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Call for Inclusion: A Study of Global Citizenship Education and the SES Achievement Gap in Chinese Higher Education Institutions

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Education

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Abstract

With China's increasingly active role in the global arena, both government officials and educators acknowledge the necessity of education that promotes global citizenship. This study examines nine university students' learning experiences of global citizenship at Chinese higher educational institutions; this study also focuses particularly on the impact of socioeconomic status in this educational model. I employed an indigenous Confucian framework adapted by Li (2010) to conceptualize the individual learning process. Li's theory enabled me to better understand and interpret how Chinese university students perceive and participate in global citizenship education and identify gaps within this process. This qualitative case study collected data through semi-structured interviews with nine Chinese university students. The findings reveal that the impact of the students' respective socioeconomic status on the global citizenship learning process was twofold: educational resources disparities and attitudinal differences. The findings also reveal some current limitations in Chinese global citizenship education. To this end, this study provides potential implications for policy-makers, educators, students, as well as future researchers.

Keywords: Global citizenship education; socioeconomic status; global citizenship education gap

Summary for Lay Audience

With China's increasingly active role in the global arena, both government officials and educators acknowledge the necessity of education that promotes global citizenship. Following Li's (2010) theory of individual political-socialization process, I probed into nine Chinese university students' learning experiences regarding their global citizenship knowing, global citizenship wisdom and global citizenship action accordingly. Specifically, this study focuses particularly on the impact of socioeconomic status in this educational model. Superficially, this study focuses on the potential impact of socioeconomic status on university students' global citizenship learning process. This qualitative case study collected data through semi-structured interviews with nine Chinese university students individually. The findings suggest that the students' respective socioeconomic status have a profound influence throughout their learning experiences of global citizenship learning process. The findings also reveal some current limitations in Chinese global citizenship education. To this end, this study provides potential implications for policy-makers, educators, students, as well as future researchers.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

In the current era of international mobility and migration, globalization stimulates and quickens the pace of economic and human exchanges, improves efficiency of communication and collaboration, and nourishes a sense of imagined international identity (Papademetriou, 2007; Castles & Miller, 2009; Bates, 2012). Citizens are involved in local, national, and global affairs—both intentionally and unintentionally (Giddens, 2000). However, traditional conceptions of citizenship and citizenship education have been challenged by the rising notion of a ‘world village’. Given the strong inter-dependency and inter-connections between countries through their respective economies, politics, and cultures, citizenship is no longer constrained to nation-states, but extends beyond passports and land boundaries.

In this context, it is important to understand citizenship within a global scope. To better prepare citizens to live, work, and travel within this globalized ‘village’, educating students as global citizens is important to “empower learners to engage and assume active roles both locally and globally to face and resolve challenges” and, ultimately, to “become proactive contributors to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable world” (UNESCO, 2016c, p. 2). With reference to Oxfam (2006), global citizenship includes, but is not limited to, knowledge about world orders, respect for diversity, a passion for social justice and peace, the ability to participate in local and global affairs.

The late 1970s marked a historical turning point in China. The former leader Deng Xiaoping came to power and led a series of reforms to rejoin the international community. Since then, China has experienced dramatic growth and development in various aspects including the economy, the educational system, and civil society (Tu, 2011). Given China's increasingly active role and impact in the global arena since 1978, both educators and government officials have gradually recognized the significance of understanding citizenship and citizenship education from a global perspective (Law, 2011; Yu, 2014; Chen, 2014).

Higher educational institutions (HEIs) play a crucial role in delivering citizenship education. In this global era, delivering global citizenship education is a prime mission for HEIs. However, this notion of global citizenship is subjected to criticism ranging from understanding global citizenship as simply a Utopian imagination to worries about global citizenship's impact on the diminishing role of nation-states and national identity. Moreover, there is no agreed-upon definition of global citizenship, although this may simply be due to the context-specific nature of global citizenship education (Goren & Yemini, 2017). UNESCO (2014) states that there are no universal model global citizenship practices. Rather, global citizenship and global citizenship education have to—in many cases—be understood and practiced in consideration of the status quo and cultural traditions of the particular nation-state. Consequently, implementation of global citizenship education is a tough task for both educators and policy-makers.

As a country that highly values nationalism, Chinese global citizenship education

is integrated with traditional citizenship education to better serve national interests (Law, 2007). For instance, a typical Chinese curriculum includes various courses including English, history, geography, moral education, and so forth; however, it also includes courses about global situations, climate change, social justice, and peace. At the same time, many international schools and exchange programs provide students with plentiful opportunities to acquire global citizenship. However, current Chinese global citizenship educational programs have some notable limitations. For instance, this educational curriculum often lacks clear clarifications and systematic pedagogy which, in turn, can reduce the effectiveness of this educational model (Fang, 2019).

In understanding students' learning achievements within this global citizenship curriculum, several studies have focused on the specific impact of students' socioeconomic status (SES) (OECD, 2019; Davis et al., 2016). In citizenship education, SES is a critical factor that affects how students from different family backgrounds perceive and participate in citizenship education (Tu, 2011). This study endeavours to explore the power of SES on global citizenship education. With respect to global citizenship education, many scholars emphasize overseas experiences as a seeming "prerequisite" (Goren & Yemini, 2017). However, overseas experiences, such as traveling or studying abroad, largely depend on the students' external financial supports. Consequently, students from less-advantaged families are often excluded from such capital-based experiences. In this study, I seek to understand and identify the potential impact of SES on Chinese university students' learning experience of global citizenship education. Ultimately, this study calls for Chinese

HEIs to adopt a more inclusive global citizenship education that supports less-privileged students.

1.2 Problem Statement

Numerous studies describe how global citizenship education is practiced across China (Yu, 2014; Law, 2007; Chen, 2014). However, the impact of social inequality on notions of global citizenship have been insufficiently explored (Goren & Yemini, 2017). Global citizenship educational models highlight the significance of including curriculum on social justice and inclusive diversity even as it is criticized for both intentionally and unintentionally “benefit(ing) mostly members of elite groups, therefore deepening societal inequality and gaps” (Goren & Yemini, 2017, p.10). Goren and Yemini (2017) describe how the gap in global citizenship education originates from social stratification in which students’ intercultural experiences and socioeconomic status are valued as a springboard for individual global citizenship. Put differently, individuals’ life experiences enable them to have better understanding and recognition of the world beyond “national traditions and identities” (Goren & Yemini, 2017; Nussbaum, 1994).

It is assumed that the SES gap leads to a gap in both educational resources and opportunities for global citizenship learning. Paradoxically, educational institutions sometimes play a crucial role in achieving equity, even as they tend to reinforce and widen this existing gap (Hill et al., 2008). As Chinese HEIs step into new phase that aims to provide mass opportunities for global citizenship education, inequalities in

learning opportunities and students' achievement gap persist, and may even be enhanced by current curriculum models.

Ultimately, students' experiences in universities vary greatly based on their socioeconomic status. It is widely acknowledged that students from non-privileged family background are less likely to access high-quality educational resources beginning from kindergarten all the way to higher education (Li, 2011). This study explores whether disparities in students' SES negatively impacts their civic engagement and participation in global citizenship learning. If yes, this study seeks to find the interrelations between students' socioeconomic background and their learning participation. In this study, I focus on Chinese university students' experiences pertaining to global citizenship while considering Chinese HEIs as the dominant "civic actor" (Li, 2012, p.58).

Confucius expected that "in education there should be no discrimination on the basis of class" (The Analects, 15.39, as cited from Li, 2009, p. 4). Likewise, this study contends that global citizenship education should prioritize students from all social groups, including students with less privileged SES. Ultimately, this study focuses on the inequity in global citizenship education in calling for a more inclusive atmosphere that supports global citizenship education for students regardless their social class.

1.3 Research Purpose and Questions

Some Chinese scholars have identified the influences of students' family background on their perceptions and participation on citizenship (Li, 2009; Yu, 2011). Building on

this, I seek to explore whether the disparities on students' SES also influence their global citizenship learning. Since global citizenship education advocates for social justice and equality, it is imperative for researchers to clarify and understand any potential inequality within global citizenship education such as different accesses to educational resources, different learning motivation and expectation and so forth.

The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of SES on students' perceptions and their participation of global citizenship education. It reflects on students' learning experiences under Chinese HEIs' current practices on global citizenship education through nine independent semi-structured interviews. Building on empirical data collected through interviews, this study seeks to comprehend how Chinese university students with different SES may interpret their experiences of global citizenship education.

Though the impact of SES has been widely discussed in terms of students' civic engagement, rare literature addresses the situation on global citizenship education. Goren and Yemini (2017) investigate a global citizenship education gap within the Israeli context. In the Chinese context, the disparities of Chinese university students' SES may also play a crucial role in their experiences of global citizenship learning. Throughout this research, I am interested in whether socioeconomic status influences Chinese university students' learning experiences of global citizenship. If it does, this study seeks to find potential reasons for the variation in their perceptions and global civic participation with specific regard to socioeconomic status.

This study was guided by the following two research questions:

(1) How do Chinese university students perceive and participate in global citizenship education?

(2) What is the potential impact of SES on Chinese university students' learning in global citizenship education?

The first question helps me comprehend how Chinese university students interpret their learning experiences of global citizenship. By exploring differences in students' perceptions and participation in global citizenship, with the second question, I further discuss whether the SES of individual Chinese university students affect their global citizenship and if so, in what ways.

1.4 Significance of this Study

Within this wave of globalization, global citizenship education has inevitably become a serious mission for educators. With China's increasingly active role in the global arena, both scholars and policy-makers have extensively considered the impact of global citizenship and global citizenship education. While there is considerable literature on the impact of SES on citizenship education, few studies have addressed the influence of SES on global citizenship education. This study contributes to the field of global citizenship education in Chinese HEIs by focusing specifically on the potential impact of SES on individual learning experiences. This study extends Li's theory of individual political-socialization to unpack Chinese university students' learning processes of global citizenship from knowing and wisdom to action. To this

end, this study details the impact of SES on global citizenship education on students' individual learning processes; it may also shed light on future reforms and the future curriculum development.

Second, this study recruited nine Chinese university students as valued interviewees. All students were completing undergraduate degrees at the time of the interviews. The interviews provided participants with a chance to reflect on their learning experiences, while also giving the researcher an opportunity to interpret their insights. Moreover, by conducting this research, participants were given an opportunity to gain new insights into their own conception of global citizenship. By addressing the global citizenship education gap, these interviews indicate the need for a more inclusive global citizenship education in Chinese HEIs. Specifically, students with a lower SES should be empowered to play a more active role in re-developing curriculum on global citizenship learning.

Third, the findings of this study may enlighten both educators and policy-makers in reforming future practices of global citizenship education at Chinese HEIs. By exploring participants' knowing, wisdom and action of global citizenship, I analyze the distinctive experiences of students from different SES backgrounds. Ultimately, the global citizenship education gap is a complex outcome derived from both the disparity in educational resources and also differences in students' "imagined future" (Ball et al., 1999). Through this study, I call attention to the global citizenship education gap among students of different SES and advocate for a more inclusive global citizenship education.

1.5 Overview of Chapters

This study is organized into seven chapters. Chapter 1 presents a brief introduction to the study, including the research context, problem statement, research questions, and study significance. Chapter 2 reviews related literature on citizenship, global citizenship, and global citizenship education in China, respectively. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework that was applied to this study. Chapter 4 provides a detailed description of the research design, participant recruitment process, personal information for each participant, ethical considerations, as well as a reflection on the researcher's role in this study. Chapter 5 presents and analyzes research findings, while Chapter 6 discusses the reviewed literature and findings. Finally, Chapter 7 concludes with study implications and presents recommendations for future research in related areas.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

This chapter reviews the considerable literature on global citizenship, global citizenship education, citizenship, and citizenship education in China, respectively. It ends with a discussion on a so-called global citizenship education gap between students' SES and civic perceptions and participation.

2.1 Global Citizenship and Global Citizenship Education

In this global age of mobility and migration, there are inevitable outcomes including wider economic and human exchanges, improved efficiency of communication, as well as a broader sense of international imagined identity (Papademetriou, 2007; Castles & Miller, 2009; Bates, 2012). Changes happen not only in the macro-level with respect to politics or the economy, but also at the micro-level including personal self-identification and citizen behaviours (DeJaeghere, 2002).

Many scholars refer to citizenship and citizenship education as “flexible, debated and contested” concepts that were developed as part of a wider transition in response to multiple social changes (Law, 2011). In this global age, citizens are involved in local, national and global affairs, both intentionally and unintentionally. The emerging notion of global citizenship has challenged traditional conceptions of citizenship as based on land boundaries and nation-states. Davies et al. (2006) indicates that the aim of citizenship and citizenship education is to understand and participate in a global contemporary society. In this sense, it is both natural and inevitable for contemporary citizenship education to broaden its curriculum to include global elements.

Although the notion of global citizenship and global citizenship education has been criticized for creating “an identity crisis” in traditional citizenship and citizenship education, many scholars believe the two concepts do not contradict each other; rather, they are compatible because the notion of global citizenship originates from the conception of national citizenship (Law, 2011). Jiang and Xu (2014) elaborate on the inherent consistency between national citizenship and global citizenship by arguing that the former is the foundation for the latter. To this end, individuals can have both of these citizenships simultaneously. Put differently, one can only be a qualified global citizen if they are first qualified as a national citizen. In this sense, it is worthwhile to look at traditional citizenship and citizenship education in discussing global citizenship and global citizenship education.

For centuries, discussions pertaining to citizenship and citizenship education have been developed and practiced within various social, political, and cultural contexts. Nation-states are often seen as a pre-condition for the very conception of citizenship (Isin et al., 1999). Put differently, citizenship is often understood in combination with nationalism (McNamara, 2005), thereby linking citizens with nation-states (Koopmans et al., 2005),

Dimitrov and Boyadjieva (2009) conclude that citizenship is “the system of values, efforts and institutionalized practices required for creating and maintaining conditions for living together in a complex society” (p. 159). In this sense, citizenship supports national stability and development. Similarly, Lister (1998) notes that citizenship involves two dimensions: “to be a citizen” (enjoy rights) and “act as a

citizen” (take responsibilities) (p.328). Given the legitimated rights and duties included in citizenship, citizenship is frequently described as a legal status (Simpsons & Weiner, 1989).

