at the national level is conceptualized as ‘opening up to the outside world’ in general, but each period had prior internationalization strategies to meet the demands of the social and economic growth. However, China’s internationalization policies have developed based on the strategy which is from academic development to economic growth and global influence expansion, and finally to the national political security.

Although the Chinese higher education institutions have certain independence in academic development through internationalization, their internationalization practice are confined within the framework designed by the national government. Most of the higher education institutions choose actively or passively to follow the national policies in their internationalization strategies. According to *the Regional University’s Strategies for Disciplinary Construction and Development 2010-2020*, Regional University internationalized itself based on the *2010 National Plan*. In this sense, RU’s internationalization represents the value of the national government.

As mentioned above, Regional University has been trying to forge itself to be a regional first-class university. In order to realize this strategic goal, RU chose to start from carrying out

the SNZDD program which was expected to help the university enhance its academic capability in a specific discipline, and eventually obtain eligibility to serve the BRI strategy. In term of the selection of disciplines, RU chose to make the national requirements and its own situations meet, and as a result, the metallic material engineering was selected.

As for the purpose of RU's internationalization, the interviews showed that providing faculty and students with an international vision, enhancing its academic capacity and local economic growth accounted for more than helping enhance the nation's global influence and political interest.

The enhancement of academic capacity existed in three aspects. Firstly, the SNZDD program introduced the expected excellent education resources: a foreign curriculum system, textbooks, and scholars. Secondly, a few of the core teachers of RU got professional training in New Zealand University, which enhanced their teaching skills. And thirdly, most of the students in this program agreed that their English capability, communication skills, and analytical skills were improved because they had opportunities to connect to the foreign professors and the original English textbooks. Most students agreed that they would be more competitive in future domestic and international job hunting or master study application. All of these benefits are valuable for RU to upgrade its level among other regional universities.

It is worth noting that none of the interview participants mentioned any negative aspects or challenges of the SNZDD program, however, a small number of students expressed their concerns about no chance to select courses and fewer opportunities to communicate with the faculty. Presenting these findings here in this chapter has provided a clear understanding of the

consistency and discrepancy between official policy documents and participants' perceptions. I further discuss RU's ideologies of internationalization, the challenges and the exclusions in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION

This study was guided by four research questions: 1) How is the internationalization of higher education conceptualized in the policies at national and institutional levels? 2) What has driven Regional University (RU) to engage in the process of the internationalization of higher education? 3) How has the Sino-New Zealand Double Degree (SNZDD) program benefited RU and the students associated with the program? And 4) what are the challenges associated with the SNZDD program at RU? In this chapter, using Stier's concept of internationalization ideologies and Bourdieu's concepts of Field and Capital, I first analyze and discuss RU's ideologies that have driven its internationalization policies and initiatives. I then analyze how the SNZDD program has benefited RU and its students. Finally, I discuss, through a critical lens, who are excluded from the benefits of the higher education internationalization and the SNZDD program at RU.

Whose Value Does RU's Internationalization Represent?

Through examining the policy documents at the national and institutional levels, I found that RU's internationalization has kept in close step with the national strategies. RU released its first internationalization-related policy in 2010 after the MOE released *the China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development 2010-2020*. RU signed *the Agreement of Higher Education Collaboration between Regional University and New Zealand University* immediately after *the 2013 Amendment of the Regulations of the People's Republic of*

China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools was issued. And when the Chinese State Council released *the Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Educational Development of the People's Republic of China* in 2017, RU issued *the Ideas on Further Enhancement of Education Internationalization* in 2018.

In addition, in each of its policy, RU stressed that this policy was made in response to the national strategies. For instance, *the 2018 Ideas* regulated that RU's internationalization development must be congruent with the general plan of the nation and the internationalization priority in the current period was to serve the national BRI strategy.

It is clear that the belief in being congruent with the national plans or strategies has been imbedded in RU's internationalization policies. Although RU has options to carry out the internationalization programs which correspond with its own context, these programs are confined within the national framework. In this sense, RU's internationalization represents the value of the nation, helping the national government transmit its ideologies (Stier, 2004).

Rationales for RU's Education Internationalization

As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, China's higher education system is highly centralized. RU's education internationalization has been significantly based on four national policy documents regarding internationalization: *China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development, 2010-2020* (MOE, 2010), *The Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools, 2013 Amendment* (MOE, 2013), *Several Opinions on Promoting Education Opening-up in a New*

Period (State Council, 2016), and *The Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Educational Development of the People's Republic of China* (State Council, 2017).

In alignment with the national policy, internationalization for RU means ‘opening up to the outside world’ in general. But the connotations have developed in pace with the nation’s economic and social development. The recent national *2017 Outline* has adjusted China’s development priorities and put the Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI) on high agenda of China’s national policy. At the same time, the Chinese government has also strengthened the internationalization initiatives in student mobility, world first-class university and first-class discipline constructions, cross-culture awareness enhancement and taking part in global education governance. All of these efforts aim at promoting “the core value of socialism” and boosting “prosperous economy, harmonious society and flourishing culture” (State Council, 2017, p. 1).

Higher education policy is not value-free since policy values reflect voices, visions and interests of people in power and various groups of stakeholders (Harvey, 1973; Rizvi & Lingard 2010), such as governments at national and local levels, and university officials. Stier (2004) indicated that the instrumentalist ideology views higher education as a way to access economic growth and a means to spread governmental ideologies. Based on the fact that the main purposes of RU’s internationalization are to serve the local economic growth and the nation’s political strategy – the BRI through academic development, I identify that the internationalization of RU is mostly driven by the instrumentalist ideology. On the other hand, RU has been trying to

enhance its academic capacity through internationalization initiatives, especially the SNZDD program, which has benefited its staff and students in academic development. In this sense, RU's internationalization has also demonstrated the educationalist ideology. In the following section, I elaborate on the driving force for RU's internationalization from the instrumentalist dimension and the educationalist dimension.

Engaging in the Instrumentalist Ideology of Internationalization

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, RU's internationalization is partly driven by instrumentalist ideology which takes higher education as a means to generate economic growth and spread ideologies of the government.

First, the mission of RU's internationalization policy has set the direction for the development of its higher education internationalization. According to RU's 2010 and 2018 internationalization policy documents, the ultimate missions of its education internationalization are to serve the local economy and the national BRI Strategy. Both the reviews of policy documents and the interviews show that RU's higher education internationalization initiatives, especially the SNZDD program, involve a number of learning practices, such as staff training, cultural exchanges and student mobility. Objectively, RU's internationalization policies have provided its staff and students with opportunities for professional or academic development and an exposure to foreign culture and academic atmosphere. To some extent, some staff and students have realized their "personal growth and self-actualization" thanks to the internationalization policies (Stier, 2004, p. 92). However, RU's internationalization is driven by

the ideology of instrumentalism. The internationalization initiatives, such as internationalization in students/staff mobility, curriculum, scientific research, and management, are all means to fulfill its ultimate missions.

Second, RU's real internationalization practice is a demonstration of the ideology of instrumentalism. RU's accumulated cultural capital and social capital have eventually converted into economic capital as the SNZDD program has generated a steady growth of student enrolment and the consequent revenue increase.

Take the SNZDD program for example, neither the *2013 Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools (Amendment)* nor the *SNZDD Agreement* indicated that the cooperative institutions aim to make profit from the TNE programs. However, anyone who has knowledge about Chinese-Foreign joint programs know that these programs charge much higher tuition than the non-transnational programs. In his interview, Dr. Wang mentioned that the yearly tuition in 2018 was 17,000 Yuan RMB (\approx \$3,400 CAD) which was almost four times of the non-transnational programs.

Fostering skilled labour force to strengthen global competitiveness of the institution or its country is another characteristic of instrumentalist ideology (Stier, 2004). As the SNZDD program was designed incorporating Chinese social and economic perspectives on the major of MME, the objectives of the program were to provide the students with foundation in MME and ensure that they gain mastery of the basic professional skills and recent developments in the subject area. On the other hand, this program has also provided an education platform where students' English ability and analytical skills were developed. The SNZDD program students are

expected to be devoted to the upgrading in the MME industry and contribute to the provincial or even national economic growth and competitiveness. This approach is in alignment with the notion that higher education internationalization has been considered resources to enhance a nation (region)'s strength in economy and competitiveness (Hammond, 2016; Yang, 2012).

