

# Meta Analysis of Sino-Foreign Cooperative Education Policy on Higher Education Institution in China

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**Abstract:** In an atmosphere of global developments never seen before, China has decided to keep opening up and engage in active international cooperation. One of the key focuses for the future growth of educational institutions is the internationalization of education. A fairly comprehensive and methodical policy structure is being formed as reformation along with liberalization facilitated by the subsequent implementation of multiple kinds of Sino-foreign cooperative education initiatives. With an apparent movement toward globalization along with increasingly frequent educational institutions exchanges and thus Chinese universities actively engage in Sino-foreign cooperative education underneath the umbrella of policies. Furthermore, the scope of Sino-Foreign Cooperative Education is continually growing. Investigating ways to advance Sino-foreign cooperative education, maintain its promotion, and raise its standard constitutes several worthwhile endeavors. This, current meta-analysis article, which focuses on SFCE, attempts to investigate China's operational circumstances, including HEIs' perceptions of inclusivity in program execution, in light of the aforementioned disagreement. As a result, issues associated with the development of SFCE in China, its past and present, the challenges encountered while implementing SFCE therein, and suggestions to improve the SFCE learning atmosphere present-day in China have been collected and analyzed.

**Keywords:** Sino-foreign cooperative education, policy, higher education institution, meta-analysis

## 1. Introduction

The phenomenon of higher education institution (HEI) becoming more internationalized is now widely acknowledged and international collaboration within education administration has grown to be a crucial aspect of cross-border educational exchanges. An increasingly interconnected and interdependent world is the result of cross-border movements of people, ideas, values, knowledge, technology, and economic activity, which is referred to as globalization. Among the sectors impacted by globalization is education (Lourenco & Paiva, 2024; Rizvi et al., 2022; Tight, 2021). The commercialization process, the high-tech insurgence, the marketplace consciousness, besides the framework of industrial and widely distributed knowledge remain some of the most powerful forces driving globalization, and they all have an effect on education (Wang, 2019). The original, singular HEI environment, the character of HEI in the nation, and the constant expectation in HEIs have all transformed as a result of globalization, which has encouraged the entry of foreign institutions of higher learning and multinational companies entering one country (Suspitsyna, 2021).

Sooner or later, it has been stated that there is no doubt that the globalization of education has altered the frameworks that allow for the provision of quality education, enabled an explosion of cross-border learning, and had a variety of structural effects on various educational systems across the globe. Indeed, globalization of education directly contributes to the growth of cross-border education (Lourenco & Paiva, 2024). At the time, internationalization, as a means of addressing the possibilities as well as challenges that arise from globalization, which is quickly emerging as one of the most, significant and intricate influences influencing the advancement of education (Marinoni & Cardona, 2024; Makinen, 2023).

Being among the fastest-moving trends in the internationalization of HEI is a Sino-foreign cooperative education (SFCE); the context of SFCE encompasses higher education that takes place in a nation other than the native nation of the awarding institution. This includes commercial programs, franchising, twinning degrees, program articulations, branch campuses, virtual/distance learning, and program transfers. It plays a crucial role in internationalization and is essential to the globalization of education (Kapfudzaruwa, 2024; de Wit & Deca, 2020).

For example, the British Council anticipates that China and India will become the primary contributors of the increase in graduate student influx, with China projected to account approximately 338.000 of all graduate students studying inside the country. Globalization, or an economical trend which has become part of the twentieth century reality, is to blame for the growing internationalization of education, which continues to be one of the biggest glitches facing HEIs across the globe (Xu, 2023; Knight, 2021; Leask & Gayardon, 2021).

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 The State of SFCE in China

As the world economy becomes more interconnected, HEI will inevitably become more internationally and globalized. Numerous nations have implemented measures to foster collaboration in HEI, facilitate reciprocal advancement and enhancement, and accelerate the growth and success of globalization in HEI (Sehoole et al., 2024). As a result, SFCE is now recognized as one of the tandem of HEI in China (Lo & Pan, 2021; MOEPRC, 1999). Eventually, different policies and rules have been disclosed by China's education authorities throughout various times due to the rapid development of SFCE.

The efforts to further internationalize China HEI sector have benefited from a number of accomplishments in strengthening the policy framework. The research under consideration looks at the previous forty years of Chinese cooperative educational legislation, addressing its historical background, the present scenario, and potential developments in the future (Frezghi et al., 2019). In fact, China's education transformation 2035 outlines the following principles as its steering principles: bringing citizens together, developing trustworthiness holistically, cultivating abilities, developing a workforce, putting the needs of individuals first, and promoting ethical, cognitive, physiological, and visually appealing development upon every level (Guo et al., 2022; Zhu, 2019).

To strengthen the internationalizing of HEI institutions, it is imperative to be simultaneously articulate the impact, evaluate the policy's drawbacks, and actively investigate remedies and suggestions grounded in real Sino-Foreign cooperative education experiences. It could lead to the intrinsic worth of the institutional framework being restored and open the door for further international connections amongst HEIs. The primary driving force that influences students to pursue education elsewhere in China is the intrinsic desire for knowledge, uniqueness, and the pursuit of challenges. Conversely, the most compelling factor that attracts students to study is their anticipation of a successful future in the country (Qiu et al., 2024; Wu et al., 2019).