Marshall (1950 & 1964) proposes three interrelated and overlapping types of citizenship: civil, political, and social citizenship. Civil citizenship is ensured by civil rights, which provides citizens with individual rights and liberty. Political citizenship describes citizens’ exercise and participation in political affairs. Finally, social citizenship provides citizens with social security including welfare, health, and education. Notably, citizenship and citizenship education have been criticized as “Western products” that generally privilege Western ideas and knowledge. For this reason, Marshall’s explication of these three citizenship types has been criticized for failing to explain concepts of citizenship in socialist countries such as China (Dickson, 2002; Solinger, 1999).

Globalization is an important contributor to citizenship and citizenship education. Based on McGrew’s work (2000) on globalization, Schultz (2007) presents three approaches to global citizenship. *The neoliberal* analysis praises globalization’s role in the emergence of a “borderless” global market. In this framework, global citizenship is related to economic success and praises the individual’s transnational mobility. Within *the radical* approach, globalization is the catalyst for polarization of capital, intensification of conflicts, and oppression. This scheme therefore requires a broader understanding of the complex processes involved in structural inequality and oppression. Schultz (2007) notes that, “motivated by strong ethical positions of social

justice, these global citizens engage in direct actions aimed at forcing radical economic, political, and social change” (p.253). In *the transformationalist* approach, globalization is a multi-dimensional concept involving “cultural, security, environmental, criminal, legal and political” aspects (McGrew, 2000, p.351). This conception understands the complex connection and relationship between all people living within this “shared planet” (Schultz, 2007, p. 257). This viewpoint engages global citizens in creating a more just and inclusive community that respects diversities and nurtures compassion for the marginalized. A qualified global citizen has the capacity to participate in international affairs, endeavours to pursue social justice and equality, and respects diversity. In short, global citizenship is about a sense of belonging to a broader community—namely, the world village.

Undeniably, globalization has blurred the boundaries between nation-states and compressed the world into this ‘world village’ with the help of technology. To better prepare citizens for this global village, global citizenship education works to “empower learners to engage and assume active roles both locally and globally to face and resolve challenges and ultimately to become proactive contributors to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable world”(UNESCO, 2016c, p. 2). According to the UNESCO (2014) guidelines, global citizenship education aims to: assure that learners are informed and critically literate; cultivate learners’ cognitive and non-cognitive skills, attitude, and values; and enhance learners’ initiative and capacity to participate in both local and global projects. Davis (2006) points out that global citizenship curriculum framework involves multiple concepts. Specifically,

global citizenship education is considered as trans-disciplinary in that it simultaneously addresses concepts ranging from human rights, equity and peace to international understandings and agreements. Correspondingly, Andreotti (2010) underlines the importance for global citizens to coordinate and collaborate with others “beyond geographical, ideological, linguistic, or other representational boundaries” (p. 234). Similarly, Atchoarena (2019) points out that global citizenship education plays an essential role in developing “informed citizens” that contribute to the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Generally speaking, many scholars approve of global citizenship education as an important goal in the world’s current educational agenda (Schultz, 2007; Jiang & Xu, 2014).

2.2 Citizenship and Citizenship Education in China

As stated earlier, Western notions of citizenship and citizenship education are inadequate in fully explaining a Chinese-specific conception of global citizenship (Law, 2011). Thus, in exploring the concept of global citizenship and global citizenship education, it is an indispensable step to first consider its foundation—Chinese citizenship and citizenship education. Qin (2014) indicates that contemporary Chinese citizenship combines the “inheritance of tradition” with “reference to practice in other countries” (pp.43-46). To this end, it is necessary to review the long Chinese history of civilization and citizenship development.

Though the term citizenship and citizenship education was coined and developed in Western society, many scholars argue that traditional Chinese philosophy provides

valuable ideological support for the development of citizenship and citizenship education in ancient China; this has profound influence in a global era. Li (2009) points out that the notion of citizenship can be traced back to various discussions by ancient Chinese philosophers in works such as *The Analects* by Confucius, *The Dao De Jing* by Laozi, *Works of Mencius* by Mencius, and *Works of Xunzi* by Xun Kuang. As a state-supported orthodoxy, the prevalence of Confucianism has contributed to the state's stability throughout various Chinese imperial dynasties. Although Western scholars have issued various critiques on Confucianism (Huntington, 1991; Shils, 1996), Confucianism still holds a valuable and irreplaceable role in understanding and further fostering Chinese citizenship and citizenship education development.

Li (2009) suggests that concept of citizen can be associated with the Chinese term *shi* (the intellectuals) and *min* (the common people). In Confucianism, *shi* and *min* are the core elements in the politics and governance of a nation. Confucianism also highlights individual people as the basis for nation-states (*minben*). Though Confucian notion of *minben* served for Chinese feudal regime at that time, its description of the relations between citizens and nation-states is still valuable for contemporary Chinese civic society.

In fact, many Chinese scholars describe moral education as an essential component of Chinese citizenship education. Qin (2014) argues that emphasis on moralization can be traced back to ancient China wherein ethics were highly regarded as the foundation for Chinese culture. According to *the Analects*, Confucianism highlights four educational dimensions: “*wen* (knowledge), *xing* (ethics), *zhong*

(loyalty), and *xin* (faithfulness)” (The Analects, 7.25). This emphasis of ethics (also loyalty and faithfulness) in education can be seen as a prelude to the contemporary practice of citizenship education, which represents the pursuit of a stable and moral society. Additionally, Qin (2014) describes the focus on collectivism in Chinese education by many Chinese ancient intellectuals. Thus, ancient Chinese literature on moralization and collectivism provides valuable historical and cultural insights for today’s Chinese citizenship education development.

It is commonly acknowledged that the concept of citizenship was not seriously introduced and discussed in China until the late 19th by pioneer intellectuals including Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao (Zarrow, 1997). The prevalence of Western notions of citizenship and citizenship education reflect a previous desire to support ideological reforms against traditional Chinese feudal indoctrination. Since then, multiple systematic studies and discussions about citizenship and citizenship education have emerged in China.

As cited earlier, Western conceptions and practices of citizenship and citizenship education have influenced China’s respective practices. By reviewing citizenship education practices in America, Germany and Singapore, Qin (2014) concludes that a qualified citizen “must first understand the relationship between citizens and the country properly, understand one’s position in the country, and know how to participate in national political affairs effectively ” (p.48). Echoing Qin’s conclusion, Zhu and Feng (2013) suggest that citizenship education should facilitate citizens to understand and handle the relations. Similarly, Xiao (2002) concludes three elements

of citizenship education, involving educating for national identity, participation of national affairs, and contribution to nation-states. Ultimately, citizenship cannot be purely interpreted as civic rights and obligations; instead, citizenship is a concept that conflates civic awareness and patriotism with features like morality.

Zhu and Feng (2006) divide the development of Chinese citizenship education into three stages since the establishment of New China in the year of 1949. In the first stage, citizenship education served for political needs. According to Zhu and Feng (2006), although the 1954 Constitution clarified the legal status of citizens, legitimized civic rights and obligations, but referring to the 1954 Constitution, the 1975 Constitution, and the 1978 Constitution, citizenship was emphasized as the obligation of obedience and service and civic rights were less addressed. Feng (2006) describes how the former paramount leader Mao Zedong addressed China's educational goals as to "enable the educated to become workers who have thoroughly developed morally, intellectually and physically and have gained socialist consciousness and culture" (p.86). In the second stage, since the late 1970s, along with economic reforms and the opening up policy, Chinese citizenship education played an important role in assisting economic development. According to the *Education Law of the People's Republic of China* (MOE, 1995), "education must serve the socialist modernization drive and must be combined with production and physical labor in order to train for the socialist cause builders and successors who are developed in an all-round way-morally, intellectually and physically" (Article 5). In this context, the function of citizenship education was to serve economic development

and modernization. In the third stage, Zhu and Feng (2006) referred to the notion of the *Scientific Outlook on Development* coined by former Chinese leader Hu Jintao which placed people at the core. In this context, Chinese citizenship education became people-oriented by emphasizing on people's need.

Although Zhu and Feng (2006) presented three stages of Chinese citizenship education along with its shift of focus, it is believed by many scholars that Chinese citizenship functions as an ideological and/or political tool by government to cultivate informed citizens with socialist's values. Similarly, Dimitrov and Boyadjieva (2009) refer to citizenship education as an instrument for nation-states to ensure and strengthen their governance and supremacy. Law (2011) defines citizenship education as "a kind of political-socialization project" (p.4). Moreover, Kennedy (2014) highlights the link between the ideological nature of Chinese citizenship and citizenship education and the Communist Party of China (CPC). In this vein, Lee (2005) points out the nature of Chinese citizenship education as "rather directive" in that it serves a political-ideological purpose and conveys a government's ideological and political values (p.210). Finally, Fairbrother (2014) argues that Chinese citizenship and citizenship education dedicates itself to the solidarity and legitimation of this CPC-led state. These researchers verify the ideological-political nature of Chinese citizenship education.

According to Zhong and Lee (2008), it is worth noting that the term citizenship education is neither commonly used nor practiced in either Chinese literature or in official curriculum. This is likely because the term itself has been routinely criticized

as a “Western product” embedded in Western ideology. Instead, Chinese citizenship education is often described in equivalent terms as political education, ideological education, or moral education. Wang (2008) presents four categories of Chinese citizenship education including *minzu yu guojia jiaoyu* (civic education), *quanli yu zeren jiaoyu* (ideological education), *daode yu wenming jiaoyu* (moral education), and *minzhu yu fazhi jiaoyu* (political education). This can be attributed to the goal of socialist citizenship which highlights morality, patriotism, collectivism, and political/ideological orientation (Feng, 2006). Feng also suggests that future Chinese citizenship education will continue this trend. Similarly, Lee (2005) argues that the role of moral education (as well as ideological education or political education) are essential components of Chinese citizenship education. Chinese citizenship education is practiced in schools through multiple compulsory courses involving Marxism, Leninism, and Mao Zedong’s theories and other related socialist texts. In the Article 6 of Education Law of People’s Republic of China, the State mandates curriculum on patriotism, collectivism, and socialism, as well as the importance of ideals, ethics, discipline, the legal system, national defense, and national unity. To this end, citizenship education has been identified as “an ideological instrument” to ensure China’s social and political stability (Zhao & Fairbrothers, 2011).

In recognition of the increased importance of citizenship education, China has released and implemented a series of related policies. Specifically, Qin (2014) finds three modes of civic education in China. First, Qin (2014) observes that top Chinese universities have established citizenship education research institutes. These institutes

produce academic literature on citizenship and also hold relevant conferences. Social organizations and leading media also play an important role in guiding the acquisition of citizenship education. Meanwhile, many provinces have reformed their citizenship education curriculum to better enhance and foster student's civic awareness. Citizenship education is officially conducted from elementary school to university. In Chinese academia, studies related to citizenship and citizenship education focus on translating related foreign literature, reviewing relevant China's practices of citizenship and citizenship education, and introducing basic concepts and theories.

Additionally, globalization has forced several changes to citizenship and citizenship education. As described earlier, global citizenship is not a legal status; thus, discussion and advocacy for global citizenship education need to highlight that it is a voluntary status. Yu (2014) points out the need for "world (global) citizenship education" in the face of globalization given "China's rapid emergence as the world's new superpower" (p.85). Moreover, given the seeming inevitability of globalization, global citizenship is an important trend within many countries' educational curricula. Given that the specific Chinese context highly values nationalism, some scholars argue that global citizenship education in China should be integrated with traditional citizenship education to better serve national interests, "as an essential ideological-political tool" in the global era (Law, 2007). According to Law (2011), China must "adopt multileveled-multidimensional citizenship frameworks" in response to globalization (p. 2). In this context, Goren and Yemini (2017) pointed out an obvious feature of Chinese global citizenship as "providing skills" to enhance

citizens' competency in the global labor market and to increase China's international influence (p. 175).

2.3 HEIs and Citizenship Education

There is widespread recognition that higher education plays a crucial role in citizenship education. Lawry et al. (2006) note that a key aim of universities' curriculum is to prepare qualified citizens. Specifically, Smith (1994) refers to the purpose of higher education as enhancing students' active participation in social issues. Although universities' emphasis on fostering citizenship education declined somewhat during the twentieth century, universities seem re-determined to foster students' civic engagement in recent practices (Talcott, 2005; Levine, 2007). Li (2011) clearly explains the role of Chinese HEIs as "civic actors" involving both Western and Chinese scholars' perspectives. Hill et al. (2008) argue that education functions to cultivate qualified citizens in order "to meet productive need[s]" (p.69). In sum, HEIs have both the opportunity and the responsibility to cultivate students' civic perceptions and prepare them for civic participation (Colby et al., 2000).

After the establishment of new China post-reforms, the civic function of Chinese HEIs serve as "a tool of political indoctrination and as an important agent in the struggle between classes and lines (socialism and capitalism)" (Tu, 2011, p.41). As previously noted, the year 1978 marks a historical turning point in China in which former leader Deng Xiaoping enacted a series of reforms. From then on, Chinese HEIs stepped into a new role (Hayhoe, 1996) with an express focus on civic education

as a key feature in “educating and cultivating citizens” (Tu, 2011).

Zha (2012) suggests an emerging Chinese model of the university which should “reconcile its indigenous roots with aspects of the Western model” (p.471). Many scholars believe that Confucianism has a age-long multifaceted influence on Chinese higher education. *Taixue* in the Western Han dynasty and *Shuyuan* in the late Tang dynasty are often regarded as the predecessor of Chinese higher educational institutions (Li & Hayhoe, 2012). In the *Great Learning*, the goal of higher education is stated as to “let one’s innate virtue shine forth, to renew the people, and to rest in the highest good” (Li & Hayhoe, 2012). Given this, Chinese higher education has a long history of citizenship cultivation.

As widely observed, HEIs play a key role in global citizenship education (Davis, 2006). Jacoby and Brown (2009) state that the fundamental role of universities is to engage students’ active and effective participation in both local and global affairs. In 2017, Deputy Minister of Education Lin Huiqing highlighted the role of HEIs to assist and service the Chinese Communist Party government in delivering ideological and moral education for Chinese citizens at a global age (Baisotti, 2019).