When talking about the future plan of the SNZDD program, Dr. Yang, the vice dean of the faculty, stated “we are hoping to work with steel industries in the BRI countries, such as Serbia, Mongolia, Iran, and Iraq in the future, and contribute our portion to the national BRI strategy.”

Engaging in the Educationalist Ideology of Internationalization

It is widely accepted that one of the intended purposes of internationalization is to enhance the quality of higher education (Altbach & Knight, 2007; de Wit & Hunter, 2015). All the national education policies reviewed in this study show that the Chinese government tends to import excellent foreign educational resources (curriculum, textbooks, renowned scholars, teaching methods and connections with international scholars) for the enhancement of China's higher education through carrying out the TNE programs. According to *The Agreement of Higher Education Collaboration between RU and NZU* (RU, 2013), the SNZDD program was designed to support the Chinese national education strategic development guideline and provide participants with a solid foundation and good practical skills in Metallic Material Engineering.

As RU invested in the SNZDD program, its economic capital has converted into ‘goods and services’ - curriculum, textbooks, and teaching methods from NZU and courses delivered by the instructors from NZU, which is called ‘excellent educational resources’ by RU. According to Dr.

Li, the teaching staff despatched by NZU represented the highest level of NZU's MME program, not only in professional expertise and experience, but in teaching method and their attitude, responsibility and passion towards the SNZDD program.

For RU, 'introducing excellent educational resources' has not been restricted to the imported curriculum, teaching materials and teaching staff. RU hopes to establish a strong staff team of its own through carrying out international cooperation. As previously mentioned, RU's economic investment also includes training its teaching staff at NZU, through which we saw a conversion from economic capital into academic capital. Dr. Hu, the coordinator of the SNZDD program, said that this program has greatly enhanced the RU teachers' professional capabilities. She stated,

The past four years has seen our teachers' capability rising. The SNZDD program has provided our teachers international visions and enhanced their English skills. More and more young teachers have been recognized by their peer teachers and the students for their excellent teaching skills. Some teachers have started research collaborations with the NZU professors.

Setting up TNE programs has become the expected norm for internationalizing institutions (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). This is true for RU as it has internationalized part of its curriculum (the SNZDD program), sending students to study abroad, recruiting international teaching staff, engaging in international research cooperation, and involving its own teaching staff in internationalization programs. On the other hand, RU has been successful in enhancing its own academic capabilities through the above practice. This approach is consistent with He's (2016)

claim that TNE programs are considered by some university policy makers as a strategy to improve their less-than-satisfactory academic status.

It should be noted that even if educationalist ideology of internationalization demonstrates in RU's policy documents and instructors' belief, and most of the SNZDD program agreed that they have benefited from this program, a small group of students still expressed their concerns about some aspects of the SNZDD program as mentioned earlier. Furthermore, their concerns were ignored by administrators and faculty staff. This inattention to the concerns of some students might have happened because the administration did not consider the concerns to be serious enough to negatively influence the operation of the SNZDD program, or because this group of students did not have enough social, cultural and symbolic capital within the institution. This episode suggests that it is important to establish a more robust communication system between the students, administrators and the faculty, so as to enhance the overall academic experiences of the students.

The Glimmer of the Idealist Ideology of Internationalization

Although Stier (2004) categorized the ideologies of internationalization into three forms, he indicated that these three ideologies are not mutually exclusive, and instead, they may overlap with each other. As discussed above, RU's internationalization has been driven significantly by an instrumentalist ideology, and partially by educationalist ideology, but the idealist ideology still glimmers to some extent.

In its recent internationalization policy documents, such as the 2018 *Ideas on Further Enhancement of Education Internationalization*, besides highlighting its priorities of serving national strategies and local economic development, RU also proposed the initiatives of expanding staff and students' international visions and engaging in language and cultural exchanges through internationalization cooperation. On the one hand, these initiatives are integral components of RU's instrumentalist ideology of internationalization, but on the other hand, they may grant staff and students access to essential knowledge and competence of understanding cultural beliefs, tolerance, respect, and democratic values. And further, these initiatives may eventually ignite a glimmer of "a sense of global community and solidarity" (Stier, 2004, p. 89) that leads to a more democratic and equitable world.

How Is Internationalization at RU different from Internationalization at Top-tier Universities in China?

Fang (2012) made a comparison on the development of transnational education programs between Chinese top research universities and regional teaching universities and concluded that top research universities have concentrated on providing academic opportunities for the students who aspire after advanced professional degrees; however, the TNE programs for teaching universities have been used as a tool to expand enrollment, which ultimately generates much needed operational revenue. The findings of this study are partially consistent with Fang's (2012) conclusions, because RU also has demonstrated some features of educationalism and idealism in internationalization.

Studies of the differences of internationalization between regional universities and top-tier research universities remain rare in China. Although this study does not focus on the comparisons between regional universities and top-tier research universities, reviewing the policy documents at the national and institutional levels and interviewing the participants have disclosed some clues of the difference in internationalization between these two groups.

First, RU faces greater pressure to internationalize its higher education. As the policy document review shows, one of the main themes of the IHE at both national and institutional levels is importing high-quality education resources from the foreign countries. However, top-tier universities focus on high-level scientific research collaborations with their international partners, while RU focuses on ‘learning’ from NZU through transplanting the curriculum and teaching methods from NZU.

Thanks to their greater academic competency, top-tier universities are entrusted more important national-level tasks. For instance, Beijing University owns 22 national-level scientific research centers (Beijing University, 2021), and Tsinghua University owns 25 such research centers (Tsinghua University, 2021). These two universities have carried out international collaborations with foreign national organizations and well-known multinational companies, such as the National Institutes of Health (US), UK Research and innovation, and Samsung Global Research Outreach (Korea). In contrast, RU is concentrating on curriculum internationalization and staff/student mobility to improve its less-than-satisfactory academic status (He, 2016). RU hopes that, in this way, it could transform its academic status and could have a chance to serve national strategies in the future. So far, RU has a few provincial-level

research centers, but has no national research centers. As per the research collaborations, the professors of the two universities have submitted an application for a joint project, and they are waiting for the approval by the MOE.

Second, RU's ideologies of internationalization are different from top-tier universities. Top-tier universities, such as Beijing University, are considered to be responsible for "producing innovative findings in science, technology and culture that make possible the nation's renaissance" (Hayhoe, at el. 2012, p. 109). According to *the Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Educational Development of the People's Republic of China* issued in 2017, the main themes of the IHE locate in serving the BRI strategies and forging China's world first-class universities so as to exert China's global influence. In this sense, it could be argued that top-tier universities internationalize their education mainly to spread the nation's ideologies more than generate revenue. For RU, its current academic performance is not high enough to build an international profile. What RU can do at this moment is to expand enrolment through improving its academic competency and building its social prestige by carrying out international programs. Therefore, compared with spreading national ideologies, generating revenue is more important and practical for RU.

How Is Internationalization at RU Similar to or Different from the IHE outside of China?

As believed by some researchers that higher education is considered as a world-wide tradable commodity in the context of neoliberal globalization (Altbach, 2012; Altbach & Knight,

2007; de Wit & Adams, 2010; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). This is true for RU and its IHE has been primarily driven by an instrumentalist ideology which focuses on revenue generation. The students at RU enroll in the SNZDD program with the motivation to gain cultural, social, and economic capital. This situation is not unlike the motivations of students who study abroad or engage in other international programs in countries outside of China.

However, Rizvi (2011) argued that rather than a totally market-driven phenomenon, the IHE should be viewed as a combination of the traditional, more democratic values of education and a discourse of educational markets concerned with revenue generation. Based on the review of the current literature, the IHE also demonstrates the strong political objective of spreading the political intentions of national governments, such as the education collaborative programs among the ASEAN countries, the EU's ERASMUS+ program, and Australia's zero-tuition foreign aid program. In this sense, RU's internationalization is quite similar to the IHE outside of China. RU has been trying to seek opportunities to serve the national BRI strategies in spite that it is not academically strong enough to assume the tasks at this moment.