Supplementary, in the framework of HEI internationalization, the Chinese government gives careful guidance, guiding institutions on when, when, what, and how to operate using both economic and political sources. As a result, the goal of Chinese education serves to educate the successors to the trigger of the working class and become an additional essential component for the lead to democratic development; it contributes to raising the entire Chinese nation's technological and societal level with and gradually eradicates all the significant distinctions among urban and rural areas, as well as by providing two types of educational environments for rural and urban students. Ultimately, in 2023, SFCE becomes an expanding and quickly growing aspect of Chinese HEIs. These institutions represent a deliberate mixture of Chinese and western educational philosophies, meeting the increasing need on global insights and competing competencies in a globalized environment (Xu, 2024; Li et al., 2023; Sabzalieva et al., 2019).

Not to mention, SFCE is an entity formed by collaborations between Chinese universities and overseas educational institutions. These relationships have been institutionalized through agreements that define the partnering universities' aims, governance structures, and academic programs. Notable examples are the University of Nottingham in Ningbo, China (UNNC), Shanghai Jiao Tong University's partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University. These universities are intended to provide programs that combine the best aspects of both educational systems, giving student's unique learning opportunities and a broad, international viewpoint (Li et al., 2023; Lo & Pan, 2021; Wang, 2019).

Some of the main advantages of such joint programs are their capacity to combine international curriculum with local experience. For example, students at HEIs frequently follow a curriculum that integrates Western teaching practices with Chinese context and expertise. This combination enables pupils to have a global perspective while simultaneously comprehending the subtleties of their local environment. This method is especially useful in disciplines such as commerce, engineering, and social sciences, where international norms and practices can considerably improve local industries. Also, when compared to other traditional universities in China, this SFCE offer students a unique learning experience due to have a greater number of foreign staff members than Chinese staff members, abide by to curriculum design, teaching, and assessment guidelines from cooperative foreign universities, and provide high-quality cooperative education in an EMI context (Guo et al., 2022; Zhao, 2021; Zhu, 2019).

More importantly, SFCE frequently provide students the possibility to earn dual degrees or certificates accepted in both Chinese and foreign universities. This combined accreditation increases students' educational accomplishments as well as potential worldwide employment. Companies increasingly search for employees that had been trained in varied educational environments along with a thorough awareness of various social and functional settings. As a result, following graduation from traditional institutions or SFCE in HEIs, a significant proportion of Chinese students pursue graduate programs in Anglophone environments. As per the National Data of 2021 by the China National Bureau of Statistics, the number of Chinese students who pursued education in SFCE increased threefold from 229,300 in 2009, to 662,100 in 2018. Furthermore, Chinese students have emerged as the world's largest and fastest-growing group of international students. This is due to a number of factors, such as genuine foreign cultural settings, career prospects, excellent educational opportunities, and contexts for learning languages (Li et al., 2023; Zou et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2020; Wang, 2019).

In a nutshell, today's China setting reflects a significant evolution in HEI, characterized by international collaboration and a commitment to academic excellence. While SFCE offer numerous benefits, including enhanced global perspectives and dual qualifications, China also face challenges related to educational integration and accessibility. However, the rise of SFCE is in reaction to China's larger education and economic initiatives. The Chinese government understands the value of global engagement in promoting invention and financial prosperity. By collaborating with well-known foreign universities, Chinese HEIs hope to improve their worldwide positions, recruit students from abroad, and strengthen the ability to conduct research. This approach demonstrates a dedication to increasing higher educational excellence and preparing Chinese students for job opportunities around the world.

## 2.2 Issues of SFCE in China

One significant and rapidly developing aspect of China's higher education system is SFCE. Improving educational quality, promoting globalization, and satisfying the demands of the global marketplace is the objectives of the alliance involving Chinese and foreign universities. Such cooperative efforts have changed over the past few decades as a result of several distinct framework and policies, influencing the growth of HEI in China. The establishment of SCFE dates back to the late 1900s, when China started to liberalize and restructure its economy. International cooperation in higher education was initially encouraged by explicit initiatives in the decade that followed. In order to raise the caliber of Chinese universities and prepare students for the global marketplace, the primary goal is to integrate foreign educational practices and standards into China's education framework.

In fact, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China newly released policies concerning SFCE in HEI, which established the groundwork for such collaborations. This rule established the guidelines for creating cooperative programs, including demands for equitable participation from Chinese and international partners as well as guidelines for administrative procedures and educational requirements. It was a major step in institutionalizing SFCE and guaranteeing that courses offered under such programs upheld strong academic standards. By means of multiple modifications in policy as well as organizational strategies, the Chinese government has boosted cooperative education in the past few years. The national medium- and long-term reform in education, along with development's new policy blueprint, highlights the necessity of collaborating internationally to raise the standard of higher education. In addition to encouraging HEIs to increase greater global participation, this blueprint promoted the growth of high-quality international cooperation programs.