Universities often hold a supportive attitude towards global citizenship education in the face of globalization driven by governmental power, the market and civil society (Lee & Leung, 2006; Yu, 2011). Globalization has expanded and highlighted the function of higher education to cultivate learners with both global consciousness and global competence (Han, 2020). Moreover, contemporary HEIs are increasingly

diversified in terms of students, faculty members, scholars, and so forth (Tu, 2011). In this context, HEIs are “a principal catalyst and defender of global civil society and its ethos” (Keane, 2003, p.137).

Xing and Ng (2013) clearly state that “higher education has to contribute to the public good by training more global citizens with a strong sense of civic responsibility and the multidisciplinary skills needed to participate as active citizens in an increasingly complex and interconnected world” (p.3). Globalization without doubt brings HEIs multifaceted opportunities and challenges. Huang (2013) points out several peculiar challenges for Chinese HEIs involving the challenge to balance national culture and new global value and the difficulty in the face of the widening SES gap.

Overall, it is evident that Chinese universities should continue to prioritize global citizenship education in response to China’s increasingly active role in this global era. In one sense, global citizenship education is valuable to increase students’ competitiveness in the globalized labor market. In another, this also benefits schools by increasing their competitiveness in the education market. Ultimately, universities have a responsibility to educate students with creativity and passion for the future, which benefits everyone living in an increasingly global landscape.

2.4 Global Citizenship Education in China

Alongside the multifaceted impact of globalization, China has made various active responses from both economic, political and cultural dimensions. Although global

citizenship has yet been clearly stated by Chinese government, China endeavors to cultivate citizens in a global community. In 2005, China's paramount leader Xi Jinping delivered a speech titled "Working Together to Forge a New Partnership of Win-win Cooperation and Create a Community of Shared Future for Mankind" at the General Debate of the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly. Later in the year of 2017 and 2018, the notion "building a human community with shared future" has been officially added into the general program of the *Constitution of the Communist Party of China* and the preface of the *Constitution of the People's Republic of China* respectively. Though multiple criticism arose, it is evident that China endeavors to contribute to this global community. Accordingly, Chinese HEIs makes multifaceted responses to Xi's thought.

Chinese global citizenship education includes national citizenship and global citizenship along an educational continuum (Wood and Kong, 2020; Yemini, 2018). Contemporary Chinese citizenship education, therefore, can be seen as a combination of Confucianism and Marxist-Lenninst socialist ideology (the continuum) with global elements (Baisotti, 2019).

With respect to national citizenship education, many scholars note that the primary purpose of Chinese global citizenship education is to serve its national interest (Yu, 2014; Feng, 2006). Yu (2014) describes moral education as the "home" for Chinese global citizenship education. He argues that there is an urgent need to reform traditional moral education framework in the face of globalization and the over-stated role of patriotism and nationalism in previous moral education practices.

Similarly, Feng (2006) points out that moral education, political education, and ideological education are still major modes of addressing both citizenship education and global citizenship. Accordingly, China's Ministry of Education has released relevant documents to further enhance and improve moral education and ideological-political education in Chinese HEIs. The MOE highlights four compulsory courses including *Introduction of Maxism*, *Introduction to Mao Zedong thought*, *Deng Xiaoping Theory and the Important Thought of "Three Represents"*, *Outline of Chinese Modern History*, and *Moral Education and Law Basics*. At the same time, the MOE also underlines the necessity of offering optional courses such as *Situation and Policy*, *Contemporary World Economy and Politics*, and so forth. This combination maintains emphasis on national citizenship while adding global elements.

Since China ended three decades of relative self-isolation and sought to re-join the world economy, education has been closely linked with the economy as an instrument for China's economic modernization (Ngok & Kwong, 2003; Rosen, 1997; Chen, 1999). Ngok and Kwong (2003) observe that the post-Mao government redefined the function of education as "improving China's economic competitiveness and its place in the regional and global markets" in response to globalization (p. 164). In this sense, Chinese education shifted its focus to "develop skilled human resources" to meet the demands and competitions of global labour market (Ngok & Kwong, 2003, p.164). Li (2017) reconfirms this perspective in his review of 22 Chinese educational policies released since the twentieth century. He concludes with a

five-step rationale for Chinese educational development: “Chinese leaders take the view that educational reform [ER] will result in better quality of education and student achievement [QE/SA], which will in turn bring about a higher quality labor force [QLF]. A higher quality labor force will tremendously benefit the country’s modernization, development, and economic growth [MD/EG] and eventually lead to China’s national achievement and competitiveness [NAC].” (Li, 2017, p.135). In the *Resolution on the Further Development of Educational Reform and Quality Education* in 1999, the Chinese government again affirmed the role of education in economic globalization (Ngok & Kwong, 2003). Consequently, the Chinese education system tends to over-emphasize skill teaching to prepare citizens for economic development and competition with less concern for social responsibility, global consciousnesses for diversity and social justice, and so forth (Yu, 2014; Goren and Yemini, 2017).

Foreign language education is regarded as a vital skill in global communication; thus, it has an increasingly imperative role in cultivating global citizenship in the Chinese context (Chen, 2014; Kan, 2013; Goren & Yemini, 2017). Kennedy (2014) indicates the importance of bilingualism in the face of globalization (p. 6). Recently, China’s Minister of Education released a series of policies regarding English language education; accordingly, public enthusiasm towards English language learning is relatively high across China (Gil, 2016). According to the *Guidelines on College English Teaching* (MOE, 2017), the value of college English education is clearly defined as “to satisfy the demands of national development, and a variety of short and long-term prospective needs of students” (Cheng & Wei, 2019, p.7). In recognizing

the importance of foreign language education in global citizenship education, college English is proposed as an important compulsory course for the majority of college students (MOE, 2007 & 2017). Kan (2013) further elaborates that the function of foreign language teaching is not solely about language as a tool for communication; rather, language teaching is often integrated with instruction about foreign cultures, politics, societies, and historical facts. Some universities provide various courses in English “as an index of their degree of internationalization” (Huang, 2013, p.21). However, Huang (2013) argued that the “over-exaggerate” of foreign language education may be detrimental for Chinese cultural traditions.

Importantly, Chinese education is multidimensional under globalization; consequently, education focuses on increasing cooperation and connections with the international community. Thus, increasing numbers of Chinese students are sent abroad for further studies; similarly, foreign students are similarly encouraged to study in China. Numerous Chinese scholars and intellectuals participate in cross-border communication and conferences. Additionally, Chinese HEIs have developed large numbers of student exchange programs. Many Chinese educational institutions have established multifaceted partnership with foreign educational institutions such as Confucius Institutes, international joint universities, exchange student programs and so forth (Zha, 2012). Finally, China cooperates with many international organizations including UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, and the World Bank for educational development (Ngok & Kwong, 2003).

Law (2011) finds that nation-states compete to host international events; consequently, they take advantage of prominent international events to enhance global citizenship within nation-states. On one hand, nation-states use international affairs as a springboard to present their national culture and economic accomplishments to the world. On the other, hosting international events stimulates national and civic development in multiple aspects ranging from infrastructure construction to global citizenship education. Similarly, Collins (2006) suggests that international events foster the development and modernization of host cities. Accordingly, scholars have commended the positive impacts of the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the 2010 Shanghai World Exposition in promoting global citizenship in China. For example, in response to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the government hosted the Beijing 2006 International Forum on Citizenship Education for Children and Youth to prepare Chinese youth with global citizenship (Luo and Shi, 2007).

With respect to universities, many Chinese HEIs compete to host international academic conferences and activities. Universities also take opportunities to present their academic achievements to the world and promote students' communicative competence, critical thinking, and cross-cultural perspectives.

2.5 Critiques of Global Citizenship and Global Citizenship Education

Global citizenship remains a contested concept subject to considerable criticism. Importantly, global citizenship is not a legal status in nation-states; rather, it represents belonging to a broader level of humanity (UNESCO, 2014). Put differently,

global citizenship represents a broader membership within a wider global community.

Globalism's view of global citizenship has been particularly criticized. Some scholars highlight the indispensable role and influence of nation-states in organizing and regulating world order and national cohesion; to this end, they worry that globalization diminishes the role and impact of nation-states (Law, 2011; Bowden, 2003). Further, they argue that the concept of global citizenship is a simple "metaphor" originating from an imaginary "world village" that is consequently both abstract and unpractical (Davies, 2006). Although global citizenship encompasses many definitions and scopes, many scholars notes that it lacks a universal definition. Accordingly, Woods and Kong (2020) suggest that global citizenship may become "simply a token term, arbitrarily chosen from a list of similar generic terms..." (p.140). Due to the "fuzziness" and "abstractness" of global citizenship, global citizenship education can be inefficient and confusing for students. Hong (2020) points out two difficulties for implementing global citizenship education in China: first, the difficulty in differentiating national citizenship education and global citizenship education; second, the difficulty in determining appropriate course contents given the specific Chinese context.

This study is premised on another common critique of global citizenship education (Goren & Yemini, 2017). Wood and Kong (2020) worry that global citizenship education privileges Western values and undermines diversity as a "homogenizing abstraction" (p. 139). Taking these critiques further, many scholars notice the reproduction of power and inequity within global citizenship education

(Hörschelmann and El Refaie, 2014). Consequently, some scholars worry that global citizenship is exclusive to elite groups and further deepens social inequities (Roman, 2003; Gardner-McTaggart, 2016).

Global citizenship education can sometimes intensify social hierarchies. That is to say, global citizenship education is largely dependent on the accumulation of capital which may, at least to some extent, reinforce social stratification. According to Oxfam's (2006) conception of global citizenship, a qualified global citizen is someone who celebrates diversity; understands global operations, seeks equity, sustainability, and social justice; is an active participant in local and global communities; and acts responsibly. However, in many cases, individuals need economic capital to acquire certain kinds of cultural, symbolic, and social capital. Yemini (2017) discusses the inequity in global citizenship education in the context of Israel schools, which provides valuable insights for this study. According to her elaboration on "global citizenship's inclusion criteria," the acquisition of global citizenship requires sufficient exposure—namely cultural exposure—to this world village. She particularly highlights the crucial role of "traveling experiences, cultural exposure and social capital functioning as prerequisites for global citizenship" (p.14). To this end, global citizenship education may be an exclusive practice that primarily benefits privileged individuals who can access to these seeming prerequisites.

Though various controversies exist, global citizenship education plays an increasingly imperative role in better preparing citizens for today's interconnected world. Equity is often regarded as one of the key themes of educational research

(Jacob & Holsinger, 2008). SES is often hypothesized as positively connected with citizenship education (Yu, 2011; Putnam, 2000). As stated, less literature addresses the impact of SES on global citizenship education. In this regard, detailed studies on the internal hierarchical structure of global citizenship education are needed. By doing so, a more inclusive global citizenship education may arise.

2.6 The Impact of SES on Global Citizenship Education

As per Sensoy and DiAngelo (2017), “education clearly makes a difference in terms of life opportunities, schooling is a stratified political structure that very predictably and efficiently reproduces rather than eliminates class hierarchy” (p.168).

In this view, education is an uneven and unequal practice that is inherently stratified. According to Hill et al. (2008), education caters to the capitalist economy; accordingly, it reproduces social hierarchy and inequality. Hill argues that the inequalities in capitalism and inequalities in education are reciprocal. Put differently, capitalism leads to economic gaps and educational inequalities; in turn, these gaps reproduce and serve capitalism. Consequently, education itself is inherently stratified. Thus, the educational achievement gap is a product of multiple elements. With regard to SES, the educational achievement gap can be attributed to differences including educational resources, opportunities, and learning experiences (Ho, 2012; Rubin, 2007; Schulz et al., 2010). The PISA 2018 Results confirm that students from less-advantaged family backgrounds are often left behind their peers from more privileged family backgrounds. Thus, differences in students’ SES produces a clear

gap in accessing educational resources. Moreover, students' expectations for the future may be both affected and limited by their financial situation (OECD, 2018).

In academia, SES has been studied and discussed in relation to a range of learning outcomes (Schulz et al., 2010). As per Falk (1994), "citizenship has always been an uneven experience for the peoples of the world" (p.39). Many scholars have explored the "unevenness" of citizenship education with regard to the impact of SES. Goren and Yemini (2017) describe the "civic education gap" in terms of opportunities; students' SES gives them different opportunities which in turn affects their perception and participation in civic practices. The disparities in students' educational resources are not the only contributor to a civic education gap. Tu (2011) identifies that students of higher SES normally play a comparatively more active role in civic participation than their less-privileged peers. She also notes several major obstacles that reduce lower-SES students' active participation in civic activities including "a lack of necessary resources in terms of both money and time, low levels of self-confidence, and a lack of organizational and communication skills" (p.181).

Although only a few studies explicitly mention a global citizenship education gap in terms of socioeconomic status, Wood (2014) suggests that this gap may parallel a similar gap in citizenship education. Individual mobility is generally regarded as a crucial component of social stratification and also a necessary quality for global citizens (Urry, 1999). A range of opportunities can increase individual mobility including traveling, working, immigration, and studying in different countries. Ball and Nikita (2012) suggest that such experiences can reshape individual's worldviews

and values. In Goren and Yemini's 2017 work, they describe "travel experiences, cultural exposure and social capital as prerequisite for global citizenship" (p.15). In this sense, students who are unable to afford relevant experiences may be left behind in terms of global citizenship education.

Another commonly discussed factor of the global citizenship education gap relates to students' "imagined future" (Ball et al., 1999). Goren and Yemini (2017) argue that teachers often perpetuate this gap among their students. According to their study with Israeli teachers, teachers in high-SES schools often emphasized providing skills to better prepare their students for global competition, while teachers at schools with lower-SES students tended to focus on delivering universal values.

As aforementioned, the impact of SES on global citizenship education is insufficiently studied especially in the context of Chinese HEIs. This literature review demonstrates that global citizenship education is tied to socioeconomic status. Moreover, SES plays an essential role in contributing to a global citizenship education gap. Yemini and Maxwell (2018) argue that practices pertaining to global citizenship education "conceive of cosmopolitanism as a form of capital" (p.9). Similarly, Goren and Yemini (2017) refer to global citizenship education as a "zero-sum game" in which students of higher SES are more often exposed to various accesses and opportunities while students from less-privileged family background are often left behind. With its particular emphasis on the impact of SES, the present study seeks to identify whether the global citizenship education gap exists in Chinese HEIs. To this end, I interviewed nine Chinese university students with different SES to explore how

they perceive and participate in global citizenship education and how their perceptions and participation have been shaped by the impact of SES.