One difference of internationalization between RU and the universities in the West is that, the Western universities usually play a role as an education service provider while collaborating, specifically in the TNE programs, with Chinese universities and universities in the global south. RU's main theme of internationalization, importing high-quality education resources, has decided that RU is a recipient of education service in most international collaborations. At this point, RU is more like the universities in South Africa and Brazil, which are active in

internationalizing their higher education institutions, but as recipients in most internationalization programs (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

How Has the SNZDD Program Benefited RU and Its Students?: Bourdieu's Concept of Capital

The Changing Status of RU

Since its establishment in the 1950s, RU has been positioned as a regional university. In the Regional University's Strategy for Disciplinary Construction and Development, 2010-2020 (RU, 2010), RU identified serving the regional economic development as one of its main strategies. In the early 2010s, internationalization was a vague and simple concept for RU as there were no detailed internationalization plans but some fragmentary initiatives in the *2010 Strategy*, such as encouraging international academic exchanges and recruiting renowned foreign scholars. However, this document clearly stated that these internationalization initiatives were to eventually contribute to regional economic development.

As noted above, the Chinese government proposed the BRI strategy in 2013, China's national strategy involving both economic and political interests. Since then, the BRI strategy has become an official blueprint for some Chinese universities to make policies. In *Ideas on Further Enhancement of Education Internationalization of Regional University* (RU, 2018), RU stated that "the mission of education internationalization is to serve the national BRI Strategy. In order to accomplish this mission, this university must intensify internationalization in students/staff mobility, curriculum, scientific research, and management" (p. 1).

As presented in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, China's national elite university programs, e.g. the Project 985 and the Project 211, have prevented a great number of non-elite universities from receiving national funding for teaching enhancement and research improvement, which means that the non-elite universities have less chance of being engaged in the national strategies, such as the BRI strategy (Fang, 2012). Unfortunately, little existing literature has paid attention to how Chinese non-elite regional universities break through the disadvantages. From the findings of this study, I conclude that changing their status by carrying out the TNE programs may help the disadvantaged universities make up for their losses in the competition for educational resources. In the following, I discuss how RU has built and applied their different forms of capital through carrying out the SNZDD program.

Conversion between Economic Capital, Cultural Capital and Social Capital

Economic capital is the foundation of all the other types of capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Bourdieu's concept of economic capital includes money and the institutionalized form of property rights, such as land, books, and facilities. When economic capital gives immediate access to "some goods and services", it can convert into different types of capital (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 252). In this study, the "goods and services" include curriculum, textbooks, and teaching methods from NZU and courses delivered by the instructors from NZU. These sources are all the source of excellent education that RU has been hoping for.

A year before the SNZDD program was carried out, RU started a significant economic investment which was immediately transformed to material and objectified forms of assets, such

as modern teaching facilities, foreign staff offices, and the recently-built conference room with national styles of both China and New Zealand. A modern remote education centre which can seat at least 40 students was in preparation when the interviews were made in 2019. As all these material assets as well as the salaries for the NZU staff were paid over a period for an exchange of the wanted foreign curriculum, textbooks, teaching methods, and courses delivered by the NZU instructors, a specific cultural capital has been gradually established in RU. For the university, the distinguishing features of the SNZDD program, such as the specifically designed curriculum, the Outcome-based Education model, foreign textbooks, English immersion courses, and even school activities associated with the New Zealand culture, have become a part of its cultural capital which has enabled the SNZDD program students to experience culturally rich study without having to go abroad. These features have helped RU stand out among regional universities.

Transnational Education (TNE) programs in China take in various forms. In the year of 2012, only 16% of the TNE programs conferred double degrees, while most conferred Chinese degrees only (Fang, 2012). Knight and McNamara (2017) found that when students choose a TNE program, which country awards the degree is a key attribute. The SNZDD program confers two degrees if the students complete one-year study at the NZU after the first three-year study at RU. According to Dr. Li, the director of RU's international department, the possibility to get two degrees is "very attractive to the students."

On the other hand, the SNZDD program has gained RU social capital and attracted social attention. Reputation and country of origin are among the major factors that influence students'

selection of a TNE program (British Council, 2012; Pyvis & Chapman, 2004). For RU, selecting a right partner is a prerequisite for successful future cooperation. According to Dr. Wang, NZU is a world-renowned university whose QS ranking was among the top 300 through 2016 to 2019. The Metallic Material Engineering (MME) is one of its strongest disciplines. In contrast, RU does not have an international ranking, but has a constant ranking between 300-400 among all Chinese universities. It is worth pointing out that since 2014 when the SNZDD program was approved by the MOE, the names of the two universities were bound together, appearing on the recruitment brochures, the websites of RU, NZU and the MOE, or even other media. For RU, the tie-up between the two universities means a recognition by a world-renowned university and demonstrates a mutual support to each other. On the other hand, this tie-up is a key reason for the SNZDD program to be approved by the MOE which values the possibility of introducing ‘excellent educational resources’ to the Chinese universities.

Bourdieu (1986) indicated that the conversion of economic capital into social capital needs “a specific labour” which, besides time, includes “attention, care, and concern” (p.253). When the SNZDD program was started in 2015, RU and NZU only had routine exchange visits and staff training as stipulated in the Agreement. At the time of the interviews, the number of exchange visits greatly increased, and the teaching staff from both universities had more interactions in teaching, research, and publishing papers. In this study, the ‘attention, care, and concern’ were reflected in RU’s endeavours to enhance its education quality through introducing excellent curriculum, textbooks, instructors, and teaching methods, assuring of quality in the process of enrolment, teaching, and assessment, and despatching its staff to NZU for professional

training. More importantly, the two universities held a forum at RU in 2018, which symbolizes an upgrade of the partnership upon mutual recognition.

In the recent two years, RU's accumulated cultural capital and social capital have eventually converted into economic capital as the SNZDD program has generated a steady growth of student enrolment and the consequent revenue increase. At the same time, as Dr. Wang mentioned, the past few years also saw more connections between RU and the local steel companies regarding student internship and employment because of the enhancement of education quality. This improvement will be analysed in the next section. In this sense, RU's practice is consistent with the processes Bourdieu (1990) described, according to which, material capital is converted into symbolic capital and then reconverted to material capital.

How Has the SNZDD Program Benefited Its Students?

Bourdieu's concept of capital and conversion between different forms of capital also apply to the students associated to the SNZDD program. As mentioned above, the tuition of the SNZDD program is almost four times more than RU's non-TNE programs. The wealthy families invest their economic capital in the SNZDD program for an exchange of benefits in cultural capital and social capital for their children, hoping to ensure positional advantage in the labour market (Waters, 2006).

First, the students' cultural capital accumulated through studying in the SNZDD program will possibly contribute to student academic achievement and economic capital. Cultural awareness obtained during the study in the SNZDD program is a personal competence that

requires a huge investment of time and materials (Stier, 2004). Immersion in the program over a few years has provided them with better English language ability, stronger analytical and communication skills, more access to original textbooks, cutting-edge technology, and possible overseas study experience and foreign degrees. These features cannot be obtained in a non-TNE program in the Chinese context, therefore, students with such cultural capital can easily stand out from those of other programs.

Bourdieu (1986) criticized some functionalist scholars that neglected the contributions of an investment of time and cultural capital to students' academic ability. The findings of this study show that most students associated with the SNZDD program have made satisfactory academic achievement after one to four years study, no matter what family background they have. In addition, as high as 40% of the students in the 2015 program attended the graduate study entrance exam in 2019. Since the rate of graduate entrance exam attendance is considered an indicator of education quality of a university in China (Zhu, 2017), the result of the SNZDD program indicates a better academic quality than other programs in RU. In this sense, the finding of this study is consistent with Bourdieu's argument.

Although there were no data about how cultural capital has influenced their economic status after graduation, most students claimed that they were quite confident in their future job hunting in the domestic and international job markets thanks to cultural capital accumulated in the SNZDD program.

Second, the SNZDD program students have established social capital too during their four-year study. Their interactions with the instructors from both RU and NZU have helped them

build a long-lasting relationship which may serve as a support to their future job hunting, graduate study or research. Although students in the non-TNE programs can also establish connections with their instructors, the connections built in the SNZDD program are far-reaching given that its foreign instructors and local instructors have an international vision, cultural awareness and more international connections.

According to the findings, most of the SNZDD program students are from wealthy families that can afford the high tuition. Studying in the SNZDD program has provided these students similar study experience. These features may form bounded solidarity which is the source of social capital (Portes & Vickstrom, 2011).