Further refining the initiative, the 20st century of China's Education Modernization 2035 plan underscored the strategic importance of international collaboration in HEI. It proposed the development of a "world-class" education system and the establishment of more SFCE joint educational institutions. The institution is exemplary of how SFCE partnerships can operate at a high level, offering internationally recognized degrees and promoting cross-cultural understanding.

Throughout the past few years, eventually, promoting SFCE has served as a significant factor in restructuring and redesigning HEIs in many nations (Hazelkorn, 2020; Buckner, 2019). In addition to internationalizing HEIs, Chinese authorities increasingly collaborate across borders to improve educational and academic excellence, boost institutional prestige, and meet social requirements (Li et al., 2023). With a growing demand for comprehensive expertise and specialized abilities in the changing workforce, the Chinese government has realized the significance of expanding foreign educational opportunities at HEI and recruiting talented personalities (Xu, 2023). Such awareness and commitment for enhancing environmental conditions manifest throughout a country's educational strategy and efforts to develop various international collaborations, with SFCE serving as the major catalyst.

Despite many Chinas HEIs see internationalization as a key operational strategy and integrate it into the institution goals and expectations, its meaning is occasionally not obvious. In reality, an international strategy for HEI is dominated by a viable, progressive, and Western-oriented perspective (Guo et al., 2022; De Wit & Altbach, 2021). Given the intricate and numerous meanings of internationalization in HEI, various institutions possess distinct perspectives upon this issue, and consequently a procedure for internationalizing HEI varies accordingly. Dealing within the regional setting, in addition to institutional issues resembling framework, approach, and tradition, all have a synergistic impact on the procedure of internationalization (Sehooole et al., 2024). Monitoring SFCE may indicate differences across educational institutions concerning how far it achieves educational internationalization as indicated.

Despite contemporary educational strategies, which are generally influenced by national debates, SFCE proposes more versatility in adapting to globalization. In regards to SFCE on HEI, the majority of the research concentrated on either the broad paradigm or various real-world scenarios at conventional Chinese educational institutions, infrequently addressing HEI in the setting of SFCE (Chan & Wu, 2020). It is important to note the unique characteristics of SFCE, which is acknowledged as an autonomous worldwide institution in China rather than splintered globalization approaches. Unlike associated schools, which exclusively provide one or two specialty programs, all SFCE are independent educational institutions that construct HEI programs in a broader range of fields. Such a differentiation restricts the applicability of past study outcomes within this particular category. Despite such studies examining the strategies and justifications underlying international colleges and universities, the majority has been conducted in national inquiry and receives inadequate scrutiny from the worldwide educational sector (Wen & Hu, 2023; Gao & Liu, 2020; Wu, 2019).

SFCE initiatives in education have profoundly influenced the nation's HEIs setting, helping the nation to achieve its objectives regarding educational quality and internationalization. Though such values have culminated in beneficial developments and increased global cooperation, continuing dedication to control of quality as well as strategic planning will remain critical for tackling issues and guaranteeing the initiatives' long-term viability. As China's HEIs sphere evolves, Sino-foreign cooperative education will continue to be a vital element of the nation's worldwide educational agenda (Wen et al., 2022; Zha et al., 2019).

### 2.3 Evolution of SFCE in China

According to the Regulations of the People's Republic of China on SFCE in HEIs, SFCE is the practice of internalizing in China involving world institutions that collaborate in organizing educational institutions to conduct operations with Chinese residents as the primary enrollment objective. In contrast to Singapore, Malaysia, the Middle East, and numerous other nations that permit or at least encourage foreign universities to establish branches in the respective countries, China's HEI is remarkably open (Wen & Hu, 2023; Zhang et al., 2022).

Following China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO), SCFE has become a rapidly expanding educational model within the country (Mavroidis & Sapir, 2023). In the realm of HEI, a partnership between international and Chinese educational institutions refers to Zhongwai Hezuo Banxue as the development of educational programs within China, primarily for Chinese nationals (Dai et al., 2020; Li, 2019). For example, a total of nine international campuses are located in China, according to statistics from MOEPRC as of 2018. Business-related areas of study, including accounting, finance, and management, make up the majority of categories (42.7%), with information technology (12%), engineering (11.3%), and health sciences (5.6%) following closely behind. The United Kingdom, America, and Russia constitute the primary countries of origin of the foreign collaborators (Huang, 2023; Yang, 2023).

China's educational sector has opened to the rest of the globe as it joined the WTO in 2001 as well as declared that it was compliant with the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATs) (Mavroidis & Sapir, 2023). Foreign HEIs have permission to conduct educational programs in China under GATs, along with those applicable to Chinese laws, yet only after establishing partnership agreements with Chinese educational organizations and obtaining legal status and approval from Chinese authorities (Ying & Wenjing, 2023). This occurrence, which additionally involves pertinent collaboration in the sphere of HEI, is known as "Chinese-foreign cooperatively run schools (Wang & Yuqi, 2021; Tang & Li, 2020)." Due in large part to China's rising economic status as the second biggest nation in the entire globe and its growing need for excellent resources for educational institutions, the UK joint institutions of higher education have turned toward appealing to the Chinese education sector.