CHAPTER 3: Theoretical Framework of the Individual Political Socialization

Process

This study applies Li's theory of the individual political socialization process to examine Chinese University students' experiences of global citizenship education. This chapter describes significance of this theoretical framework and discusses its in guiding this study.

3.1 Related Theoretical Frameworks

Almond and Verba's work, *The Civic Culture: Civic Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (1963), plays a significant role in exploring the conceptions of political culture and political socialization. Almond and Verba conducted a cross-national study among 5000 citizens from the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Italy and Mexico. They systematically explain and compare the five political cultures from various aspects related to civic perceptions and participation, including political cognition, feelings toward government and politics, patterns of partisanship, the obligation of civic participation, civic competence, political allegiance, social relations, civic cooperation and political socialization. However, Almond and Verba's work is not free from criticism. For example, the discussions on potential factors on citizenship such as participants' family background and political, historical and social contexts are insufficient.

A series of studies regarding civic education by the IEA have had a profound influence on citizenship studies. The IEA's first attempt to address civic education

can be traced back to the Six Subject Study in 1971 (Torney-Purta et al., 1975). From 1994, the IEA Civic Education Study (CIVED) started a two-phased project with over 140,000 14-year-olds from 28 countries in total (Torney-Purta et al., 1999; Torney-Purta et al., 2001). In Phase 1, IEA explored the content, context and process of civic education in participating countries. Building on the information collected in Phase 1, the second phase focused on participants' cognition, attitudes and behaviors toward civic education with most data collected in 1999. However, the framework presented by Torney-Purta et al. pays less attention on the political, social, economic and cultural disparities in different countries. Thus, the findings cannot be used for making a comparison among countries.

3.2 A Confucian Model for This Study

Li's (2011) analytic framework combines a psycho-cultural approach with reconstructionism and traditional Chinese culture. In its psycho-cultural approach, Li adopts Almond and Verba's work (1963) on political culture in their investigation of civic participation and political socialization. Building on this, Li (2009) creates an analytic framework to analyze his research on Chinese university students' civic perceptions and participation. Specifically, his work applies the individual political-socialization to three domains including cognitive orientation, affective orientation and evaluative orientation by considering the reciprocal relationship between students' political orientations and their political socialization (Li, 2009). In terms of reconstructionism, Li (2010) explains that its use describes the deficiency of the IEA CIVED framework (Torney-Purta et al., 1999).

Many scholars argue that Western frameworks frequently fail in comprehensively explaining the learning process for Chinese learners. Watkins and Biggs (1996) identify several typical Western misperceptions of the Chinese learners including: “the role of repetition”, “intrinsic and extrinsic motivation”, “collective versus individual orientations” and “internal attributions” (pp. 270-275). They suggest that these cases of “cultural astigmatism” may blur and distort the focus of studies on Chinese learners through the Western lens (Watkins & Biggs, 1996). It is observable that Chinese learners share multiple differences with the Western learners. In terms of the difference on the civil consciousness, Li (2010) concludes one major reason between the West and the East is that the former highlights individual responsibility and individuation, while the latter pays attention to the cultivation of individuality. To better understand the experiences of Chinese students, an indigenous model on the learning experiences of Chinese university students is worth considering. Thus, Li (2011) gains insights from “the classical Confucian theory focusing on the process of individual cultivation process and the lifelong pursuit of moral perfection” (p.72).

Confucianism, without doubt, plays a crucial role in shaping Chinese history, culture, and society. However, while Confucian thoughts have persisted for a remarkable length of time, they have also experienced complex changes over its 25-century long history. The core of Confucianism is *dezhi* (rule of virtue). With the pursuit of *dezhi*, many Confucians refer to the cultivation of *junzi* (wise and virtuous man) as the ultimate goal of education.

As stated in the Record on the Subjects of Education (Book of Rites, 18.2),

education is prioritized before building up nation-states and governing the people. Confucianism understands the learning process as a spiral rotating circle involving three phases: learning (xue), thinking (si), and practicing (xing). In the *Doctrine of the Mean*, five steps of learning is summarized as “study extensively, inquire accurately, reflect carefully, discriminate clearly, practice earnestly.” Another influential Chinese ancient educator, Zhu Xi, has similarly proposed Eight Steps of learning in which learners “begin with the investigation of things and extension of knowledge, going through self-cultivation and the care of family, and end up with the governance of the state and the making of a peaceful world for all people” (Li & Hayhoe, 2012, p.2). Education becomes learning, in which learners acquire cognitive cultivation such as learning of concepts, beliefs, values and so forth. In the second phase, learners re-think and reflect on what they have learned and gain new insights. Confucius believed that thinking was an essential part of the learning process. In the *Analects*, he states that “learning without thinking leads to confusion; thinking without learning ends in danger” (The *Analects*, 2.15). Practicing is the third phase of learning in which learners are expected to translate their learned knowledge into practice (the *Analects*, 13.5).

Building on the above mentioned Confucian thoughts, Li presents an analytic framework for understanding Chinese characteristics in the individual learning process. As shown in Figure. 1, knowing, wisdom, and action are presented as three fundamental components in the individual political-socialization process. Importantly, the three components are correlated rather than separated.



Figure 1. The conceptual framework of the individual political socialization process
(Li, 2011, p. 73)

Civic knowledge is the basis for individual political-socialization; thus, it is placed in the center as the starting point. As shown in Figure 1, civic knowing refers to the cognitive cultivation of concepts, beliefs, values and so forth. In this study, I investigated Chinese university students' global citizenship with knowing at the core. Under the investigation of participants global citizenship knowing, I further discuss the impact of curricula and mass media on cognitive cultivation in Chapter 5.

Based on civic knowing, individuals produce affections and evaluations towards their community, society, nation-state, as well as global society. That is to say, civic wisdom consists of two aspects: affective cultivation (feelings) and evaluative cultivation (attitudes and judgments). In this study, students' feelings, attitudes and judgments towards global citizenship education are understood as global citizenship wisdom. This scale is valuable in analyzing how Chinese university students interpret

their learning experiences as they pertain to global citizenship education. Overall, it helps to understand current limitations of global citizenship education and describes student expectations for future practices.

The outer layer is tied to civic action. Premised on civic knowing and wisdom, individuals participate in civic events. Li (2010) explains that civic action includes three dimensions: personal, familial, and communal (the fundamental stage); in classroom and on campus (the intermediate stage); and local, national, regional and global (the extended stage). During civic action, individuals utilize, reflect, update, and reconstruct their civic knowing and civic wisdom (Li, 2010). In terms of global citizenship action, I examine interviewees with their overseas experiences and social media as two major approaches in which they put global citizenship in practice. Through traveling and studying abroad, students often practice their global citizenship through activities such as going to the churches, participating community services, volunteering and so forth. Through social media, students are often involved in international current affairs including online voting and petition.

The fourth scale of this framework refers to civic relationships. Civic knowing, civic wisdom, and civic action are not isolated from each other; rather, they are strongly interrelated and reciprocal (Li, 2010). Li (2010) highlights the importance of examining the relationship between knowing, wisdom, and action in understanding students' civic perceptions and participation. In this study, I discuss the relationships in Chinese university students' global citizenship knowing, wisdom, and action in order to better interpret their global citizenship education learning process.

This framework was first employed in Li's quantitative research on Chinese university students' experiences of civic engagement, and I found that it was also meaningful and dynamic in my qualitative research which seeks to explore Chinese university students' learning experiences of global citizenship. The continuum of national citizenship education is an essential component of Chinese global citizenship education. In this respect, students' learning process of global citizenship shares many similarities with their citizenship learning process.

Unlike many Western theories on citizenship and global citizenship researches, Li's (2010) framework accounts for China's distinctive history and culture. Confucian thoughts have a far-reaching and profound influence on Chinese students which should not be ignored. Derived from traditional Chinese culture, this framework provides a channel to better interpret how Chinese university students perceive of and participate in global citizenship. This framework allowed me to interpret each interviewee's learning experiences according to the above-mentioned phases and further analyze the impact of SES during each phase of the learning process.

Enlightened by this framework, this study intends to identify the impact of SES on global citizenship education through students' learning process. This theory informs the nature of the interviews which focused on students' knowing, wisdom, and action of global citizenship. This research begins by exploring participants' knowledge of global citizenship, such as their conceptions of global citizenship, and the ways students learn concepts and develop beliefs about global citizenship. Second, this study investigate student's feelings and attitudes towards global citizenship. The

third phase identifies some major ways that Chinese university students participate in global citizenship. The findings are presented from four scales: global citizenship knowing scale, global citizenship wisdom scale, global citizenship action scale, and the relationship scale. Based on these scales, I further discuss the impact of SES on perpetuating a global citizenship education gap from each phase of the learning process.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the study methodology. In the following sections, I detail the research design, data collection, participants' information, ethical concerns, and study validity, respectively. This chapter ends with a reflection on the researcher's role in this study.

4.1 Research Design

Given my intention to understand and interpret Chinese university students' perceptions and experiences of global citizenship education, I adopted a qualitative case study method. Merriam (1998) notes that qualitative research studies social situations to understand the meaning of people's behaviours and experiences. Specifically, qualitative research attributes experiences to situation-specific contexts in order to understand and interpret the complexity of a person's sociocultural world. Patton (2002) argues that qualitative study enables researchers to deeply explore the inner workings of certain phenomena (Patton, 2002). Thus, qualitative research largely relies on the participants' perceptions toward the situation under investigation; put differently, qualitative research posits that gathering these responses are assets in understanding society, often with the intention of positively transforming it (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, I endeavoured to understand students' learning experiences in order to make suggestions that increase the inclusivity of global education. For this reason, a qualitative study aligned with the intended purpose of this investigation.

McEwan and McEwan (2003) note that case studies can effectively benefit researchers' understanding of a particular human behaviour. Thus, a case study approach can help me to gain an in-depth understanding of students' experiences as they pertain to global citizenship education. The essence of a case study methodology is to holistically investigate a contemporary, real-world phenomenon (the so-called "case"), particularly when there are no clear-cut distinctions between phenomenon and context (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2014). Thus, case studies examine a particular issue and can collect rich data from participants' knowledge of personal and shared experiences (Merriam, 1998). This research method concentrates on specific phenomenon within a particular context, bringing depth and breadth to the study with multiple alternative data collection tools that stimulate a comprehensive interpretation of the data that combines both the researcher's and participants' perspectives (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003). In the present study, I explore the learning process of global citizenship as the specific phenomenon in the specific context of CHEIs.

Given the features of the case study as described above, this approach supports my intent to deepen my understanding of Chinese university students' perceptions of and participation in global citizenship education. Zainal (2007) suggests that case studies are most effectively when they include a "limited number of individuals as the subject of study" (p.1). Consequently, in this study, I recruited nine participants for individual semi-structured interviews. The limited number of participants enables me to complete a thorough analysis of each individual's perspectives and experiences.

With respect to the research questions, the two guiding questions for this study

are as follows: How do Chinese university students perceive and participate in global citizenship education? What is the potential impact of SES on Chinese university students' learning process in global citizenship education? Consistent with Yin (2014)'s suggestion that case studies are valuable for exploratory and explanatory studies, this case study approach helps answer my research questions.

Notably, the case study method has notable detractors in academia. Scholarly criticism of the case study method often focuses on its context-specific nature. However, Creswell and Creswell (2018) defend the value of qualitative research as valued interpretations generated from a specific context and site. Greene and Caracelli (1997) similarly posit this particularity feature as a "hallmark of good qualitative research". This contextualized feature of the case study aligns with the initial goal of this study: developing a thorough understanding individual experience in order to make generalizable suggestions and recommendations. In-depth case studies allow the researcher to dig into the data and better interpret specific experiences. Thus, the context-specific nature of case study assist me in this analysis of students' stories.

4.2 Participants

Coyne (1997) highlights importance of selecting appropriate participants for the particular research purpose. Given the nature of this study, I selected study participants who were undergraduates in a Chinese university at the time of their interviews. The selected university is a public research university, under direct guidance by the Ministry of Education. It holds the membership of various

educational projects, such as the Project 211, the Project 985 and the Double First Class University Plan. Since this study is purposefully comparing different experiences across various SES, interested study participants were categorized into three comparison groups: low-income family (annual household income below ¥ 100,000 RMB), middle-income family (annual household income between ¥ 100,000 RMB to ¥ 500,000 RMB), and higher-income family (annual household income above ¥ 500,000 RMB). This criterion was guided by Ning Jizhe's (Director of the National Bureau of Statistics) definition of Chinese middle-class, which encompasses an annual income varying between ¥ 100,000 RMB to ¥ 500,000 RMB (Renmin ribao [People's Daily], 2019).

After I received ethics approval (Appendix A) from Western University, I contacted and invited two initial participants through my personal network. I also posted a website ad (Appendix B) to attract potential participants. Initial participants were asked to pass along the basic information about this research, such as themes and goals. Meanwhile, they were encouraged to forward the website ad and share their feelings and experiences of the interview with their friends. Notably, this was not a mandatory requirement of the study. Thanks to the help of my initial participants who introduced the project to many of their classmates and friends, I gained a sufficient number of student participants to complete the study. All potential participants were required to read through the Letter of Information (Appendix C), which clearly stated that this study was voluntary and that their personal information would be confidential. Participants were also asked to sign the consent form

(Appendix D) to participate in this research and authorize the use of audio-recordings during the interviews. Participants were assured of study confidentiality; to protect participants' personal information, this analysis uses pseudonyms. Given the desired interest in SES status, the recruitment ended with 9 participants evenly divided across the three comparison groups.

I categorized Li, Bei, and Tao as low-income families based on their self-reporting of annual household income. They shared several similarities in terms of their personal experiences. All three participants were annual scholarship winners. Additionally, they all relied on several part-time jobs to fund their living expenses. None of them had overseas experiences including traveling, studying, volunteering, and so forth. Interestingly, they all participated in student associations within the first few months of their university life, but quit soon after. Li is set to graduate this year and has already found an ideal job following many job interviews.

Ming, Man and Sha are grouped as middle-income family. All of the three have various overseas experiences. Both Man and Sha participated in several volunteer programs, both at home and abroad. Man studied in a British elementary school for approximately three years while her father completed his PhD program in Britain. Ming and Sha are in their final year of university. Ming plans to complete his Master's degree at a first-tier university in Shanghai. Sha has applied for some Master's programs in Australia. Finally, Man states that she is still considering future plans at this stage.