Thirdly, the SNZDD program students have also benefited from the social capital accumulated by RU through carrying out the program. As the SNZDD program has gained social recognition for its rising academic quality in MME, special cultural features and student development concept, RU has established connections with a number of local steel companies regarding student internship and employment. Compared with the students in the non-TNE programs, the SNZDD program students have priorities in internship and employment. The opportunities of internship are believed to pave the way for a better future employment.

Who Are Excluded from the Benefits of the RU's Internationalization?

The internationalization of higher education has been considered a means to bring profits to educational institutions, countries, and regions (Blumenthal, et. al, 1996; Knight, 2003; Maringe et. al, 2013). In the past twenty years the Chinese government has significantly invested in the

development of its own world-class universities, so that these Chinese universities could compete with their international world-class peers. As a result, China's top universities have received special support through a number of national elitist programs. As introduced in Chapter I, Project 211, Project 985, as well as the recently launched 'Double-First Class Project' are most important among the elitist programs. Coupled with these programs, the Chinese government has established some research funding programs, such as the National Natural Science Foundation and National Social Science Foundation, and a high percentage of these funds have been granted to the top universities. However, these national elitist programs have been criticized by a number of scholars for producing inequality (Li, 2016; Yang, 2014).

In contrast to the top research universities, a large number of non-elite universities, including RU, have been excluded from receiving national funds for their own academic development, faculty and student development, and facility upgrading. The TNE programs are considered a way for the non-elitist universities to change their status and become regional or national first-class universities. However, the TNE programs have again become 'elitist programs' in these universities given the special funds allocation, program visions, and student enrolment principles.

According to the information from its website, RU is a multi-disciplinary university, and its mission is to foster an all-round development of students and serve the local economic development and social progress. Realizing that internationalization can be an important way to become a regional or even a national first-class university, RU has identified internationalization as one of its three development strategies. It is obvious that RU's internationalization policy

reflects the comprehensive requirements of the national policy of higher education internationalization. However, some exclusions from the national requirements can also be seen from the SNZDD program, the most important part of RU's internationalization initiatives. These exclusions are presented and discussed here.

First of all, instructors were excluded in policy making. As mentioned in Chapter III, the deputy president of RU has drafted a policy document by himself, and this document has finally become an important internationalization policy of the university. The deputy president said:

I do not have enough time to have a long interview with you. But I will send you the university internationalization policy document which I drafted. You review the document and you will find the answers to your questions.

As stipulated in the *1998 Higher Education Law*, the president, under the supervision of the CCP committee, is fully responsible for the teaching, scientific research, and other administrative work of the university. In the case of RU, the deputy president, although not a president, has been in charge of the internationalization affairs for eight years, and clear evidence can be found in his words that he is the main, if not the only, drafter of this policy. This is in alignment with what Arar, Kondakci, and Taysum (2019) have found that in the institutions of centralized countries, top leaders play a key role in interventions in policy making and implementation, and their interventions are not based on "a rational needs analysis" because there is a lack of "human readiness" (p. 299). This finding may shed light on policy research in some non-Western countries.

The exclusions were not limited to the recently issued policy at Regional University. According to the interviews, RU's 2010 *Strategy for Disciplinary Construction and Development 2010-2020* and the 2013 *Agreement of Higher Education Collaboration between Regional University and New Zealand University* were made by RU's top leaders and mid-level leaders, such as the director of the International Department and the deans of the faculty, but no instructors were involved. When talking about the internationalization policies of RU, Dr. Hu said, "I do not care about the university policies, I did not take part in drafting the SNZDD agreement. What I need to do with the program is just follow the agreement." Although Dr. Hu has been devoted to the SNZDD program as an instructor and coordinator, he seemed not happy with being excluded from drafting the SNZDD agreement. Two other instructors also mentioned that they did not know exactly about the SNZDD agreement since they were not involved in drafting it. Stier (2004) indicated that under the instrumentalist ideology, university administrators play a key role in making internationalization policy. This notion exactly represents the practice of internationalization policy making at RU.

It is worth noting that Dr. Hu's understanding of internationalization of higher education is different from that of the ideology of instrumentalism. Dr. Hu considered internationalization as a 'window' through which the institutions, staff and students could communicate with the outside world, and finally realize academic enhancement and personal development. His understanding is much close to the ideology of educationalism. The other two instructors had similar understanding of the internationalization of higher education.

Li (2016) argued that the official-centred bureaucracy may lead to “fierce economic and political tensions between implementers and participants” (p. 175). In this study, the tension was reflected in the two different ideologies of internationalization held by the university leaders/administrators and instructors. This confrontation between policy makers and policy actors may bring negative effect to the university in a long run. Studies show that the engagement of the faculty staff play a critical role in internationalization initiatives (Childress, 2010; Stohl, 2007). The individual motivation of faculty staff has a great impact on their engagement in internationalization (Li & Tu, 2016). If faculty staff are not interested in or excluded from internationalization policy making at an institution, it is hard to believe that they would be fully devoted to internationalization in practice. This situation may result in, as Stier (2004) warned, an obstacle in the implementation of internationalization policies.

Second, for-profit programs generate new inequities. Although *the Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Operating Schools (2013)* stipulates that the TNE programs should be non-profit and established for common good, as discussed above in this chapter, the SNZDD program charges a yearly tuition as much as four times of the non-transnational programs, which has actually excluded the students who own less economic capital from access to international education and experience. In China, the economic development in the rural area is far behind that of the urban areas, and the ‘urban-rural gap’ in income has been increasing (Pan, Wu & Zhang, 2018). In this study, 80% of the total student participants are from urban and suburban areas, and only 20% are from rural areas. When society and companies attach too much importance to students’ cultural capital and social capital, such

as foreign degrees, overseas study experience, foreign language abilities, and international or domestic connections, the students who are not wealthy enough and most students from the rural areas have actually been situated in a disadvantageous situation because they cannot afford the expensive TNE programs that may offer access to cultural and social capital accumulation. This situation may even put those students at a disadvantage for their future job hunting or further study. This finding is consistent with Stier (2004) conclusion that exclusion from or limited access to higher education potentially “sustains social inequality in the world, both within countries and between countries” (p.88).

Inequality also develops within the teaching staff in RU’s non-TNE programs. The *Agreement* of the SNZDD program stipulates that NZU invites the teaching staff from RU to receive a specified period of training at NZU. According to Dr. Wang, the dean of the Faculty of Engineering, NZU has trained 30 person-times for RU’s staff by the interview was made. This mechanism has enhanced academic capability of the teaching staff in the SNZDD program and the Faculty of Engineering. However, most teaching staff in the non-TNE programs have no chance of academic training just because they are not associated with the TNE programs. Thus, inequality in academic development has happened between the TNE teaching staff and the non-TNE teaching staff.

Third, the ‘urgently-needed-program’ and ‘renowned foreign university’ models that are driven by economic and political reasons may damage academic freedom and marginalize academic and intellectual principles in the higher education sector. The *2013 Regulations* stipulates that one of the purposes of establishing TNE programs shall be train talents for

different social fields. At the same time, *The Regulations* also requires that only an ‘urgently-needed’ program is eligible for becoming a TNE program. RU is a large-scale university with 16 faculties and 79 undergraduate programs and 43 graduate programs which cover science, engineering, management, liberal arts, economics, medicine, laws, and education. Currently, the SNZDD program, as well as all other TNE programs at RU, are concentrated on engineering subjects which are believed urgently-needed for the local economic development.

Given the limited funds, when the university has mostly invested in the SNZDD program, it shows that they care less for other programs. On the other hand, if a program would become eligible to be a TNE program, it must follow the directions of the MOE in terms of curriculum development and staff development, which could potentially damage the development of China’s TNE programs in its nature (Zhang & Liu, 2013).

Summary

The critical policy analytical framework was applied to analyze the perceptions of internationalization at a national level and an institutional level in the Chinese context, the value that RU’s internationalization represents, the driving force for RU’s internationalization, the benefits RU and its students have obtained from the SNZDD program, and the challenges RU is facing. Stier’s ideologies of internationalization and Bourdieu’s concept of capital were also used.