One may argue that the twentieth century represents the "limerence" of Sino-foreign cooperation, particularly in light of both the UK-China bilateral partnership's formation in 2004 and the 2006 revision of China's high-quality oversight framework for SFCE (Ying & Wenjing, 2023; Lo & Pan, 2021; Wang, 2019). China and the UK have collaborated on various organizations and initiatives that improved significantly. For example, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, authorized in 2006, as well as the University of Nottingham Ningbo, acknowledged by the Chinese Ministry of Education in 2004, is two of the Sino-British joint HEIs that have proven to be effective instances of Sino-foreign cooperation in managing HEIs (Xu, 2024; Li et al., 2023; Wen & Hu, 2023; Yang, 2023).

However, China-Britain educational cooperation is underway, but there is no conclusion to remarks or cautions about it. Chinese *Universities: The Reality Beyond the Rhetoric* (2006) is a particularly significant analysis. Six experts possessing a wealth of Chinese experience have contributed their opinions for the study. Although the text acknowledged that China is going to become a global center for HEI, it is not evidence that collaborating with China remains beneficial. Instead of just jumping into China headfirst, British HEI would be better off carefully evaluating whether to build an effective strategy for SFCE involving Chinese universities and the United Kingdom (Lee et al., 2024; Liying, 2021).

## 2.4 Policy of SFCE in China

Internationalization is critical to the development of Chinese academic institutions. The term transnational educational institution, considered an innovative form of academic educational opportunities, is growing increasingly popular in China. It collaborates with foreign and Chinese higher learning frameworks to establish initiatives or universities in China, with the primary goal of delivering academic programs for Chinese students.

Furthermore, SFCE is a key component of higher learning globalization and the current university structure. In this context, SFCE institutions and programs sanctioned by the Ministry of Education received high-quality curriculum resources from overseas. Students can get foreign educational exposure simply by departing China, resulting in lower expenditures in comparison to subsidized studies abroad (Miani & Picucci-Huang, 2023; Ying & Wenjing, 2023; Zhang & Ling, 2022).

SFCE as an important component of China's educational reform policy, demonstrating the country's commitment to global integration and academic success. This policy, which began in the late twentieth century, attempts to improve the quality of HEI in China by encouraging collaboration between Chinese institutions and international universities. The cooperative education paradigm facilitates cross-cultural exchange, educational innovation, and the advancement of academic standards (Zhou et al., 2024; Dong & Ni, 2020). Under this policy, Chinese institutions work with prominent overseas universities to provide joint programs, degrees, and courses. These collaborations allow students to benefit from a variety of instructional techniques, global viewpoints, and cutting-edge research facilities. The collaborative approach frequently entails the exchange of curriculum, teachers, and resources, which ensures that the educational experience is enhanced by international knowledge. Such agreements have the goal to address the growing need for worldwide competitive education as well as to provide students with the qualifications required in a fast-changing worldwide job marketplace (Li et al., 2023; Chan & Wu, 2023; Zhang & Ling, 2022; Mok et al., 2020; Wang, 2019).

The Chinese government promotes such initiatives with legislation aimed at making it easier to launch Sino-foreign collaborative ventures. Procedures have been put in place to guarantee that foreign universities comply with China's educational demands yet retaining academic credibility and excellence. Furthermore, the government offers benefits such as exclusive treatment for foreign institutions and funding for partnership agreements. This comprehensive strategy benefits not exclusively the local education system, but also China's overall educational orientation (Zhou et al., 2024; Yang, 2023; Zhu, 2019). In reality, the preposition "Sino-foreign" indicates the importance of Chinese authority in relationships. The participation of a Chinese university, whether in the way of information, prosperity, or other kinds of ownership liberties, is the cornerstone of collaboration. Foreign affiliate campuses must be established with the involvement of regional higher education institutions. To accomplish this, the curriculum needs to conform to national educational ideas and guidelines. Authoritarian principles and techniques appear to be promoted within such contexts (Miani & Picucci-Huang, 2023; Liu & Wang, 2021).

However, recent study data shows that this specific kind of globalizing program framework, along with execution, demonstrates the growing prevalence of neoliberal concepts and language. Neoliberalism possesses a number of tangible characteristics, including a requirement for open markets and the privatization process, a stress on individual accountability, and personal investment in intellectual property. Many academics are concerned that the penetration of neoliberal principles in higher educational institutions might worsen disparities and consolidate authority (Li et al., 2023; Liying, 2021; Wang et al., 2020; Wang, 2019).

Following the identical plot, neoliberalism's economic reasoning sees education as an enterprise, students as clients and educational institutions as rivals for revenue. Investigating the legal framework of transatlantic educational collaboration, this was characterized as a sort of decentralization market-driven government oversight. Diversifying educational institutions by accepting abroad colleges generates numerous educational options; nevertheless, it also amplifies capitalist involvement (Han, 2023; Lai & Jung, 2023; Chen, 2020).