Jie, Rui and Zhu are listed as higher-income families. Jie helped organize a nation-wide volunteering organization. Jie and Zhu both had various overseas volunteering experiences. Meanwhile, all three have extensive travel experiences. Jie has an elder sister working in the US while Rui has two elder sisters living in Australia; both stated that they often spent their entire summer/winter vacations with their sisters in these countries. In addition, both Rui and Zhu have already applied for Master's programs in American universities. Jie also plans to pursue further study abroad; at the time of the interviews, he was preparing for IELTS.

Table 1: Participants' Profiles

Name	Gender	Educational Background	Family Background
Li	Female	Year Four, Insurance	Low-income family Rural area Has an elder brother and a younger sister Father: elementary school education; works as a taxi driver Mother: elementary school education; is a stay at home wife/mother
Bei	Female	Year Two, English	Low-income family Urban area

			<p>Father: elementary school education; works in a restaurant</p> <p>Mother: elementary school education; works in a local supermarket</p>
Tao	Male	Year One, Network engineering	<p>Low-income family</p> <p>Rural area</p> <p>Has two younger sisters</p> <p>Father: elementary school education; works as a security guard</p> <p>Mother: no education; is a stay at home wife/mother</p>
Ming	Male	Year Four, Statistics	<p>Middle-income family</p> <p>Urban area</p> <p>Father: BA education; works for the government</p> <p>Mother: BA education; works as a bank manager</p>
Man	Female	Year Three, Chinese painting	<p>Middle-income family</p> <p>Urban area</p> <p>Father: PhD education; works as professor in a university (Computer Science)</p> <p>Mother: PhD education; works as professor in a university (English Literature)</p>

Sha	Female	Year Four, English	Middle-income family Urban area (Beijing) Father: middle school education; works for the government Mother: middle school education; works for the government
Jie	Male	Year Three, Law	Higher-income family Urban area (Hangzhou) Has an elder sister Father: BA education; runs family business Mother: vocational school education; runs family business
Rui	Female	Year Four, International economics and trade	Higher-income family Urban area Has two elder sisters Father: BA education; owns family business Mother: BA education; is a stay at home wife/mother
Zhu	Female	Year Four, Polymer material and	Higher-income family Urban area Father: Master's education; works for a national

		engineering	company Mother: BA education; works for the government
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4.3 Data Collection

In this study, I used semi-structured interviews for data collection (Patton, 2002). Semi-structured interviews assist in acquiring an in-depth understanding of students' personal experiences and conceptions about global citizenship education. Interviews were conducted through conversation in order to extract valuable information. Conversations were supported by purposeful and mostly open-ended questions. Before conducting the interviews, a list of predetermined questions (Appendix E) were designed to start conversations and guide interviews.

This study engaged in face-to-face interviews for four reasons: first, in-person conversations help establish quicker researcher-participant relationships; second, researchers are available to exert “control over the line of questioning” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p.188); third, it is easier for interviewees to share personal perspectives in a face-to-face setting; fourth, individual interviews foster effective and efficient conversations. It is important for researchers to have thorough and sufficient information to support further analysis. Importantly, the use of a semi-structured interview provides both the researcher with in-depth data and the interviewees with the freedom to share their personal experiences and perspectives.

All nine interviews were conducted separately in approximately one hour. The

interview locations were chosen at the participants' convenience, while three interviews were conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, all interviews were conducted in Mandarin to ensure accuracy and efficiency of the interviews since all participants identified Mandarin as their first language. Before completing any data analysis, I transcribed the interviews verbatim and then translated the Chinese transcripts into English. Both the Chinese version and the English version of transcripts were sent back to participants for review to ensure accuracy.

4.4 Ethical Consideration

With regard to ethical concerns, this research strictly follows Western's ethical research guidelines. First, I applied for permission through the Office of Human Research Ethics of Western University. Once this project was approved, I began to contact potential participants who fulfilled the selection criteria.

All participants were required to read through and sign for the Letter of Information (Appendix C) and the Consent Form (Appendix D). They were sufficiently informed that their participation in this study was voluntary and confidential. To protect their privacy, their personal information would be protected by pseudonyms. Finally, all participants were informed that the interview would be audio-recorded for further analysis.

In addition, the Interview Guidelines (Appendix E) were distributed to every potential participant to ensure transparency. Participants were informed about the theme and goal of the study in advance. They were also given the right to abstain from answering any sensitive questions and encouraged to freely express their

perspectives. Additionally, they were guaranteed the right to withdraw from this study at any time.

4.5 Validity

Zhao (2019) concludes that three key principles guide research validity: “internal validation, researcher bias and research ethics” (p. 93). To promote internal validity, I adopted member checking as the dominant method to ensure credibility. Merriam (2009) advocates for the use of member checks as a valuable way to add trustworthiness in qualitative studies. After the interviews, I transcribed the Chinese interviews and translated the data into English. During transcription, I checked the transcripts frequently to avoid obvious mistakes. To avoid any misunderstandings or inaccuracies, I shared the transcripts with the interviewees via email before completing my data analysis. In addition, I used detailed descriptions of the findings and presented negative information to make sure the results are rich and realistic (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 200).

With regard to researcher bias, Merriam (2009) highlights the importance for researchers to clarify their own personal experiences. Given the importance of the researcher’s role in avoiding bias, I reflected on my position in this research to minimize potential bias. In consideration of research ethics, as discussed earlier, this study followed Western’s ethical research guidelines strictly.

4.6 Limitations

Several limitations exist in this study. First, given the relatively small sample size, the

findings of this study are context-specific and limited in breadth. My data source is limited to interviews. Future studies could explore the use of additional data sources to add research validity, including document, survey, and observation. Meanwhile, the experiences of these nine participants cannot encompass the rich experiences of all Chinese university students. Therefore, the findings of the study are not generalizable to all of Chinese university students. Future studies could focus on quantitative or mixed research methods to broaden the participant pool.

Second, as stated the scope of this study focuses on the Chinese context, all participants were undergraduate students at the same Chinese university. Since Chinese HEIs are diverse in terms of history, culture, policies, structures, and so on, it would be valuable to explore the diverse learning experiences in different universities. Hopefully, the present study may shed light on future studies on the impact of SES on global citizenship education in other contexts.

Third, this study focuses only on nine individual students' learning experiences of global citizenship. This is to provide both policy-makers and educators in HEIs an important perspective that is often neglected in policy and curriculum development. Parents also play a critical role in global citizenship education. In this sense, alternative voices need to be studied.

4.7 Researcher's Position

It important for researchers to properly position themselves in their studies in order to appreciate the extent to which their own experiences significantly influence their

interpretation and understanding (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that the researcher serves as the primary instrument in conducting research. That is to say, they argue that the researcher's personal experience plays an indispensable role in influencing the entire research process.

As for my own experiences, I prefer to describe myself from a middle-income family. After finishing my undergraduate program, I came to Canada to pursue my Master's degree. When the notion of global citizenship first came to me, I asked myself many times, "am I a qualified global citizen"? My answer was always uncertain. I consider my overseas experiences involving traveling, volunteering, and studying as major contributors to my own global citizenship. Sensoy and DiAngelo's (2017) discussion about classism triggered my interest in exploring experiences regarding to global citizenship education for students who are unable to afford the high expenses required by either overseas traveling and study abroad opportunities. Inherent in the concept of global citizenship is the clear pursuit for social justice and diverse inclusion. However, based on my own experiences, global citizenship learning acquisition relies largely on the support of the individual's economic capital; this reproduces—rather than diminishes—social inequities.

Lincoln (2005) locates the relationship between researchers and participants as a key feature in collecting data from in-depth information. Creswell and Creswell (2018) suggest that a collaborative relationship between researchers and participants can avoid further marginalization. Consequently, researchers are responsible for establishing a favourable relationship with their participants in terms of effective data

collection, but also for ethics—particularly when doing research with an oppressed group. Indigenous research perspectives—particularly community-based research theory—provide valuable references and guidelines on establishing this type of relationship. Marginalized groups are often treated only as beings to be studied—often regarded as an “other”, or a passive data source to satisfy researchers’ need rather than as “equal holders of knowledge or collaborators in the creation of knowledge” (Koster, Baccar, & Lemelin, 2012). Consequently, the very act of listening can communicate deep respect for their knowledge. Put differently, this is a process involving the inclusive co-construction of knowledge (Hollinshead and Jamal, 2001).

Likewise, each participant was regarded as an insider to the research. Their experiences and worldviews were heard, respected, and valued. Research that is based on a positive partnership with the participants can maximize benefits for both parties and foster positive changes. In this qualitative study, I prioritized building a respectful and trustful relationship with my participants based on “relationships, respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility”, as expected by Johnston, McGregor and Restoule (2018). In a broader sense, strong educational research must include trust, respect and benefit of people’s well-being, and this has been my guiding principle in dealing with my participants. Throughout the data collection process from collection to analysis and then further interpretation, I appreciated participants’ knowledge and tried to be objective so as not to misrepresent their voices.

CHAPTER 5: Findings

This chapter analyzes interview data according to Li's framework of the individual political-socialization process. Nine interviews were conducted separately in order to understand how university students perceive of and participate in global citizenship. This chapter provides detailed interview data, including the participants' global citizenship knowing, global citizenship wisdom, and global citizenship action respectively.

5.1 Global Citizenship Knowing

Global citizenship knowing refers to the cognitive cultivation of concepts, beliefs, values and so forth. Investigating participants' knowing of global citizenship is useful in understanding how they perceive of global citizenship and sheds light on later exploration of their wisdom and global citizenship action.

As aforementioned, national citizenship and citizenship education is the foundation for global citizenship and global citizenship education. Questions about participants' conceptions of citizenship (such as "Do you think you are a qualified citizen?") were posed as a prelude for further discussion on global citizenship. A common recognition among all nine participants is that they all interpreted citizenship as including both rights and obligations. This is likely attributable to previous political education in which all participants learned a clear definition of citizenship including its rights and obligations. Participants tended to describe rights and obligations in terms of their qualification as a qualified citizen, such as: "I am a qualified citizen

since I have enjoyed my rights to vote... I have the responsibility for social stability and development". Another common perspective among participants' understanding citizenship is that it is an inherent, natural-born identity. All participants made clear statements about the concept of citizenship; again, this likely results from intensive and compulsive ideological-political education and moral education throughout their educational career.

Likewise, when it comes to global citizenship, all nine participants shared a similar universalist perspective that "we are all citizens of this world village since we are born and live on the same planet". Sally, for instance, describes global citizenship as a "compulsive" identity:

You can change your nationality by simply migrating to another country but it is obvious that you can not move to another planet so far.

There is no doubt that globalization shrinks the whole world and diminishes the impact of distance. In this context, all participants made statements suggesting the need "to be global citizens" given the impact of globalization, broadly. Jie explains:

Globalization brought the whole world into the butterfly effect...Everything in this world is interconnected, (such as) economy, culture, politics, and the environment. Premised on all these interconnections, I felt that I had to take greater responsibility...We are all responsible to do the right thing to make a better world.

Globalization plays an essential role in generating a broader sense of belonging to a

global community. In certain sense, most participants agreed that many global issues—such as global warming and the global financial crisis—affect their responsibilities as global citizens. In another sense, technology and social media connects citizens across the world, popularizes different cultures, and provides information about other parts of the world. Participants frequently suggested that social media connected them with “other world villages”. For instance, Man majored in Chinese painting and often shares her works through social media. To this end, she praises social media as a “magic channel” for people around the world to communicate, disseminate ideas and creativity, and help resolve misunderstandings and stereotypes.

Although all participants understand global citizenship as an inherent identity, they nevertheless agreed that there should be certain measurements for being a qualified global citizen. One of the most commonly discussed qualifications was English proficiency. All participants believe that English proficiency is a prime requirement for global citizenship. Li explains:

As world citizens, we need to communicate with each other and that is why English proficiency so important. Otherwise, the lack of accurate and efficient communication may lead to misunderstanding and hostility.

Participants from more advantaged family backgrounds tended to have better English language skills—and thus more qualifications for global citizenship—as compared with the three participants from less-privileged backgrounds. From their

perspectives, qualified global citizens should “have certain kinds of skills so that they can make a living at any part of the world”; “actively participate in both local and global affairs”; and “take the responsibility and make the effort for a better world, such as joining some volunteer programs both at home and abroad”. In discussing the above-described qualifications of global citizenship, participants tended to reflect on their own experiences. For example, Jie organized several overseas volunteer programs and placed a high importance on these experiences as evidence of his own global citizenship.

5.1.1 Curriculum

In discussing global citizenship knowing, participants observe that curriculum is one of the dominant instruments for cognitive cultivation including education in concepts, belief, values and so forth. As stated in Chapter 2, Chinese global citizenship is integrated across several mandatory common core courses from kindergarten to university as well as some specific disciplines such as foreign language education. Thus, participants can easily relate many elements of global citizenship with course content. For example, moral education cultivates values and attitudes consistent with global citizenship; political education often addresses global history, world issues and climate change. Zhu further stated:

I felt current common core courses still largely serve for national interest. In this context, the contents relating to global citizenship are very limited and insufficient...The purpose of global citizenship education, in most cases, is to

satisfy the CPC's need rather than contribute to the global community as a whole.

Thus Zhu's comment highlights the extent to which citizenship in China is an ideological phenomenon and one that is not so much about globalization per se.

Discipline was mentioned as an additional variable affecting university students' learning experiences of global citizenship. Man explains:

My friend majored in oil painting and she learned art history of the world as a compulsory course. My major was Chinese painting so that I am only required to learn the art history of China...I think it is the difference. If there is no particular courses for global citizenship education, then the gap between disciplines (in addressing global citizenship) will still exist.

The participants frequently criticized the impact of curriculum on cultivating global citizenship knowing. Participants suggest that relying on current curricula to acquire global citizenship was inefficient for two reasons: first, students are commonly indifferent towards courses such as moral education and ideological-political education; second, current citizenship education mostly addresses nationalism and patriotism. Moreover, Chinese educational models have a long-standing adherence to an exam-oriented educational structure; consequently, students tend to pay less attention to subjects such as moral education and ideological-political education which normally account for less in their GPA. Also, students' indifference towards core courses can be attributed to outdated and

overlapping course content, as well as teaching methods that are primarily lecture-based.