In its mission, RU’s internationalization policies represent national values. RU takes the instrumentalist ideology as its main driving force for its internationalization, although

educationalist and idealist ideologies are involved to a certain extent. Compared with Chinese top-tier universities, RU's internationalization demonstrates some different features. First, RU faces greater pressure to internationalize its education than the top-tier universities do. Second, RU's internationalization has been driven by instrumentalism, but mostly focuses on revenue generation at this moment. When compared with the universities outside China, RU, unlike the Western universities which usually play a role as an education service provider while collaborating with Chinese universities, is a recipient of education service in most international collaborations. At this point, RU is more like the universities in the Global South, such as South Africa and Brazil.

The finding shows that by investing in the SNZDD program, RU's economic capital was converted into cultural capital (foreign curriculum, English immersed courses, foreign instructors, foreign teaching method, overseas study experience, and foreign degree) and social capital (partnership with NZU and cooperation with the domestic steel companies), both of which have contributed to a conversion back to RU's economic capital (more student enrolment and revenue generation). The conversion of economic capital into cultural and social capital also applied to the SNZDD program students. These students paid four times of the tuition of the non-transnational program, and they have learned cutting-edge MME knowledge, as well as English skills, analytical skills, and communication skills. Some of the students went to study at the NZU for an overseas study experience and a foreign degree. The students have also established connections with some foreign professors and students with better family background. All these benefits could help them with a better situation in future job hunting and further study.

However, RU's internationalization policy and the SNZDD program have also generated some problems. Faculty staff are excluded from being evolved in making policies, which could potentially damage the staff's engagement in internationalization initiatives. The for-profit TNE program could generate inequality in education as it mostly focuses on increasing revenue from charging the wealthy students with high tuition. Therefore, students whose families cannot afford the high tuition are excluded from enrolling in the TNE programs. At the same time, since the overseas academic training opportunities were provided only to the teaching staff associated with the TNE programs, the non-TNE program teaching staff have been excluded from personal academic development via overseas academic training. On the other hand, the required 'urgently needed program' and 'renowned foreign university' models of the TNE program damage the academic freedom and limits the development of other programs. This finding is consistent with what Li (2016) and Yang (2014) criticized about the erosion to China's academic freedom and intellectual atmosphere when the governmental strategies and policies involved too much in academia.

As discussed in chapter 2, some authors have argued that the purpose of the internationalization of higher education should be the focus on achieving the public good, with all students and staff included (De Wit & Hunter, 2015). Given the problems generated in the process of the internationalization policy and TNE program at RU, I suggest that RU harmonize the three forms of ideologies of internationalization, that the top leaders work with administrators and teachers in making internationalization policies. Also, more research in terms of academic freedom and how to reduce inequality in higher education internationalization is needed.

CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION

Introduction

A review of the research context and some key points regarding methodology and the research framework is helpful to fully appreciate the scope of this study. Situated in a critical policy analytical framework, this case study aimed to address the following questions: How is the internationalization of higher education conceptualized in the policies at the national level and the institutional level? What has driven Regional University (RU) to engage in the process of the internationalization of higher education? How has the Sino-New Zealand Double Degree (SNZDD) program benefited RU and the students associated with the program? And what are the challenges associated with the SNZDD program at RU?

The research site of the study, RU, is one of the many regional universities in China, a sector that accounts for 95% of the Chinese higher education institutions. Since the 2010s RU has been actively engaged in higher education internationalization and carried out a number of internationalization initiatives. The focus of this study, the SNZDD program, is RU's major internationalization program which this study focused on. Three main sources of data were used in the analysis of the operation of the SNZDD program: the interviews with the administrators and instructors, an online survey on the students and official policy documents. Document data is considered one key source for policy research, as it is often seen as the formal representation of the government interests (Ayoubi & Al-Habaibeh, 2006; Silverman, 1999). The document review included an analysis of a series of internationalization policy documents produced

between 2010 and 2019 at the national and institutional levels. The three groups of data were analyzed from a critical policy analysis perspective. This chapter concludes the dissertation with a summary that combines the findings in order to address the research questions. A final argument and some recommendations will be presented as well.

Conclusions

The past three decades saw a great development of the internationalization of higher education in China. Internationalization in general means ‘opening up to the outside world’, but this notion has different foci in different periods and at different levels, changing with the nation’s political, economic and social development.

Regarding the first research question: *How is the internationalization of higher education conceptualized in the policies at national and institutional levels?* Since the BRI strategy has become a national strategy, the internationalization initiatives in higher education mostly centre around this strategy. Currently, in China, the internationalization of higher education means international cooperation with various countries, especially with the BRI countries. This cooperation takes some of the following forms: outward and inward student mobility, the introduction of high-quality education resources, participation in global education governance and cultural exchanges and the encouraging of innovation to build up first-class universities and disciplines. China has a highly centralized higher education system and the findings show that RU’s internationalization strategies are consistent with the national strategies. For RU, higher education internationalization means introducing high-quality educational resources,

talent/teacher mobility, carrying out international academic collaborations, student mobility, and promoting humanity and cultural exchanges.

In terms of the second question: *What has driven Regional University (RU) to engage in the process of the internationalization of higher education?* I used Stier's Ideologies of Internationalization as the framework to analyze the driving forces for RU to carry out education internationalization. This study identified that RU's internationalization has been mostly driven by the ideology of instrumentalism. According to the interviews with the administrators and instructors, RU's ultimate missions of educational internationalization are to serve the local economy and the national BRI strategy. The current internationalization initiatives, such as students and staff mobility, and the exchange of curriculum, scientific research, and management, are all means to fulfill its ultimate missions: to serve the national strategies and to promote the local economy.

Besides the instrumental goals, RU's internationalization policies have facilitated academic enhancement and provided RU's staff and some of the students with opportunities for personal and professional development through exposure to foreign culture and knowledge (Stier, 2004). In this sense, the ideology of educationalism also functioned in driving RU's internationalization. There was, however, a slight difference between RU administrators and instructors' perceptions of the purposes of higher education internationalization. According to the findings, the administrators placed more emphasis on the political and economic purposes of the initiative, which aligned with the ideology of instrumentalism. The instructors focused on academic

development for both the university and the individuals, which suggested the ideology of educationalism.

In addition, RU's engagement with the initiatives of expanding staff and students' international visions and language and cultural exchanges through internationalization cooperation may have granted its staff and students access to essential knowledge and competence of understanding cultural beliefs, tolerance, respect, and democratic values. These initiatives may eventually contribute its share to a democratic and equal world.

Concerning the third research question: *How has the SNZDD program benefited RU and the students associated with the program?* This study used Bourdieu's concept of capital and found that the SNZDD program has benefited both RU and the students associated with the program. First, the SNZDD program influenced the direction of RU's economic investment. For instance, RU designated part of its budget to improve teaching facilities and pay for the foreign instructors, resulting in an enhancement of into cultural capital. The enhanced cultural capital could be evidenced in the incorporation of a foreign curriculum, the creation of English immersed courses, the hiring of foreign instructors, the adoption of foreign teaching methods, the facilitation of an overseas study experience, and the opportunity for the students to obtain a foreign degree. In addition to the enhanced cultural capital, the SNZDD program improved social capital for RU's students and faculty, for instance, through the partnership with NZU and cooperation with the domestic steel companies, RU has established a strong bond with NZU and the domestic steel companies.

All these forms of capital have made RU stand out from its peer regional universities. As a result, these forms of capital have been converted to economic capital through the increased enrolment of students at RU. The SNZDD program has benefited its students through the similar mechanism, namely, the accumulation of cultural capital and social capital has enabled the students to be competitive in international or domestic labour markets and application for future studies.

Regarding the fourth research question: *What are the challenges associated with the SNZDD program at RU?* The study identified the following four issues. First, while the BRI-centred pattern of internationalization may optimize the geopolitical interests of the involved nations and regions (Wang, 2014; Wu, 2018) and contribute to building soft power for China (Peterson, 2014; Richmond, 2003; Wu, 2018), it may potentially bring an imbalance of international cooperation between China and the countries in other regions.