Afterwards, the market forces paradigm towards HEIs exerted an important influence on developing generations of employees who will be competent on a worldwide scale. In this setting, neoliberal concepts symbolize a "white/Anglo/European/American" dominant position in the global marketplace, emphasizing the supremacy of occidental understandings, customs, and lifestyles over local settings. For example, choosing partners in Sino-foreign cooperation mirrors prestige cultures. In China, for example, the majority of international educational operations center upon collaboration with Western HEIs, as a brand's superiority' in the globally recognized higher education pyramid helps to promote its image (Robertson & Wu, 2023; Gruin, 2021; Duckett, 2020; Kadri, 2020).

Reflecting on Bourdieu's theory, Mu (2020) asserted students desire particular kinds of cultural funding, such as English proficiency, foreign qualifications, and European pedagogies, owing to the metaphorical significance linked to the occidental world. Furthermore, others argue that promoting internationalization disguises itself as education collaborations and the exchange of sophisticated expertise and methodologies, thereby impacting the restructuring prevailing dominance structures. Such beliefs inadvertently lead from the segregation of the occidental world along with other nations by means of the proliferation of global higher education which marginalizes regional values and existence. As a result, this article suggested that the methods and techniques used in the procedure of internationalization are substantially similar with the occidental perspective of the postcolonial age (Ma, 2024; Wang, 2024; Lai & Jung, 2023; Mu & Dooley, 2023).

Fostering SFCE on HEI reflects the effort made by the government to find solutions to internationalization and react to diverse societal changes. Yet, such initiatives remain scarcely immune towards the consequences of neoliberal pressures and Western hegemony, culminating in a proclivity to seek revenue-generating opportunities and profitable opportunities in nations around the world. In regards to higher education, China's market-driven expansion has hastened the international market. At present, the significant study of enforced neoliberal consequences on the strategy of broadening HEI programs is unexplored.

Thus, this article contends that an in-depth look at SFCEs reveals why contemporary HEIs conceive and implement internationalization at the higher education levels while engaging as well as negotiating global settings. Nevertheless, issues persist, such as guaranteeing high standards of education and balancing global influence with regional goals for education. Strategies ought to be continuously evaluated and adapted to overcome such issues as well as optimize the advantages of SFCE. In a nutshell, SFCE is a key component of China's educational initiative, which aims to promote global cooperation and excellence in education. By using foreign relationships, China improves educational standards and educates students for an uncertain globalized world.

## 2.5 Framework of SFCE in China

The SFCE framework is a revolutionary approach to higher education in China, aimed at integrating global educational standards with regional educational frameworks. This framework, developed and refined over the last few decades, symbolizes China's strategic objective of improving its educational system and fostering international academic collaboration in HEIs. The key aims of this vanguard framework include raising educational quality, introducing varied pedagogical approaches, and strengthening the global standing of Chinese graduates, along with the components outlined as follows (Dawodu et al., 2024; Liu, 2024; Knight, 2021; Liu & Wang, 2021; Tight, 2021; Chan & Wu, 2020; Kadri, 2020; Buckner, 2019).

- a. Interactions and Collaborations: The framework prioritizes the formation of collaborations between Chinese institutions and foreign universities. These kinds of agreements frequently include collaborative educational initiatives, dual-degree promotions, and student exchange opportunities. Each country's institutions collaborate to develop curriculum that incorporate global and local academic standards. Such collaborations tend to be managed by explicit commitments outlining every participant's obligation, duties, as well as commitments.
- b. Curriculum and Pedagogy: The curriculum of Sino-foreign cooperative programs is intended to leverage the qualities of both systems of education. It might entail combining global standardization along with regional standards of education. For example, programs might include international viewpoints and case studies while simultaneously dealing with local industrial demands. The pedagogical design frequently stresses experiential and research-based education to prepare students for the global workforce.
- c. Quality Assurance and Regulation: The Chinese government has established a framework for regulation to assure the high standard of cooperation initiatives. The Ministry of Education along with other appropriate agencies is accountable for charge of approving and accrediting collaborative courses. Such constraints strive to keep standards for education respectable while also preventing education from becoming commercialized. Continuous evaluations as well as audits take place to guarantee that the established standards remain fulfilled.
- d. Academic and Resources Sharing: Academic collaboration initiatives and interdisciplinary initiatives in research have been embedded into the structure. Chinese and international academics collaborate frequently on research and academia projects, enriching the educational environment and encouraging intercultural intellectual's communication. Furthermore, exchanging resource including laboratories, libraries, and technologies improves the educational environment for students.

In this context, HEIs launched different changes and developments in administration, facilities, academics, regulation, evaluation, and pedagogy while assimilating characteristics of educational methodologies from foreign partners. Furthermore, the SFCE framework launched by the Chinese government seeks to revolutionize HEIs by harnessing global skills and capabilities. For example, universities recruit a significant proportion of foreign academics, implement international curriculums, and provide non-local foreign language instruction to establish educational settings and perspectives completely opposed to traditional Chinese educational institutions.