Another criticism that participants addressed is that current curriculum on global citizenship is insufficient and limited. Jie argues that many courses, especially moral education, teach “educated students to have respect for diversity, pursue for social justice and peace [...] [but] they are too general like an abstract slogan and insufficiently explained”. Consequently, issues such as racism, sexism, classism, religious intolerance, and LGBTQ groups are rarely addressed through curriculum.

Foreign language education holds a distinctive role in Chinese global citizenship education. Notably, all participants highlighted the role of foreign language education’s role in global citizenship. Foreign language education is not simply about teaching a communication tool, but is often accompanied by content including politics, culture, and social histories. Two participants majoring in English mention that their courses often included various global elements. For instance, they were required to dictate the BBC news or transcribe TED Talks; this taught them international values and attitudes pertaining to social justice, diversity, and critical thinking. Sha notes:

I enjoy the language learning process that is why I chose English as my major. English learning, especially in university, is very different from the English classes in our high school. Learning a language is more than learning the grammar and vocabulary, instead, it is about learning a culture. My courses involved global politics, world history and foreign literature. I think these

courses are all good opportunity to learn global citizenship.

However, other participants not majoring in foreign language describe current language education (especially English education) as “too test-orientated” in that it focuses primarily on ability in reading, writing, and listening to the exclusion of culture or history.

Many participants took extra-curricula English courses. According to the participants, the cost of these courses were relatively high and ranged from ¥ 100 RMB to ¥ 500 RMB per class. Many participants state that they plan to apply for overseas Master’s programs; consequently, they took additional language courses to help them pass language tests such as the IELTS. In contrast, less-privileged participants took fewer—if any—of these extra-curricular courses. Although the gap on their English transcripts may not be obvious, participants who participated in after-school English courses argue that they learned much more than grammar.

Jie, for instance, had one-to-one English language tutoring every week with an English professor, which cost more than ¥ 1000 RMB per class. During the tutoring, Jie practiced oral English with the professor by discussing international news. He felt this practice helped him develop global awareness and global consciousness in addition to learning English as a communicative tool.

Three participants from low-income family backgrounds expressed difficulty in using English to communicate; conversely, participants from middle to higher income families backgrounds tended to have more confidence in using English language in

practice. This may be explained by the unbalanced emphasis on English writing and grammar in Chinese foreign language education, compared with participants who received additional English language instruction using a communicative language teaching approach.

In addition, given the lack of a clear and consistent definition of global citizenship, teachers' impact in addressing global citizenship is essential. Rui shares an unpleasant experience in a moral education class:

Once in a moral education class, the professor presented a rather negative and even offensive perspective towards the LGBTQ group. She even rejected to hear any different opinions. That made me uncomfortable!

Rui seemed critical about what was learned, and worried that teachers' biased perspective might have detrimental effects on students' worldviews and values.

5.1.2 Mass Media

Mass media is a popular and dynamic instrument in global citizenship education. Although all participants expressed a positive attitude and interest in learning global citizenship through mass media, they also worried about the credibility of the information delivered by mass media. Rui, for instance, describes the negative impact of mass media and expressed her worries:

Since the pandemic of Covid-19, there are tons of fake news everyday on the Internet. This news can simply manipulate my mood and my conceptions. The most important and challenging thing is that you have to carefully select news

and opinions from mass media...and that's exhausting.

Ultimately, Rui feels that mass media should be more responsible in delivering the truth rather than misleading the public.

Admittedly, mass media provides people with substantial information and resources that can be easily-accessed; this can shed light on learners' global citizenship knowing to some extent. However, mass media can also provide information that is inauthentic, stereotypical, and biased. Moreover, in many cases, mass media serves less as a mediator of information than as a political and economic tool. In this sense, acquiring global citizenship knowing should not rely purely on mass media. Given their general skepticism towards mass media, participants noted that they have to expend additional work in trying to verify the news they hear.

5.2 Global Citizenship Wisdom

In terms of participants' global citizenship wisdom, this study considered their feelings, attitudes and judgments. Notably, participants sharing their overseas experiences highlight their frequent homesickness. Zhu indicates that it was hard to generate a sense of belonging outside of China. Some participants attributed their homesickness to the consistent and intensive education in patriotism that they received in China. Although some participants argued against patriotism's role in the Chinese educational curriculum, all participants nevertheless recognized that their worldviews and values were more or less influenced by this emphasis on patriotism in education. Rui explains:

For me, patriotism stands for the various relations, such as my relation with the nation-states at a macro level and my relations with people around me at a micro level. I love my homeland because of all the connections between me and this land. And this is why I suffered from homesickness when I was abroad...I think homesickness is probably due to my lack of connection with another place.

For these reasons, Rui found it difficult to establish a sense of belonging and place outside of China.

Given the importance of global citizenship education, all participants described educating students as global citizens as a big step forward consistent with China's increased influence in the global arena in terms of political and economic affairs. Jie emphasizes the urgent need to address global citizenship systematically in response to various social changes:

Currently, Chinese society is experiencing a boom of diversity. It was of necessity to conduct corresponding education to avoid misunderstanding and conflicts in terms of issues such as racism.

However, despite agreeing on the necessity of global citizenship education, participants nevertheless had different attitudes towards it. Participants from higher and middle income families commonly expressed positive feelings towards global citizenship learning. In particular, they tended to relate global citizenship learning with their everyday life and future plans. For them, global citizenship education was "an interesting adventure to see the world" and also "beneficial for (their) future".

Yet, participants from less-advantaged backgrounds mentioned that being a global citizen is a rather abstract idea. Put differently, the three less-privileged participants had an obvious indifference towards global citizenship learning compared with the others. Such indifference can be attributed to two reasons. First, these participants understand global citizenship as a compulsive identity into which they were born, even though it has minimal impact on their daily life. In other words, their lack of global citizenship experiences contributes to their relative indifference towards this concept; they see global citizenship as less relevant in their lives. Second, they describe facing greater life stresses compared with their peers from middle and higher income families. Due to financial precarity, they focus harder on academics and have part-time jobs. Bei explains:

For my higher/middle income family peers, the scholarship is more like a 'bonus' which is not indispensable. However, for me, scholarship is a necessity, which means I have to try my best to win it and keep it continuously...Under the great pressure for scholarship, I want to exclude any interference and concentrate on my academic study only...At least so far, I do not see the importance for me to spend much time on global citizenship education...Actually there were not even any classes for global citizenship.

Overall, the differences in the participants' attitudes towards global citizenship education here clearly relate to their SES. Although middle and higher income family students could understand the benefits and experiences of global citizenship education, it was harder for less-advantaged participants to relate global citizenship to their lives.

5.3 Global Citizenship Action

Global citizenship action focuses on the wider practice of global citizenship. In this section, I discuss how Chinese university students participate in global citizenship.

5.3.1 Overseas Experiences

Overseas experiences including traveling, studying, volunteering, and so forth are one of the most important and effective approaches to global citizenship. Participants frequently highlighted the importance of exposure to these types of overseas experiences. Moreover, all participants noted that overseas experiences provide a unique cultural atmosphere that help participants learn about cultures and societies.

Although participants with previous travel and study abroad experience more obviously recognized the role of these experiences in their global citizenship education, even the participants without these experiences recognized the necessity of cultural exposure as a seeming prerequisite to participating in global citizenship. Li, Bei and Tao agreed that overseas experiences can cultivate an individual's understanding of diversity, enhance foreign language proficiency, and develop the ability to participate in global affairs.

Overall, the participants were supportive of overseas experiences due to the unique cultural atmosphere they provide. These experiences provide specific knowledge and skills, including mobility, participation in global affairs, and so forth. They also cultivate and enhance specific attitudes and values, such as a more nuanced understanding of diversity.

Zhu, Sha, Man and Jie felt that they best developed their individual global citizenship by attending overseas volunteer programs. In particular, they argued that volunteering better connected them with local people and culture. As Jie explains, such overseas programs are popular among Chinese university students:

By volunteering, I gained an indispensable sense of satisfaction...I felt I did something meaningful to the world...Besides, it is a valuable experiences that you can write on your CV. Many of my volunteer friends came to the program because they believed that these experiences were beneficial for their later applications for overseas universities.

Similarly, Man mentions that her parents are supportive because “in their mind, it is like ‘buying a certificate’ which can promote my resume and smooth my later application for Master programs abroad”.

However, these programs can be cost-prohibitive. Participants reported average weekly fees around approximately ¥ 4,000 RMB, which normally include five days of accommodations and breakfast; however, the actual incurred cost of these programs was closer to ¥ 8,000 RMB - ¥10,000 RMB per week once accounting for other incidental costs accrued during these volunteering programs. This is to say, students who are lucky enough to afford overseas experiences due to their economic capital gain additional “credential” that will benefit their future and further reinforce their class status.

Overseas experiences are prized as the most direct and effective approach to

global citizenship for two reasons: they foster personal mobility and cultivate an understanding and appreciation for diversity. However, these overseas experiences are subject to various criticism. Chiefly, overseas experiences rely on financial support. Thus, students from low-income families are often prohibited from experiencing this type of global citizenship learning. My participants' statements generally mirrored this criticism. Participants from less-privileged family backgrounds commonly expressed indifference towards these experiences. Li, for instance, has an elder brother and a younger sister; yet, she is the only one with the opportunity to attend university. She describes feeling great financial burden in paying both tuition fees and living expenses:

Personally, I do not think I have extra time to pursue such kind of global citizenship, especially by participating in these overseas programs...For me, it is like a waste of time and money. At least at this stage of my life, it is not on my to-do list. I had to study hard to keep my scholarship and I also did part-time jobs. It is already a tough work to balance my academic study and the part-time job.

As this comment shows, the exclusionary nature of overseas experiences negatively impacts some learner's accesses to global citizenship education. In addition to privileging economic capital, it also reinforces social hierarchies; learners who cannot afford overseas experiences are left behind.

In recognition of this fact, both universities and the Chinese government provide less privileged students with financial support for overseas study or exchange

programs. However, Li, Bei and Tao indicate that these programs are neither attractive nor suitable for several reasons. First, although these exchange programs are sponsored by universities or government, students nevertheless have to pay for “invisible” expenses such as the cost of preparation and participation in language proficiency tests, and so forth. Meanwhile, the competition and selection process for such opportunities is very limited and time-consuming. According to Li, she states, “I do not think it is worthy to spend abundant time and money in competing a place for these exchange programs.” This explanation indicates their indifference towards this aspect of global citizenship. Conversely, participants from middle and higher income families express greater interest in these programs.

In addition to cost, overseas experience are often criticized for being limited in scope and sometimes biased. Sha reflected on an online conflict with a PhD student. Their conflict originated from a discussion on the usage of an English word:

I expressed my confusion and doubt towards his post politely, while he commented me in rather rude and offensive languages. His followers messaged me saying he must be right because he was a PhD from a top university and asked me to stop ‘showing my ignorance’.

Consequently, Sha doubts whether overseas diploma and experiences can guarantee global citizenship. She adds:

In many cases, people tended to overstate overseas experiences that it seems like once you have studied or worked abroad, you must have learned advanced

knowledge and skills and had the right worldviews and values. Obviously, it is not true.

Another commonly mentioned criticism surrounds a sense of belonging. All participants with overseas experiences suggest that their patriotism towards China increased while overseas. Man describes experiencing homesickness during a one-week short trip abroad:

It does not mean that I did not enjoy my vacation in another country, on the contrary, I love learning different cultures. But there seem to be clear line reminding me that I am the outsider.

Jie, Man, Ming and Zhu similarly describe feeling mention a strong sense of patriotism while traveling abroad. Ming explains:

[When I was abroad], I always felt I was more than a tourist or a student... My behaviors may influence foreigners' impressions on China. So, I was always under great pressure that I wanted to act very nice and polite to form a good impression to others.

Despite these drawbacks, overseas experiences do provide learners with a unique atmosphere by experiencing and observing other cultures. This process generally enhances mobility, increases second language proficiency, and expands social networks. However, participants' statements show that the impact of overseas experiences on fostering global citizenship is sometimes overstated. While overseas experiences expose individuals to other cultures, they cannot be considered a standard

or guarantee of global citizenship due to financial barriers and cultural capital.

5.3.2 Social Media

Social media promotes individual global citizenship knowing by providing an indispensable channel for global citizenship action. For instance, all participants share their experiences of signing online petitions as an easy way to participate in both local and global affairs. In terms of global affairs, the White House Petition is underscored by participants. The White House Petition is about having a voice in government and is a section of the White House government website for citizens to petition the administration and “to speak directly to the government” (<https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/about>). This may be attributed to the centrality of the US in global politics and the dominance of English language as lingua franca.

In further discussions, most participants indicated even though they did not clearly understand the mechanism of such a petition, they nevertheless felt that it was an important way to make their voice matter. Ming shares:

The first time I knew online petition was because of a sexual violence scandal from Korea...It was the hottest topic on Weibo that time. Many online celebrities shared the link of a White House Petition and asked followers to sign. I signed this petition because I felt my voice might be helpful.

Ming’s statements indicate that he felt a sense of belonging to a global community by signing this petition.

All participants note that they enjoy sharing opinions online on both local and

global issues. Put differently, they believe their voices are valuable in many social issues, on both local and global scales. Tao explains:

I knew a bunch of social issues were first exposed online to gain netizens' discussion and support and then won the official attention and well-resolved. I felt netizens nowadays are like an online supervision department that our voices mattered.

Likewise, other participants state that they had a stronger feeling of global citizenship when expressing their opinions online such as fighting against racism, discussing politics, and showing supports for LGBTQ groups. Zhu observes:

Issues such as discrimination and violence matter for everyone in this world and that is why we all should fight against them...I felt it was a mission for everyone in this world. And with the same mission and goal, we are better connected with others and the world.

5.4 The Interplay of Knowing, Wisdom and Action

While participants' cognition, evaluation, and participation in global citizenship education has been presented separately, my study ultimately seeks to probe the correlated relationship between each level in the global citizenship learning process.

First, participants' understanding of global citizenship encompassed two major two perspectives. The first understands global citizenship from a universalist view as an inherent identity. Participants with this viewpoint frequently make statements such as, "I was born in this world, so I am a global citizen". The second understands global

citizenship as encompassing rights and obligations, although participants acknowledged that there was insufficient clarification on global citizenship within their education to-date. Thus, participants' cognition of global citizenship was palpably influenced by their broader attitudes and participation in other aspects such as their engagement with social media and experiences abroad. Meanwhile, less-advantaged participants argue that global citizenship is less relevant with regard to their "imagined future" (Ball et al., 1999). In this sense, participants described feeling excluded from broader participation in global citizenship.