Second, Robson (2016) argued that if a university wants to become international in a serious way, its academic staff should be included to help decide the priorities of internationalization for transformative change. RU's internationalization policies including the SNZDD agreement were drafted by the university top leaders and faculty deans, and instructors were excluded from involving in making policies. This situation could have potentially affected the instructors' motivation to engage in future internationalization initiatives. Also, it should be noted that the SNZDD program was designed at the top level of the organization and student voice was not taken into consideration when the agreement was drafted. The online survey

showed that some students complained that there was no chance to select different courses and that some of the course settings were unsystematic and less practical.

Third, the SNZDD program is actually a for-profit TNE program which mainly focuses on increasing revenue by charging wealthy students with high tuition. Since the students whose families cannot afford the high tuition were excluded from enrolling in the TNE programs, inequality in education could be further reproduced.

Lastly, the ‘urgently needed program’ model of the TNE program that I discussed in Chapter V and Chapter VI may have excluded the programs that were not on the ‘urgent’ list. What is worse is if a foreign university is not considered as a ‘renowned university’ by the MOE, the potential cooperation between this university and a Chinese university would not be approved. These pitfalls may cause damages to the academic freedom and limit the development of other programs.

Taking all the above into account, this study concludes that in spite of the emergence and presence of some successful academic international initiatives such as the SNZDD program, RU’s internationalization has been predominantly driven by the instrumental ideology, which serves the government interests and has the local economic development as its ultimate mission.

Argument: Toward IHE for Inclusiveness and the Academic and Democratic Development

The promotion of the public good, intellectual freedom and democracy that were traditionally cherished in the field of higher education have slowly been replaced by an intensive and extensive international competition and marketization (de Wit, 2011). However, the belief of

the academic and democratic development has not totally vanished from RU. This belief still exists among the instructors. For example, both Dr. Hu and Dr. Ning stressed that the purposes of higher education internationalization in the Chinese context were to improve Chinese universities' academic capabilities, experience foreign cultures and achieve personal and professional development for staff and students. This finding contradicts the findings from previous studies according to which China's regional/teaching universities carried out the TNE programs for the exclusive purpose of revenue generation through enrolment expansion (Fang, 2012).

Policy work is a series of complex and continuing actions rather than simply a chosen course of activity, and it involves a range of players (Colebatch, 2011). This study found that in making its internationalization policies and producing the SNZDD agreement, the authoritative leaders, namely high-level administrators, made the decisions, and other policy actors and stakeholders, namely the instructors and students, were not included in the policy making process. Due to these disparities, the analysis evidenced some tensions in the understanding of internationalization between the instructors and the administrators.

This study found that slippages exist between RU's internationalization policy rhetoric and policy implementation. This finding is consistent with the argument by Taylor (1997) about the gap between policy objectives and policy outcomes. As discussed in Chapter VI, the SNZDD agreement stipulates that this program was designed to provide Chinese students with the opportunity to obtain a bachelor's degree in the major of Metallic Material Engineering (MME) incorporating Chinese social and economic perspectives on their major. However, the for-profit

program has given the priority of international education to the students from wealthy families and has excluded the students whose families could not afford the high tuitions. Even if most of the SNZDD program students agreed that this program has benefited them in various fields, this does not mean that the SNZDD program embodies the intrinsic academic and democratic values of higher education mentioned above.

The SNZDD program emerged under the context of the Chinese government's policy of cultivating world-class universities. Under such a context, for the regional universities that would never become world-class universities, due to their overall lower academic capability and fund shortage, forging one or a few single world-class subjects through cooperation with foreign universities seems to be a practical approach. The case of the SNZDD program shows that the subject of Metallic Material Engineering (MME) at RU did gain social acceptance in the past four years, however, I doubt that MME at RU could become a world-class subject if the higher education internationalization policy is still led by the national priorities but not the local needs. This finding is consistent with other scholars' observations that indicate that China's universities have a considerable gap from their international world-class competitors because of the lack of academic freedom and the inefficient engagement of the faculty in policy making (Childress, 2010; Li & Tu, 2016; Qiu, 2018; Yang, 2014).

The argument is that the administration of higher education could adopt a novel approach, for the Chinese context, consisting of recognizing that the university is not only a unit that serves the nation's political and economic strategies, but also an academic-socio-cultural entity that undertakes the task of promoting cultural exchanges and educating global citizens (Ambrósio et

al., 2014; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). At the moment of closing the study, I would put forward to my thought as follow: As China's higher education internationalization is joining the cultural integration with the West (Yang, 2014), RU needs to move beyond being a mere enactor of the national strategies and instead, must attempt to champion the public good, or, as what de Wit and Hunter (2015) noted, to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff and to make a meaningful contribution to society.

Areas for Future Research

Besides the current research, there are a number of topics that could be explored in relation to the internationalization of regional universities in China:

I. How can Chinese regional higher institutions obtain more independence in engaging in education internationalization?

II. Comparative critical policy analyses of higher education internationalization in different Chinese regional universities.

III. Comparative studies on the TNE students and non-TNE students in their further study application, job hunting and economic status.

IV. How can the Chinese TNE programs address wide inclusiveness in the market-driven context?

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Interview Questions

Part A. Basic Knowledge about Internationalization Policies

Q 1. What do you know about Chinese higher education internationalization policies?

(Prompts) What do you know about the following policies?

- 2003–2007 Action Plan for Revitalization of Education (MOE 2004)
- The National Outline for Mid- and Long-Term Education Planning and Development 2010-2020 (State Council 2010)
- The Outline of Subjects Construction and Development of the Chinese University (2010-2020)

Q 2. Why do you think internationalization is important for Chinese higher education?

(Prompts) Do you think it's important for China's reputation, economic reasons, or for educational reasons?

Part B. Internationalization at Your University

Q 1. What do you think internationalization means to your university?

Q 2. Why do you think internationalization is important for your university?

Q 3. In what ways have the national internationalization policies that I mentioned above been implemented/enacted (taken-up) at your university?

(Prompts) The policies focus on enhancing international research partnerships. Do you see this happening at your university?

Q 4. How important are transnational education programs for your university?

Q 5. Are you familiar with the Agreement of the Sino-New Zealand Dual Degree program

(SNZDD) between your university and the New Zealand University? Can you tell me what you know about this agreement? For example,

- What is the goal of the SNZDD program?
- How was the SNZDD program developed/established?

Q 6. The National Outline for Mid- and Long-Term Education Planning and Development 2010 -

2020 (State Council 2010) says that one of the main purposes of transnational education is to introduce excellent educational resources. Could you outline briefly for me how the program operates excellent educational resources introduction?

Q 7. Do you think the SNZDD program that is in place reflects (or aligns with) the Agreement of the Transnational Dual-degree Program between your university and the New Zealand University?

Q 8. How to guarantee the quality of the SNZDD program?

Q 9. What actions has the university taken to achieve the goal of the SNZDD program?

Q 10. Is there anything else that you would like to share about your experience in the SNZDD program?

Appendix 2: Survey Questions

Internationalization of Regional Higher Education in China: A Critical Policy Case Study of a Transnational Double-Degree Program

Statement of Consent: I understand the information provided for this study survey as described in the Letter of Information. Completing the survey indicates my voluntary consent on participating in the study.

- I DO NOT wish to participate
- YES, I want to participate

Q1 What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Self-identify _____

Q2 Which year of the program are you in?

- First year
- Second year
- Third year
- Fourth year

Q3 Where are you originally from?

- Urban area
- Suburban area
- Rural area

Q4 Have you studied in an international program before?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

Q5 How did you learn about this transnational dual-degree program?

- Through the university's website
 - Through social media (e.g. WeChat; QQ)
 - Through a student who is in the program or graduated from it
 - Through a recruitment agent
 - Other? Please explain here.
-

Q6 Why did you choose this program? (You can provide more than one answer.)

- The status/prestige of the university
 - The status/prestige of the program itself
 - To learn about other cultures and countries
 - To connect to the world through cutting-edge technologies
 - To enhance my career prospects
 - To study abroad
 - Other? Please explain here.
-

Q7 How do you describe the quality assurance processes of the transnational dual-degree program?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

Q8 How do you describe the teaching methods of the transnational dual-degree program teachers?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

Q9 How do you describe the program management of the transnational dual-degree program?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

Q10 How do you describe the student support services of the transnational dual-degree program?

- Extremely satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Extremely dissatisfied

Q11 Who is (are) the person(s) that you refer to most when you have complaints or questions?
(You can provide more than one answer.)