Furthermore, to distinguish apart in the academic marketplace through this framework, SFCE branded HEIs through the phrase "study abroad at home." Several words in institutional visions of the future such as "global citizens" and "world-class university" frequently employed to publicize its objectives of educating competitive graduates spanning worldwide job markets along with achieving an important position in the internationally recognized higher education institutions pyramid. Such entrenched international visions entice prospective students who crave for metropolitan cities, particularly students from the privileged socioeconomic strata (Miani & Picucci-Huang, 2023; Liu, 2024; Liu & Wang, 2021; Chan & Wu, 2020).

Following that, given a legislative and regulatory body standpoint, SFCE is fundamentally transnational and bound by the accreditation requirements imposed by both countries of origin and guest educational institutions. Nonetheless, Chinese-foreign collaboration as it exists is criticized as uneven and unilateral. In the framework of occidental education, SFCE can be considered an indication of international branch campuses (IBCs), which has

become a technique used by occidental universities to extend the worldwide educational marketplace, especially throughout the developing nations of the globe. Drawing on this point of view, other academics witnessed Western culture as being propagated at such HEIs along with offered proof.

For example, Xu (2023) analyzed promotional material as an advertising technique, revealing that IBCs prioritize academic achievement in extracurricular endeavors in nations across the globe and admission to occidental student educational institutions. While Siltaoja et al. (2019) noted that IBCs present itself as exceptional educational institutions by using English as the primary means of teaching and following occidental educational methods, this poses the danger of repeating colonialism rhetoric throughout global contacts. In terms of academic assistance, Yu (2021) discovered that Chinese culture-related programs appear more occasionally compared at regional institutions and make up a small proportion of the overall curriculum framework.

Finally, the SFCE framework reflects a daring and new method for approaching higher education in China. This framework seeks to improve the quality of education, stimulate intellectual interchange, and educate students for an increasingly competitive global setting by promoting cross-border relationships and incorporating international standards into local norms. Notwithstanding the difficulties, the continual refining of this framework demonstrates China's dedication to improving the country's educational system while adding to worldwide educational dialogue. SFCE is expected to keep serving as an essential component of China's educational approach, pushing both national and international higher education advancement.

### 3. Challenges of SFCE in China

China, as a developing nation offering both the benefits of buoyant economic expansion and currently underway substantial demand for HEI, is without uncertainty among the countries exhibiting the greatest opportunity for international campus growth throughout the entire globe. Not to mention, several of the world's leading educational institutions have collaborated with China HEIs on the country's mainland, providing an exclusive setting to promote the internationalization of China HEIs.

Without doubt, SFCE is an intentional attempt on China's part to improve its university structure via global cooperation. In this context, China HEIs collaborate with universities around the world particularly the Western in an effort to raise student job marketability, promote worldwide viewpoints, and enhance the standard of HEI. But notwithstanding of its benefits, this kind of strategy has a number of serious shortcomings that affect its durability in addition to safety and effectiveness.

Nowadays, as a result, continental China's SFCE resides in the Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta, wherein economic conditions become most thoroughly industrialized. HEIs have started to operate institutions with autonomous legal identities and campuses, providing courses for both undergraduates and graduates as well as awarding certificates to students from their own institutions along with foreign HEIs. For instance, SFCE has spread throughout China, with campuses including the University of Nottingham Ningbo, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (Suzhou), Beijing Normal University-Hong Kong Baptist United International College (Zhuhai), New York University in Shanghai, and Duke University's Kunshan Campus, among others (Zhou et al., 2024; Xu, 2023; Ying a& Wenjing, 2023; Dong & Ni, 2020).

Consequently, this paper believes such colleges and universities to provide possibilities for further transformation of China's HEI framework, although the challenges it could confront during its rise to prominence must constantly be properly anticipated. As beneficiaries of educational opportunities, the perspectives of students and feedback deserve to be addressed in the course of study. Students appear to be one of the most significant constituents in HEI frameworks. Following meta-analysis in the ocean of literature review, this paper also finds out various issues concerning SFCE have come to light as follows (Qiu et al., 2024; Makinen, 2023; Zhang & Ling, 2022; Zou et al., 2022; De Wit & Deca, 2020; Mok et al., 2020; Liying 2021; ; Chen, 2020; Frezghi & Tsegay, 2019):