Second, participants from middle and higher income families were active participants in global citizenship learning for two reasons. First, they believe that global citizenship is relevant and beneficial for their future plans. Second, they were often influenced by their parents and friends who similarly value these experiences and action.

Third, participation in global citizenship education is directly influenced by students' pre-conceptions and attitudes towards global citizenship learning. This demonstrates the persistence of a SES gap across every level of global citizenship learning. This can be partly attributed to insufficient definitions of global citizenship in the educational curricula, which limits students' conceptions of global citizenship. Combined with reduced economic and mobility opportunities, participants were less able to connect global citizenship education with their imagined future which translates into a lack of participation compared with their more affluent peers.

5.5 Expectations

This study seeks to understand different students' demands and expectations for global citizenship education; accordingly, I encouraged participants to share valuable suggestions and advice for future educational curriculum practices in global citizenship.

First, participants suggest that universities play an important role in establishing a systematic framework that can better address global citizenship. All participants argue that universities should stimulate students' attention and passion for global citizenship. Thus, participants urge Chinese educational models to reform courses on traditional moral education and ideological-political education by including more global elements. In particular, participants thought that the current curriculum focuses on nationalism at the expense of globalization.

The initial intention of this study was to focus on lower-SES students' perspectives and expectations towards global citizenship education. My initial premise was that students from less-privileged family backgrounds are excluded from global citizenship education based on the cost of international travel experiences, comparatively limited cultural exposure, and reduced social capital—all considered broad prerequisites for global citizenship (Goren & Yemini, 2017). Consequently, this study endeavored to amplify the voices of students from lower-SES classes in order to identify—and then reform—the barriers that reduce their access to and participation in global citizenship education.

However, my interviews with nine participants from different family backgrounds, indicated that students themselves had more agency than I had expected in choosing to opt it and opt out of global citizenship acquisition. According to three participants from low-income family backgrounds, despite generally recognizing the importance of global citizenship education in the face of globalization and understanding the extent to which their own lives are shaped by globalization, they nevertheless expressed an obvious indifference towards global citizenship learning. In fact, they described themselves as outsiders to global citizenship education. They offered various explanations to support their reduced participation including financial burdens and different future plans. These interviews mirror an observation that Ball et al. (1999) finds, which is that students' "imagined futures" are affected by their social class; in turn, the differences in their respective imagined futures further perpetuate social inequity gaps.

In my interviews, six participants from middle and higher income families planned to pursue further study either abroad or at home. In contrast, the three participants from low-income families preferred to get a job as soon as possible after graduation. In this respect, less-advantaged participants note that they do not see either the value or importance of global citizenship education in their future plans. Li, for example, states: "I think I can still get a decent job without sufficient global citizenship learning".

Moreover, all three participants described considerable pressure in balancing their studies with part-time jobs. Thus, they generally considered global citizenship

learning as a “time-wasting” practice. In Tao’s interviews, he describes the beginning of his college life when he actively participated in various associations and group activities; however, he soon found that such activities and associations required plentiful time and money for socialization. Tao states, “I had to join them (group members) for dinner after activities while after dinner, I had to have a karaoke night with them. Otherwise, you’ll be judged as asocial.” Thus, Tao quickly quit these associations and group activities to “save time and money”.

These interviews demonstrate how difficult it can be for students from less privileged family backgrounds to relate global citizenship to their daily lives and future plans. Moreover, the insufficiency of official instruction and lack of consistent definitions of global citizenship further perpetuates both disconnection and indifference to global citizenship learning. Ultimately, the global citizenship education gap arises both from differing learning opportunities and resources which are then combined with differences in learners’ attitudes.

Chapter 6: Discussion

In this chapter, I contextualize the global citizenship education gap observed in my interviews with a review of related literature and the theoretical framework that was applied. My findings affirm the existence of a global citizenship education gap directly tied to SES among Chinese university students, especially in terms of their attitudes and participation of global citizenship learning. Under the guidance of Li's theory of individual political-socialization process, the following sections discuss the global citizenship education gap from three dimensions: knowing, wisdom, and action.

6.1 Global Citizenship Knowing Gap

In Confucianism, knowing is believed as the first stage of individual learning process (Li, 2010). In Li's individual political socialization process theory, knowing is also placed at the core through which individuals obtain cognitive cultivation such as learning of concepts, beliefs, values and so forth (Li, 2011). Following Li's theory, my findings contend that Chinese university students' knowing of global citizenship is more or less influenced by their SES. Moreover, as the core of individual learning process of global citizenship, the disparities on students' global citizenship knowing can attribute to further gaps on wisdom and action.

According to my findings, while the disparities in university students' knowing of global citizenship is slight, they nevertheless reflect a complex phenomenon. Chinese university students' interpretations of global citizenship included two aspects: a

globalist view in which “we are all citizens of this world village since we are born and live on the same planet” and a more intellectual awareness that national citizenship is based on textbook definitions—namely, as “rights and responsibilities”. Their understandings echo Yemini’s study (2017) in two Israeli schools where students also tended to understand global citizenship as an “inborn” identity that is somewhat “limited” and “inadequate”.

To better explain Chinese university students’ limited knowledge of global citizenship, it is important to consider how students learn about global citizenship in the first place. As identified and discussed in Chapter 5, two major approaches to global citizenship learning include mass media and official curriculum. Mass media’s role in promoting global citizenship is powerful and dynamic. Throughout the interviews, participants note that mass media is the most efficient and enjoyable approach for them to learn about global citizenship. Put differently, mass media communicates up-to-date news around the globe and facilitates conversations about other cultures, histories, and politics. However, participants note that there is an urgent need to regulate mass media to reduce misleading and fake information.

In terms of curriculum, the participants echoed similar criticism to that expressed in the literature. As per Han (2020), “there is no global citizens out of the country”. In China, global citizenship education is integrated into national citizenship education (Law, 2011; Fang, 2019). Thus, global citizenship education is—paradoxically—embedded in national citizenship education. In discussing how they learned about global citizenship, participants related it to various courses such as

moral education, ideological-political education, English language education, history, and so forth.

However, the participants also suggest that a lack of independent instruction on this topic and unclear definitions of global citizenship also led to insufficiency and inadequacy in understanding it. Goren and Yemini (2017) argue that Chinese global citizenship education “often overlook[s] issues commonly associated with global citizenship education elsewhere, such as human rights or global responsibility” (p. 175). Participants similarly criticize the current curriculum for failing to provide updated course content by omitting issues relating to racism, sexism, classism, LGBTQ, and so forth.

Participants also complain about the current lecture-based teaching method. Their complaints echo many Chinese scholars’ research on citizenship education and global citizenship education (Fang, 2019; Tu, 2011). Participants urge more empirical teaching, especially in terms of core courses. Fang (2019) suggests that systematic curriculum can be essential in narrowing the global citizenship education gap and bringing more efficiency to Chinese practices in both citizenship education and global citizenship education.

In addition, teachers have a crucial role in cultivating students’ global citizenship knowledge through curriculum. Integrating global citizenship into current courses without sufficient and clear clarifications can render global citizenship education a random practice based on teachers’ individual choices. Notably, many participants

state that teachers have an indispensable influence on their global citizenship knowing. However, participants felt that teachers' ability to properly address global citizenship varied greatly based on the teacher's own experiences rather than reflecting a unified standard. This corresponds with many Western scholars' investigation into the obstacles in properly teaching global citizenship such as lack of practical resources and GCED-related training (Rapoport, 2010; Schweisfurth, 2006, Niens et al., 2013).

Another feature of Chinese global citizenship education is the emphasis on "providing skills" to prepare students to compete in this global age, especially with regard to foreign language teaching (Goren & Yemini, 2017). In this context, English language instruction is regarded as a dominant component of Chinese global citizenship education. Many scholars verify the importance of English language instruction as both a communicative tool and in cultivating students' intercultural understanding (Chen, 2014; Fang, 2019; Kan, 2013). Foreign language education not only instills students with academic knowledge and skills, but also exposes students to foreign cultures.

The Chinese government acknowledges the necessity of English language teaching to the extent that English language instruction is a compulsory course for Chinese students in primary school. In recent years, the Ministry of Education has released various policies to better enhance English language education (Gil, 2016). Chen (2014) notes that universities' efforts in promoting Chinese-English bilingualism education include: "translating their materials into English and/or purchase relevant literature in English, re-training their staff on-site, or sending them

for further training abroad, and employing a growing number of foreign English teachers and academics” (p.153). For instance, students are required or encouraged to pass various standardized language tests such as College English Test Band 4 and 6. These certificates contribute to students’ competence in the job market and promote access to further study. Given this emphasis on English language education in official practices, the public is also enthusiastic about English language learning. Outside of classes, there are multiple organizations in Chinese HEIs such as “English Corners” and “English Clubs” that give students the opportunity to practice their English proficiency and gain insights into critical thinking and cross-cultural perspectives (Chen, 2014). This excessive emphasis on foreign language education may explain why all participants in this study emphasized English language proficiency as a prime requirement for global citizenship. This excessive emphasis on skill and grammar to the exclusion of culture and history may also contribute to students’ limited understandings of global citizenship.

Notably, in recent years, the “English Learning Fever” seems to experience an observable fading in national policy and curriculum (MOE, 2007, 2017). This may be attributed to the growing consciousness of Chinese language and culture as well as the low efficiency of current English teaching (Cheng & Wei, 2019). The potential impact of this policy changing on global citizenship education can be twofold. On one side, it may enhance national identity which is referred as the foundation of global citizenship. On the other side, the emphasis on national language and culture may lead to nationalism and even xenophobia in some cases.

6.2 Global Citizenship Wisdom Gap

According to Li's theory of individual political socialization process, premised on knowing, students then obtain affective and evaluative cultivation such as feelings, attitudes, judgments and so forth. As an intermediate step of global citizenship learning, students' global citizenship wisdom, on the one side, are under direct influence by students' global citizenship knowing. On the other side, global citizenship wisdom is an essential factor in understanding students' global citizenship action. Meanwhile, my study confirms the impact of SES on reinforcing the global citizenship wisdom gap. During the interviews, I found that participants' attitudes towards global citizenship varied greatly depending on SES. Less-privileged participants often held indifferent attitudes towards global citizenship education. This phenomenon can be partially explained by insufficient demonstrations of the importance of global citizenship education through curriculum and other official practices so that students tended to pay less attention to global citizenship learning. In addition, less-privileged participants argue that global citizenship is not "seriously influential" in their everyday life. Moreover, these participants describe tremendous pressure to win scholarships every term in order to reduce the financial burden of their education, often borne by their parents. They also have part-time jobs to pay for their living expenses; thus, they have less time and energy for other activities. Such explanations demonstrate that participants from less privileged backgrounds do not—for several reasons—value global citizenship education compared to their more-advantaged peers.

Their indifference can also be attributed to differences in the participants' "imagined futures" (Ball et al., 1999). Ball et al. (1999) argue that SES differences often result in great differences in anticipated future plans—students' so-called "imagined futures". Importantly, students tend to use their imagined futures to assist and frame their choices. In this study, participants from middle and higher income families all stated their intent to pursue further future studies. One participant from a more privileged family background even referred to her application for a Master's degree as "an escape from work". Moreover, those planning to complete Master's programs abroad often showed greater passion and interest towards global citizenship acquisition; this includes active participation in volunteering and vast investment, including both time and money, on foreign language learning. However, the imagined futures of less-privileged participants are impacted by multidimensional pressures from their families and studies. Consequently, these participants present their future plans in terms of "getting a decent job" to help relieve their parents' financial burden. Overall, the practical nature of these future plans reduces their interest and passion for global citizenship learning, which they tend to see as "less beneficial for their future plans" than their more affluent peers.

6.3 Global Citizenship Action Gap

Supported by Li's theory of individual political socialization process, action is referred as the final step of students' learning process of global citizenship. In this phase, individuals take actions based on their global citizenship knowing and wisdom. My findings confirm that students' global citizenship action varies according to their

SES. Differences in students' attitudes towards global citizenship education influences their actions towards global citizenship accordingly. Specifically, less-advantaged participants often took a relatively inactive role in global citizenship learning. For these participants, global citizenship education is less relevant for their future plans; consequently, they tended to exclude themselves from global citizenship learning by treating this learning as mostly voluntary. Thus, participants' SES is an essential factor that influences their participation in global citizenship learning, particularly with respect to overseas experiences.

Nevertheless, overseas experiences do have a distinctive place in addressing global citizenship. Many scholars believe that overseas experiences increase learners' understanding of diversity as well as the improve the skills required to participate in global affairs (Goren & Yemini, 2017). Accordingly, overseas experiences are often praised as "prerequisites" for global citizenship education (Goren & Yemini, 2017). In this study, all participants believe that overseas experiences provide learners with indispensable and unique cultural experiences.

However, overseas experiences are capital-based approaches that require considerable financial supports which, by their very nature, disadvantage students from less-privileged family backgrounds. Although both universities and governments have made considerable efforts to financially support less-advantaged students in pursuing overseas programs, the three participants from low-income family backgrounds in this study still had less interest in participating. In particular, they worried about invisible expenses associated with these programs. Further, they noted

the complicated and time-consuming application process. These three participants mention that they are already under great pressure from their academic studies and part-time jobs; consequently, they do not want to “waste time and energy” on these programs. This demonstrates a similar gap in their global citizenship wisdom. While participants from more advantaged backgrounds were compelled by their imagined future to actively participate in global education programs, the imagined future of less-privileged participants were constrained by more pressing issues such as financial costs. Thus, participants from more privileged background tend to have more future options compared with less-privileged participants who experience family and social pressures to “be realistic”. Consequently, these participants tended to place more focus on futures involving good jobs to support their families.

Additionally, study participants noted that overseas experiences did not automatically deliver a global citizenship education. This is supported by participants’ statements describing homesickness while abroad and increasing feelings of national patriotism while overseas. This corresponds with Fang’s (2019) research in which she analyzed both negative and positive learning overseas study experiences; in particular, she doubts whether overseas experience “indeed provide[s] a channel for students to develop their inter-cultural awareness”. She argues that many overseas programs, especially short-term programs, insufficiently prepare participants for larger discussions and participation in global citizenship.