- The subject teacher
- The program advisor
- The dean of the faculty
- The staff of the International Office
- The university leaders
- None of the above

Q12 How fast do you get feedback about your complaints or questions?

- Immediately
- 1-2 days
- 3-5 days
- 1 week
- 2 weeks

Q13 My English ability has been improved through the study in the transnational dual-degree program.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q14 I believe that the transnational dual-degree will help me connect to the world through cutting-edge technology.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q15 The transnational dual-degree program has provided me a with chance to connect to international professors in my academic field.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q16 The transnational dual-degree program has enhanced my communication skill.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q17 The transnational dual-degree program has enhanced my analytical thinking skill.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q18 The transnational dual-degree program will provide me a with chance to study abroad.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q19 The transnational dual-degree program has provided me with access to the original English-version textbooks or articles.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q20 I am satisfied with the courses that the transnational dual-degree program offers.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q21 Most of the teachers in the transnational dual-degree program are knowledgeable about their subject matter.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q22 Overall, I am pleased with the course materials that we are using in the program.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q23 The original English-version textbooks provide me with more up-to-date information than the Chinese-version textbooks do.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q24 I am quite confident that I can complete the transnational dual-degree program study on time.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q25 The transnational dual-degree program has helped its graduates to be more competitive in the domestic job markets.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q26 The transnational dual-degree program has helped its graduates to be more competitive in the international job markets.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q27 I believe that the transnational dual-degree program will help me increase my competitiveness.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

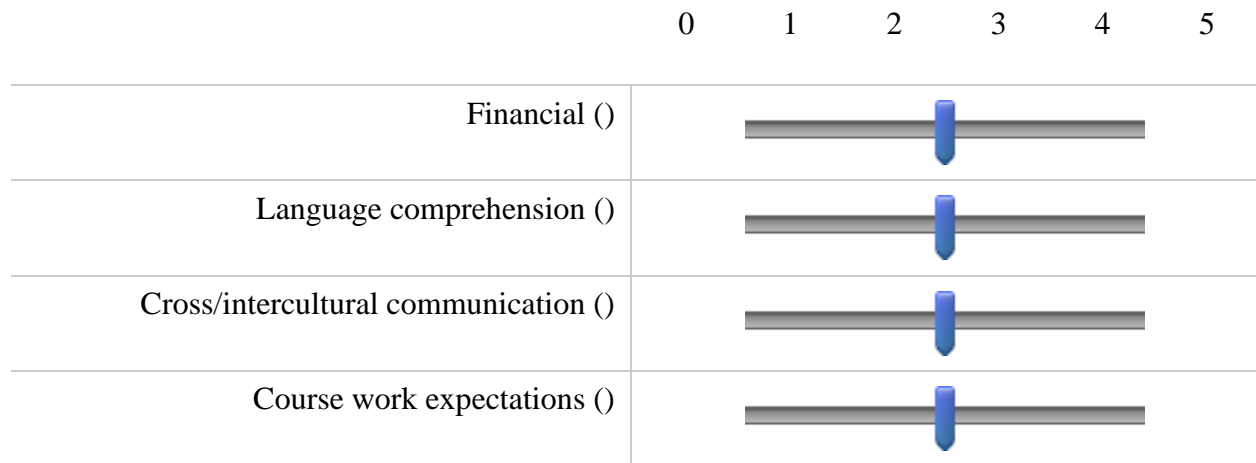
Q28 The transnational dual-degree program is a preparation for me to pursue my master's degree abroad in the future.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

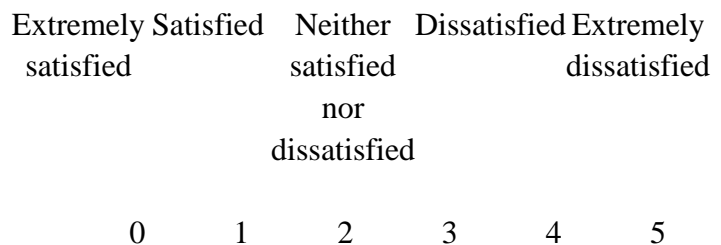
Q29 Overall, to what extent have you benefited from the transnational dual-degree program?

- Very large
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

Q30 Move the cursor below to indicate how significant each of the following challenges are, where 1 represents a minor challenge and 5 represents a very serious challenge.



Q31 Move the cursor below to indicate your overall satisfaction with the transnational dual-degree program.



Extremely satisfied ()



Q32 Would you recommend the transnational dual-degree program to others?

- Extremely likely
- Likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Unlikely
- Extremely unlikely

Q33 Do you think the transnational dual-degree program still needs to be improved? If so, in what aspects?

Q34 Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences in the transnational program?

Appendix 3: Ethics Approval



Date: 22 April 2019

To: Dr. Marianne Larsen

Project ID: 113262

Study Title: Internationalization of Regional Higher Education in China: A Policy Enactment Case Study of a Transnational Dual Degree Program

Short Title: Internationalization of Regional Higher Education in China

Application Type: NMREB Initial Application

Review Type: Delegated

Full Board Reporting Date: 03/May/2019

Date Approval Issued: 22/Apr/2019 14:30

REB Approval Expiry Date: 22/Apr/2020

Dear Dr. Marianne Larsen

The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the WREM application form for the above mentioned study, as of the date noted above. NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the expiry date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

This research study is to be conducted by the investigator noted above. All other required institutional approvals must also be obtained prior to the conduct of the study.

Documents Approved:

Document Name	Document Type	Document Date	Document Version
Email Recruitment - Survey-Clean Copy	Recruitment Materials	16/Apr/2019	
Email Recruitment-Interview-Clean Copy	Recruitment Materials	16/Apr/2019	
Internationalization_of_Regional_Higher_Education_in_China_A_Policy_Enactment_Case_Study_of_a_Trans	Online Survey	15/Apr/2019	
Interview Questions-Clean Copy	Interview Guide	12/Apr/2019	
LOI-Interview - Clean Copy	Verbal Consent/Assent	16/Apr/2019	
LOI-Survey - Clean Copy	Implied Consent/Assent	16/Apr/2019	
Translation- Email Recruitment - Interview Participants	Additional Consent Documents	16/Apr/2019	
Translation-Interview Questions	Additional Consent Documents	12/Apr/2019	
Translation-LOI-Interview	Additional Consent Documents	16/Apr/2019	
Translation-Verbal Consent Script	Additional Consent Documents	16/Apr/2019	
Verbal Consent Script - Clean Copy	Verbal Consent/Assent	12/Apr/2019	

Documents Acknowledged:

Document Name	Document Type	Document Date	Document Version
Confirmation Letter of Translation-Yinan Wang	Additional Consent Documents	16/Apr/2019	

No deviations from, or changes to the protocol should be initiated without prior written approval from the NMREB, except when necessary to eliminate immediate hazard(s) to study participants or when the change(s) involves only administrative or logistical aspects of the trial.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario. Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB. The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Katelyn Harris, Research Ethics Officer on behalf of Dr. Randal Graham, NMREB Chair

Note: This correspondence includes an electronic signature (validation and approval via an online system that is compliant with all regulations).

Appendix 4: Letter of Information and Consent – Interview



LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT

Study Title: Internationalization of Regional Higher Education in China: A Policy Enactment Case Study of a Transnational Dual Degree Program

Principal Investigator

Dr. Marianne Larsen, Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, Western University

Student Researcher

Hailiang Zhao, Doctoral Candidate, Faculty of Education, Western University

Introduction

My name is Hailiang Zhao and I am a doctoral candidate at the Faculty of Education, Western University (Canada). I am currently working on a research project about the internationalization of regional higher education in China. I am inviting you to participate in this research.

Purpose

Following global trends, China has made significant developments in the area of higher education internationalization. Most research on this topic focuses on the internationalization initiatives in the top research universities. However, this study aims to explore why and how one Chinese regional university has enacted internationalization through a transnational dual-degree program in the context of globalization, and how this university has interpreted and enacted internationalization policies. It also focuses on the opportunities and challenges this regional university faces during the process of internationalization.

Study Design

This study is guided by a main research question “How has a Chinese regional university enacted the national internationalization policies?” and three sub-questions “Why is the internationalization of higher education important for this university?”, “How has this university enacted the internationalization policies through a transnational dual-degree program?”, and “What are the opportunities and challenges associated with the transnational dual-degree program?”