- a. Synchronization of Academic Requirements: Among the foremost significant challenges associated with Sino-foreign cooperative education is coordinating the educational requirements and procedures of China and foreign institutions. Variations in curriculum, instructional approaches, and evaluation procedures might result in disparities in educational achievement. Western schools, for example, may encourage analytical thinking and exploratory study, whereas China HEIs tend to put a greater emphasis on conventional education and standardized assessments. Conciliating the differences is critical to ensuring students acquire a coherent and excellent educational experience which fulfills both global and local standards.
- b. Assurance of Quality and Governance: Sustaining the standards of excellence and uniformity of SFCE is an important objective. The Chinese government has developed governing structures to regulate such initiatives, although ensuring exacting standards of quality is occasionally challenging. Foreign institutions must adhere to Chinese educational policies while upholding the same standards of excellence. This simultaneous adherence might result in discrepancies in the implementation of programs and assessment. Furthermore, the rapid proliferation of collaboration programs places an increased demand on the regulatory bodies to appropriately oversee and evaluate such initiatives.
- c. Educational Concepts and Methodological Varies: Notwithstanding their benefits, such collaborative structures encounter a number of challenges. One key challenge involves attempting to maintain equilibrium between

various pedagogical strategies and procedures. The combination of foreign and Chinese methodologies can occasionally result in confrontations over methodologies for teaching, curriculum components, and evaluation systems. Addressing such discrepancies necessitates meticulous preparation and continual interaction among the two institutions.

- d. **Sociocultural and Pedagogic Disparities:** The execution and effectiveness of collaborative education programs could potentially be influenced by the cultural and pedagogical disparities between the Chinese and international educational institutions. For example, educational environments and instructional methods might differ greatly throughout nations. Chinese students may be habituated with a more teacher-centered, authoritarian style of lessons, while active, student-centered teaching methods become increasingly prevalent in foreign institutions. It takes meticulous preparation and compromise on both sides in order to bridge such sociocultural disparities to ensure learning is inclusive and successful.
- e. **Financial and Resource Restrictions:** Sino-foreign cooperative education faces additional obstacles due to financially and limited resources. Collaborative programs establishment and upkeep demand large financial commitments from Chinese and international organizations. The facilities, administrative costs, and academic wages will all be funded by the above investments. Sustaining exceptional collaborations could prove prohibitively expensive for many educational institutions, particularly institutions that have limited funding. Apart from the escalating costs of admission resulting from international education, which can be an obstacle over students, differences in financial resources and accessibility to resources across collaborating institutions may also cause inequalities that affect the quality of the programs.
- f. **Local Relevance and Global Integration:** A further challenge involves juggling local significance along with a global perspective. SFCE programs must take into account localized academic as well as professional demands as an adjunct to fulfilling the goal of offering a global point of view. For students to be successful and employable, it is imperative that the educational experience and curriculum correspond for the Chinese labor market and national setting. Courses need to be flexible enough to include internationally recognized standards whilst still meeting the expectations of the local sector in general.
- g. **Institutional Engagement and Dedication:** Both countries need to demonstrate an exceptional level of institutional collaboration as well as commitment for SFCE to be successful. Occasionally, misalignments and disputes may originate from disparities between institutional objectives, administrative processes, even strategic objectives. For it to rise beyond such challenges, it is imperative that Chinese and international organizations have a common interest in the partnership's achievement. Building the effective collaborative educational framework requires constant interaction, united objectives, as well as reverence for one another.

Accordingly, this article anticipates that these institutions will present chances for a more thorough reform of China's higher education system. It is very important to permanently and completely assess any potential issues before moving further. Students' experiences and evaluations should hold a prominent role in learning since become the ones who receiving the education. Indeed, one of the most significant stakeholder groups in HEI systems is thought to be students. This article also believes that some of the students who had been graduated at a Sino-foreign cooperative university, some problems faced in SFCE have been emerging.

Authoritatively, one viable way to improve HEI by means of international collaboration involves SFCE in China. To get the most benefit of this paradigm, though, a number of challenges need to be overcome, including retaining local relevance, overcoming cultural gaps, managing budgetary limits, assuring quality assurance, and encouraging institutional commitment. In order to develop successful and long-lasting educational initiatives that benefit students and advance scholarly research worldwide, China and foreign international institutions might collaborate in anticipating such challenges.

#### **4. Suggestions of SFCE in China**

China has witnessed significant changes throughout the educational scene recently, mostly due to the country's desire to continue integrating within the international economy of knowledge. Indeed, this is the logic of that globalization and internationalization emerged as an essential response to this changing worldview in a quality education. This has led to the identification of an entirely novel phase in SFCE as well as the definition of the ambition's developmental aim, which is to improve quality and efficiency while contributing to the larger context and boosting capacity.

Through cross-cultural exchange and pooled resources, this SFCE framework makes advantage of foreign relationships to improve the caliber and reach of China's HEIs. In fact, China is working to create a more universal standards-compliant educational system through the integration of international curriculum, practices in education, and academic skills. In order to adequately prepare students for a globalized workforce, SFCE programs expose students to a variety of perspectives in addition to introducing novel teaching and learning pedagogies.

Furthermore, such collaborations enable the sharing of scholarly information and perspectives on culture, benefiting individuals from China as well as other countries. Possibilities for educational enlightenment scientific advances and mutual understanding arise through the collaborative efforts of Chinese universities and their overseas counterparts. SFCE is becoming more and more recognized as an essential strategy to cultivating comprehensive,



internationally competent people as China continues to stress the value of an internationally recognized educational system. By working together, China may resolve the issues facing modern educational institutions while simultaneously offering students the resources required to succeed in a globalized society.