6.4 SES and Global Citizenship Education Gap

My findings also indicate something additional that SES impacts students' perceptions and participation of global citizenship in two ways: access to educational resources and process of global citizenship learning.

First, students from different background are exposed to different educational resources. Tu (2011) points out that one dominant barrier for lower-SES students' civic participation is the lack of socioeconomic resources. Echoing Tu's findings, participants from less-privileged family background in this study described their lower SES as a prime obstacle in actively participating in global citizenship education—especially in terms of overseas experiences and extra-curricular foreign language courses. Goren and Yemini (2017) note that capital—both economic and social—play a dominant role during students' acquisition of global citizenship. Learners require economic capital to acquire high-quality educational resources; consequently, less-advantaged students have limited access to these higher-quality resources. Both of these economic cycles reinforce the students' pre-existing social capital.

As aforementioned, participants identify English language instruction as an important component of Chinese global citizenship. In this context, off-campus language courses are particularly popular among Chinese students, especially those who plan to study overseas. However, before submitting their applications, students have to pass language proficiency tests such as IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or TOEFL (test of English as a foreign language). Since Chinese HEIs generally do not offer these courses, students have to take additional

courses at language training institutions to prepare themselves. According to my participants from middle and higher income families who completed them, the cost for these off-campus language courses can be up to ¥ 1000 RMB per class; this again disadvantages students from less-privileged backgrounds. Consequently, the three participants of lower-SES in this study suggested that such extra-curricular courses are “luxuries” that they would not purchase.

Goren and Yemini (2017) praise overseas activities as “prerequisites” for global citizenship education. However, less-advantaged students rarely have such experiences. As stated, although both universities and the Chinese government have made considerable efforts to help less-advantaged students with financial supports to access some overseas programs, the three participants of lower SES in my study stated that they were uninterested in pursuing them. In particular, they cited concern over invisible expenses, the complicated and time-consuming application and selection process, and, most importantly, less interest due to the constraints of their imagined futures.

Thus, socioeconomic status greatly shapes students’ imagined future and attitudes towards global citizenship education during their learning process. Students with positive attitudes towards global citizenship education often held active roles in global citizenship processes. This supports Ball et al.’s (1999) finding that students’ future choices are often limited by their imagined futures, which are in turn shaped by their SES. Participants from less-advantaged family backgrounds often plan to work immediately after graduation, while their privileged peers normally apply for Master’s

programs both at home and abroad. These disparities explain less-advantaged participants' indifference towards global citizenship education; in short, they see it as irrelevant to their future plans.

Consequently, SES contributes to the exclusion of less-advantaged students from global citizenship education based on limited accesses to educational resources and more emphasis on practicality in their imagined futures. However, while SES is an imperative factor in students' perceptions and participation in global citizenship, the global citizenship education gap cannot be solely attributed to socioeconomic status. Rather, this gap is associated with multiple interrelated factors including discipline of study, gender, and ethnicity—all of which deserve further exploration in future studies on this topic.

Chapter 7: Concluding Remarks

In this final chapter, I discuss the implications of my findings for policy-makers, educators, and students. I also state some recommendations for future research. Finally, I present an overall conclusion of this study.

7.1 Implications

While global citizenship and global citizenship education have been extensively studied, studies relating specifically to SES and cultural background are insufficient (Goren & Yemini, 2017). Consequently, this study may help reform educational practices surrounding global citizenship education in Chinese HEIs.

It is noted that current practices pertaining to global citizenship education are inadequate in China. Given that global citizenship education is generally a voluntary part of the curriculum based on individual teachers' choices, students' global citizenship learning varies greatly. To this end, Chinese policymakers should give this curricula official support and better integrate global citizenship education into existing curriculum. Specifically, Chinese HEIs may plan to provide clearer and more consistent definitions of global citizenship, develop specific courses on global citizenship, and integrate concepts around global citizenship into current courses. Participants in this study further echoed this need for serious course reforms by adjusting current course content with more updated information and empirical teaching.

However, improvement should not be solely limited to curricula in HEIs. Rather,

policies and curricula in currently-existing exchange programs should also be modified. As stated earlier, students from disadvantaged family backgrounds are less interested even in sponsored exchange programs. Thus, universities and the Chinese government need to develop a more comprehensive policy to increase access and opportunities to exchange programs, study abroad opportunities, and global citizenship education more broadly. While this would benefit all students, it would particularly support students of lower SES backgrounds.

Meanwhile, teachers have an essential role in promoting global citizenship education. Participants in this study mention that their learning was largely reliant on teachers' personal perceptions and experiences. As a result, students' learning of global citizenship was associated with uneven outcomes premised on teachers' personal attitudes and experiences. In this sense, teachers should be better supported to teach global citizenship education, such as by widening teaching training and developing official guidelines.

Finally, students themselves need to recognize the necessity of global citizenship education. Even if they see less applicability to their future plans, less-advantaged students should not exclude themselves from global citizenship learning. Active participation in global citizenship across all SES backgrounds is vital.

7.2 Recommendations for Future Study

Given the specific focus of this study on Chinese university students' perspectives, educators, policy makers, and even parents may have different perspectives on and

attitudes to global citizenship. Consequently, it would be valuable to recruit and compare their perspectives. Future studies could explore different perspectives from the perspective of other students, educators, policy makers, and parents.

At the time of my interviews, all interviewees were undergraduate students. After graduation, they all intended either to work or pursue further studies. Thus, future studies could follow-up with participants later in their careers to determine what—if any—changes occurred to their thinking about, evaluation, and participation in global citizenship education after graduation. A follow-up study could be valuable in order to explore the reasons for these possible changes.

Furthermore, it was palpable that the university has a prominent role in implementing a more comprehensive and systematic curriculum around global citizenship education. Thus, future studies could further consider universities' policy-making and related practices in order to identify the most effective ways to achieve educational reform. Meanwhile, teachers' role in global citizenship education is indispensable; similarly, future research could further explore teachers' perspectives in order to identify supports and policy changes that would improve their ability to teach global citizenship education.

While this study focuses specifically on the impact of students' SES on their learning process, I recognized during my interviews that other factors including academic discipline, gender, race, ethnicity, and regions also have a significance influence in one's thinking, attitudes, and responses to enacting global citizenship

education.

7.3 Personal Reflection and Conclusion

As this study concludes, it is natural for me as the researcher to provide some personal reflections. Before I arrived in Canada to complete my Master's degree in Education, my understanding of global citizenship was limited to the universalist view like most of my participants: "I was born in this world, so I am global citizen". However, after two years study in Canada—including the influence of conducting this particular study—this limited conception of global citizenship has been expanded in many ways. While my experiences helped me communicate with the nine participants of this study, their valuable perspectives enriched my understanding of Chinese university students' experiences with global citizenship. My initial hypothesis and criticism towards global citizenship education is that it is an unequal practice that reinforces and perpetuates social inequities. However, this research allowed me to better understand the so-called global citizenship education gap more comprehensively. This global citizenship education gap is not simply about the disparities in educational resources, but also perpetuated by differences in students' imagined futures. Although these are clearly related to SES, I learned that economic and social capital are not the only factors influencing participants' desire to opt it or out of the global citizenship education.

Nevertheless, my findings confirm the existence of a global citizenship education gap among students from different family backgrounds. This SES-based global

citizenship education gap consists of two aspects: the first is due to the disparities in accessing educational resources. Students from advantaged family backgrounds normally have more accesses to GCED-related practices, such as extra-curricular foreign language courses and overseas experiences.

Second, students' "imagined future" also play an prominent role in perpetuating a global citizenship education gap. Participants from less-advantaged background often have limited future choices compared with their peers from middle and higher income families. Thus, students from lower SES backgrounds seem to regard global citizenship education as less relevant to their personal lives while students from less-privileged backgrounds often seem to voluntarily exclude themselves from global citizenship education opportunities. These indifferent attitudes towards global citizenship education seems to result, in part, from their relatively inactive role in global citizenship learning. This lack of participation in global citizenship education produces a limited and inadequate cognition towards the possibilities and potential of global citizenship and global citizenship education; in turn, this reinforces learners' negative attitudes towards the concept. Thus, a global citizenship education gap arises within a closed-cycle process.

The diminishment of this gap warrants attention. Considerable time, energy and funding is needed for educators and policy-makers to reflect on current practices and implement multidimensional reforms. Importantly, social justice and equality cannot be easily accomplished overnight; rather, it takes time, energy and effort. These changes must also be supported by educational and policy reform.

Thus, overall, I solicited students' perspectives in order to unveil certain inequities in global citizenship education. Ultimately, my intent is to bring attention to these inequities in order to promote the reform necessary so as to provide additional opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds so that all students can actively participate in global citizenship education. Yet, SES is a significant barrier that excludes students from global citizenship learning - both voluntarily and involuntarily. The conclusions of this study hope to change that.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A



Date: 3 December 2019

To: Professor Jun Li

Project ID: 114904

Study Title: Call for Inclusion: Case study of Global Citizenship Education and SES Achievement Gap in Higher Education Institutions in China

Short Title: Call for Inclusion: Case study of GCED and SES Achievement Gap in Higher Education Institutions in China

Application Type: NMREB Initial Application

Review Type: Delegated

Full Board Reporting Date: January 10, 2020

Date Approval Issued: 03/Dec/2019

REB Approval Expiry Date: 03/Dec/2020

Dear Professor Jun Li

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
Yang_Debriefing Form_2	Debriefing document		
Yang_Letter of Information Consent_2-2-4	Written Consent/Assent		
Yang_Website ad_1	Recruitment Materials		
Yang-interview guide	Interview Guide		

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,

Kelly Patterson, 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 B

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH IN Global Citizenship Education and SES Achievement Gap in Higher Education Institutions in China

We are looking for volunteers to take part in a study of GCED and SES achievement gap who are currently undergraduate students in any Chinese University. Anyone who is interested in this study is welcome and all your knowledge and experience is appreciated.

If you are interested and agree to participate you would be asked to: have a person-to-person interview
each interview will be about 30-60 minutes long.

Welcome to
share your experience and expectation!

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study,
please directly contact:

Yang HU

Faculty of Education

Email: [REDACTED]

Appendix C

**Call for Inclusion:
Case study of Global Citizenship Education and SES Achievement Gap in
Higher Education Institutions in China
Letter of Information**

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jun Li

Affiliation: Western University

Email address: [REDACTED]

Telephone number: [REDACTED]

Additional Researcher: Yang Hu

Affiliation: Western University

Email address: [REDACTED]

Telephone number: [REDACTED]

You are invited to participate in this research study about exploring the SES achievement gap of global citizenship education in Higher Education Institutions in China. The purpose of this study is to foster a more comprehensive and inclusive GCED in Higher Education Institutions in China with understanding of student's current experience and expectation from different socioeconomic background. This study will last around two months, and during this period you will be contacted for a 60-minutes interview for discussions on your experiences with regard to this topic. The interview(s) will be taking place at your convenience place or via remote technology. The interview(s) will be recorded upon your voluntary consent, and the data will only be used for the research purpose. Your personal information will NOT be revealed, in no circumstance and all the data is under the protection of confidentiality.

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with your participation in this study. You may not directly benefit from participating in this study, but information gathered may provide benefits to society as a whole which may provide valuable insights for future practice of a more inclusive Sinicized GCED.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you will not be compensated for your participation in this research. You do not waive any legal right by signing the consent form. Even if you consent to participate you do not have to answer individual questions, and you may withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. If you decide to withdraw from the study, you have the right to request (e.g. by phone, in writing, etc.) withdrawal of information collected about you. Representatives of Western University's Non-Medical Research Ethics Board may require access to your study-related records to monitor the conduct of the research.

Your full name and telephone number will be collected for distinguishing with your pseudonym and contact. Nobody else expect for the researchers will have access to your personal information as a participant. The data will be stored on a secure server at Western University and will be retained for a minimum of 7 years. A list linking your pseudonym with your name and telephone number will be kept by the researcher in a secure place, separate from your study file. With your permission, quotes will be used in the dissemination of results. You may (or may not) be quoted directly in the results, but once you are quoted, your pseudonym will be used and any information that could identify you will be removed. If the results of the study are published, your name will not be used.

If you have questions about this research study, please contact the Principal Investigator of this research: Dr. Jun Li (Email: [REDACTED]). If you have any questions about your rights as a participants or the conduct of this study please contact The Office of Human Research Ethics [REDACTED], [REDACTED], email: [REDACTED]. 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.

Appendix D

**Call for Inclusion:
Case study of Global Citizenship Education and SES Achievement Gap in
Higher Education Institutions in China
Letter of Consent**

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jun Li

Affiliation: Western University

Email address: [REDACTED]

Telephone number: [REDACTED]

Researcher: Yang HU

Affiliation: Western University

Email address: [REDACTED]

Telephone number: [REDACTED]

1. I agree to be quoted in the dissemination of results on the premise that a

pseudonym is used.

Yes

No

2. I consent to be contacted for future studies.

Yes

No

I have read the Letter of Information and have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Print Name of Participant: _____

Signature: _____

Date (DD-MMM-YYYY): _____

My signature means that I have explained the study to the participant named above. I have answered all questions.

Print name of Person Obtaining Consent: Jun Li

Signature: _____

Date (DD-MMM-YYYY): _____

Appendix E

Semi-structured Interview Guide

Questions about citizenship and citizenship education as a prelude:

- Do you think you are a qualified citizen? Why?
- Could you name some relevant courses or events you've participated? What's your comments/suggestions?

Questions about global citizenship and global citizenship education:

- Do you think you are a qualified global citizen and why?
- What is your experiences pertaining to global citizenship? What's your comments and suggestions?
- To what extent is global citizenship education important to you? Do you think GCED is of necessity which can benefit your future development and why?
- What do you think of parents' attitudes towards GCED?
- What sort of skills do you think global citizenship education should foster in students? - What is the driven factor impelling you to global citizenship? What is the impediment?
- Do you think GCED is related to all or exclusive to specific groups?
- What is your expectation of future practices of GCED in CHEIs?

Curriculum Vitae

Name: Yang HU

**Post-secondary
Education and
Degrees:** Western University
London, Ontario, Canada
2018-2020 M.A.

Shanxi University
Taiyuan, Shanxi, China
2014-2018 B.A.

Related Work Program Coordinator

Experience: Xueda Education Technology(Chengdu) co.Ltd
2020-present

Research Assistant
Western University
2018-2020

Substitute English teacher
The Affiliated High School of Shanxi University
2018