Procedures, Participants' Rights and Benefits

The study consists of an interview to understand internationalization at your university. The interview will be conducted via Skype. It will take between 45 - 60 minutes of your time. Participants must be either administrators who are responsible for the SNZDD program management or instructors who are teaching at least one SNZDD program course; and be able to speak and understand English or Mandarin. You can choose whether to be interviewed in Mandarin or in English. Participation in this research is voluntary and not mandatory in any way. The interview can be stopped at any time if you experience any discomfort or fatigue. You may refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time. If you decide to withdraw, any information collected prior will not be used. No new information will be collected without your permission. You do not waive any legal right by consenting to this study. There are no known or anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participating in this study. The research will help improve our understanding of the importance of internationalization of regional higher education in China, and the ways internationalization policies are interpreted and enacted. The research might not have a direct benefit on you personally but will provide you with an opportunity to reflect on the role you take in internationalization of China's regional higher education. You will not receive any direct compensation for participating in this study.

Confidentiality

In order to build a rapport during the interview, I will ask your full name. However, your name will be replaced by a pseudonym in the study, and your name will not be shared in any reports, publications or presentations of the study results. I will not collect any other identifiable information from you. Only with your consent, unidentified quotes obtained during the interview may be used in the dissemination of research findings. Only representatives of Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board may require access to the study-related records to monitor the conduct of the research. Other people/groups/organizations outside the study team will not have access to the information collected. Any personal information about you in a form of a hard copy will be kept for 7 years in a locked cabinet at the researcher's locked office. A list linking your assigned code for the research study with your name will be kept in a password-protected file, separate from all other files, in the hard-drive of the researcher's laptop, which is encrypted and has personalized lock system. Only Hailiang Zhao has access to this laptop. All the data will be securely destroyed using industry-standard shredders and data-deletion software after the retention period of 7 years.

The interview will be conducted via Skype. If you are interested in participating in this study, your verbal consent to participate in the study must be provided at the start of the interview. If you wish to participate in an interview, please email to confirm your interest and we will set a date and time for the Skype interview.

If you have any questions regarding the study, please contact me, Hailiang Zhao, or my supervisor, Dr. Marianne Larsen at the contact information above. If you have any questions

about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Human Research Ethics. This office oversees the ethical conduct of research studies and is not part of the study team. Everything that you discuss will be kept confidential.

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Hailiang Zhao

Appendix 5: Verbal Consent Script



Internationalization of Regional Higher Education in China: A Policy Enactment Case Study of a Transnational Dual-Degree Program

VERBAL CONSENT SCRIPT (To the interview participants)

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me (Hailiang Zhao) today and for your interest in participating in this study. Based on our email correspondence where you were provided with a Letter of Information about the study, I am assuming that you understand that this Skype interview is about a research study I, Hailiang Zhao, am conducting. This study aims to investigate from the perspective of administrators and instructors, why and how a Chinese regional university enacts internationalization through a transnational dual-degree program in the context of globalization.

Using Yes or No as your response, can you please confirm each of the following:

Have you read and reviewed the Letter of Information that was sent to you electronically? {If no, provide the participant time to review the Letter of Information}

Do you have any questions about the study? {Answer Questions}

Do you want to participate in this study? {If no, thank them for their time and end conversation}

Do you consent to the use of unidentified quotes obtained during the study in the dissemination of research findings?

Would you like to receive a copy of the final report?

Please state your name {allow participant time to respond}

Thank you for your participation in this study {if they agree to participate}. We will now begin the interview.

Appendix 6: Letter of Information and Consent– Survey



LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT

Study Title: Internationalization of Regional Higher Education in China: A Policy Enactment Case Study of a Transnational Dual Degree Program

Principal Investigator

Dr. Marianne Larsen, Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, Western University

Student Researcher

Hailiang Zhao, Doctoral Candidate, Faculty of Education, Western University

Introduction

My name is Hailiang Zhao and I am a doctoral candidate at the Faculty of Education, Western University (Canada). I am currently working on a research project about the internationalization of regional higher education in China. I am inviting you to participate in this research.

Purpose

Following global trends, China has made significant developments in the area of higher education internationalization. Most research on this topic focuses on the internationalization initiatives in the top research universities. However, this study aims to explore why and how one Chinese regional university enacts internationalization through a transnational dual-degree program in the context of globalization, and how different actors - administrators and faculty staff - interpret and enact internationalization policies. It also focuses on the opportunities and challenges this regional university faces during the process of internationalization.

Study Design

This study is guided by a main research question “How are national internationalization policies enacted in a Chinese regional university?” and three sub-questions “Why is the internationalization of higher education important for this university?”, “How has this university enacted the internationalization policies through a transnational dual-degree program?”, and “What are the opportunities and challenges associated with the transnational dual-degree program?” However, the survey, which I am requesting you to participate in, will only focus on asking about your

motivations for enrolling in the Sino-New Zealand Dual-degree program, and your experiences with the program.

Procedures, Participants' Rights and Benefits

If you want to participate in this study, you should be enrolled in the Sino-New Zealand Dual-degree program. You also need to be able to read and respond to the survey questions in English. The survey is electronic and will take 10 minutes of your time. It can be completed anywhere you have access to a computer and the Internet. You can access the survey by clicking on this link: <https://uwo.eu.qualtrics.com/ControlPanel/>. Completion of the survey is an indication of your consent. You do not waive any legal right by consenting to participate in this study. There are no known or anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participating in this study. The research will help improve our understanding of the importance of internationalization of regional higher education in China, and the opportunities and challenges associated with a transnational dual-degree program. The research might not have a direct benefit on you personally, but will provide you with an opportunity to reflect on your experiences and understanding of the transnational dual degree program you are enrolled in. You will not receive any direct compensation for participating in this study.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide not to be in this study. Even if you consent to participate you have the right to not answer individual questions or to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose not to participate or to leave the study at any time it will have no effect on you.

If you decide to withdraw from the study, you may do so at any time by exiting the survey window. Due to the anonymous nature of your data, once your responses have been submitted, the researchers will be unable to withdraw your data.

Confidentiality

Your survey responses will be collected anonymously through a secure online survey platform called Qualtrics. Qualtrics uses encryption technology and restricted access authorizations to protect all data collected. In addition, Western's Qualtrics server is in Ireland, where privacy standards are maintained under the European Union safe harbor framework. The data will then be exported from Qualtrics and securely stored on Western University's server.

We will not collect your name and any identifiable information of you, so neither your name nor personal information will be used in any reports, publications or presentations of the study results. The information collected will be used for research purposes only. Only representatives of Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board may require access to the study-related data to monitor the conduct of the research. Other people/groups/organizations outside the study team will not have access to data collected. Any information in a form of a hard copy will be kept for 7 years in a locked cabinet at the researcher's locked office. The electronic data will be encrypted and kept in a password-protected file, separate from all other files, in the hard-drive of the researcher's

laptop, which is encrypted and has personalized lock system. Only Hailiang Zhao has access to this laptop. All the data will be securely destroyed using industry-standard shredders and data-deletion software after the retention period of 7 years.

If you have any questions regarding the study, please contact me, Hailiang Zhao, or my supervisor, Dr. Marianne Larsen at the contact information above. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact the Office of Human Research Ethics. This office oversees the ethical conduct of research studies and is not part of the study team. Everything that you discuss will be kept confidential. This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Hailiang Zhao

Curriculum Vitae

Name: Hailiang Zhao

Post-secondary Education and Degrees: China University of Mining and Technology
Jiangsu, China
1994-1998 B.A.

Memorial University of Newfoundland,
Newfoundland, Canada
2013-2015 M. ED.

Honours and Awards: Yearly Excellent Individual, Hebei Provincial International Education Administration (China), 2012

Related Work Experience: **Research Assistant**
Faculty of Education, Western University
2016 - 2020

International Education Program Coordinator
Hebei University of Science and Technology, China
2003 - 2013

Publications: Hurley, N., Zhao, H., Yu, P., Lu, D., & Wang, X. (2015).
Transitional Experiences of Chinese Students to Graduate Study at a Canadian University Within a Social, Political, Cultural, and linguistic Context. *US-China Education Review A* 5(10), 641-659.