On the other hand, the applicable laws, rules, policies, and implementing strategies become organically combined to form the SFCE regulatory framework. In light of the internationalization of HEIs, this article also actively explores the valuable reconstructive strategies and efficient tactics of SFCE from the four perspectives of the policy itself, external variables, policy value, and its implementation as well as development. Given the internationalization of HEI, certainly it possesses profound practical consequences.

In the end, SFCE is a key component of China's plan to improve its higher education system by working with other countries. This strategy, which aims to combine local demands with international standards of education, has a number of shortcomings as well as areas for development. Additionally, there have been a few suggestions for policies that might be put into practice to optimize the program's longevity and efficacy. The following recommendations seek to solve present problems and create a strong foundation for upcoming SFCE initiatives (Lee et al., 2024; Liu, 2024; Zhou et al., 2024; Lai & Jung, 2023; Zhao et al., 2023; Feng, 2022; Wang, 2021; Dong a & Ni, 2020; Xiao et al., 2020; Zeng, 2020; Chunli, 2019):

- a. Curriculum Uniformity and Accreditation: A fundamental problem in SFCE is matching curriculum and accrediting requirements between China and international HEIs. To solve this, a uniform structure for curriculum creation and accreditation of programs ought to be implemented. The framework must incorporate explicit norms for syllabuses, instructional approaches, and evaluation standards to maintain uniformity among the partner institutions. By creating a uniform accrediting process, China and international HEIs may ensure that joint programs fulfill high quality requirements and provide a coherent learning environment.
- b. Upgrading Quality Assurance Procedures: To ensure the effectiveness and reliability of collaborative educational programs, a robust quality assurance processes remain essential. It is recommended that the China government implement routine audits and reviews of collaborative initiatives in order to improve the accuracy of its reliability procedures. It is possible to accomplish by establishing an impartial organization towards quality assurance which keeps an eye on program execution, evaluates student progress, and offers suggestions for ongoing development. Incorporating external stakeholders such as industry professionals as well as peers from academia into the evaluation procedure may provide significant benefits and guarantee thorough evaluations.
- c. Optimizing Financial Assistance and Resource Distribution: The effective execution of collaborative educational programs is hampered by a number of financial challenges. In order to mitigate this problem, the government ought to think about providing more funding towards such initiatives. This assistance might arrive within the form of exemptions from taxes, grants, or scholarships for colleges and universities which employ cooperative education. Educational institutions may additionally increase control over the expenditures of academic wages, facilities and managerial costs by setting aside particular funds for the creation and preservation of collaborative programs. Furthermore, necessary to guarantee equitable program delivery and quality is the equitable distribution of resources across partner institutions.
- d. Encouraging Cultural and Pedagogical Collaboration: Policy measures should concentrate on urging cultural interaction and pedagogical compliance across Chinese and foreign institutions so as to eradicate cultural and pedagogical disparities. It is possible to accomplish from setting up collaborative training courses that introduce academics to various teaching philosophies and methodologies. Furthermore, including cross-cultural interaction knowledge in the curriculum may assist students in navigating and appreciating a variety of academic settings. Facilitating cooperative research and scholarly endeavors might additionally cultivate reciprocal comprehension and assimilation among affiliated establishments.
- e. Sustaining Regional Relevancy and International Competence: Although having an international perspective is important, collaborative educational initiatives must also continue to be applicable to the workforce and culture setting of China. Authorities ought to require collaborative initiatives to incorporate components that tackle regional industry demands and cultural concerns. The consultations upon on an ongoing basis with members of the educational community and specialists in education can assist in customizing programs to satisfy regional needs while embracing international standards. This strategy will guarantee that each program will have a beneficial impact on the national economy as well as increase the job readiness of graduates.
- f. Promoting Organizational Devotion and Coordination: Significant organizational dedication and collaboration is essential for SFCE to be beneficial, from both Chinese and foreign institutions. Governments must promote partnering institutions' open channels of communication and common strategic objectives. For example, conducting forums for discussion and cooperation, including collaborative conferences and seminars, might assist to accomplish this matter. Official agreements that specify the obligations, duties, and standards of both sides may assist as well to avoid misunderstanding and guarantee a fruitful collaboration.

## 5. Conclusion

With the ongoing advancement toward globalization as well as the constant improvement in the standard of educational implementation, internationalization has emerged as an overall framework for expanding the scope of higher educational institutions in numerous countries. Following the reformation and opening up, China has demonstrated a commitment to exploring the HEI growth plan, continuously enhancing the SFCE guidelines and processes in HEIs, and striving for China's higher educational institutions to meet world standards. But a thousand miles begins with a single step, and the road to perfecting the SFCE policy for HEIs is a long and winding one. The only way that SFCE will remain grounded within right now, look forward, acknowledge weaknesses, explore simultaneously within and without, and comply with the simultaneous action of “coming in” or “introduction” is if SFCE remain on present moment. For the purpose to succeed in the quality restoration and implication advancement of China’s education sector in the aim of boosting the globalization of China’s HEI, SFCE can only strengthen and implement the policy framework and constitutional framework of SFCE in such a way.

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