

**International Co-operation Between Chinese
and UK Higher Educational Institutions in
the Arts**

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Abstract

This research discusses the concept of *guanxi*, and how *guanxi* affects international co-operation between Chinese and UK higher education institutions in the arts. This study uses Foucault's philosophy of *dispositif* to build a new theoretical model called the *guanxi dispositif* (GD) model, which is an original idea that comprises a combination of Western and Eastern philosophies and discourse analysis.

The research questions posed are: RQ1. How deep is the involvement of *guanxi* in co-operative categories in arts related HEIs? RQ2. How widely of *guanxi*'s involvement in the area? RQ3. How do higher education organisations use *guanxi* in their relationships with their partner institutions in the Arts and Humanities? In order to answer these questions, pragmatic paradigm and Methods-Strands Matrix (MM) research designs were used to build the fieldwork of this research, which was largely composed of questionnaires and interviews employed in a quality-quantity-quality process to analyse meta-inference.

The findings suggest that: 1) *guanxi* exists in most forms of international co-operation conducted by Chinese people in higher education institutions; 2) *guanxi* increase the efficiency of co-operation, especially in relationship setup; 3) Chinese people tend to use *guanxi* in international co-operation, and Western practitioners prove willing to use it more during China-related collaborations; 4) *guanxi* exists in a simplified but not weakened form in modern China. Future studies should continue to test the theoretical framework of the *guanxi dispositif* (GD) model formulated by this research.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and that I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This study focuses on international co-operation between Chinese and UK higher education institutions in the Arts. The purpose of the research is to understand how the Chinese social concept of *guanxi* (a Chinese term, which literally means relationships) is employed in the higher education sector and to map the involvement of *guanxi* in co-operative relationships. It proposes a methodology for understanding the context of international co-operation in higher education through its relationship with *guanxi*. The background and reasons for the importance of international co-operation will be given, followed by a literature review of *guanxi*, and Foucault's framework of *dispositif*. An intersectional understanding of both concepts, which I shall introduce as the idea of as *Guanxi Dispositif*, will serve as the fundamental frame for this study. The process of fieldwork is used to additionally demonstrate *guanxi*'s existence and tendencies. Lastly, a theoretical framework for understanding *guanxi* in relationships will be presented.

Higher education has a complex relationship with different sectors, such as local communities, schools, governments, and international partners (Edwards, 1995; Harkavy, 1998; Barnes, and Phillips, 2000; Franklin, Bloch, and Popkewitz, 2003; Hines, 1988; Amey, Eddy, & Ozaki, 2007; Lankard, 1995; Bringle, and Hatcher, 1996; Bryson, 2016). Previous English-language research regarding international relationships has largely focused on the relationships between English speaking countries (Abramson, 1996; Bryson, 2016) and developing countries (Altbach and Knight, 2007). For example, Heffernan and Poole (2004, and 2005) evaluated the relationships between Australian universities and Chinese universities, while Wann, Hinz and Day (2010) evaluated the relationships between UK Universities

and African universities.

This research focuses on international co-operation between UK and Chinese HEIs, largely from the perspective of Chinese organisations, and is based around collaborations on research, joint student programmes, and cultural exchanges in the Arts and Humanities. The type of international co-operation in HEIs can be divided into three different categories between these two countries: **developing branch campuses**, (some Western universities have set up branch campuses in China, attached to one Chinese HEI); **joint programmes** (such as 3+1 undergraduate programmes¹ and 2+1 postgraduate programmes²); and **staff and student exchange**. A comprehensive review of *guanxi* (which literally means 'relationship') as a social concept will be included to enable its complexity to be unpacked. However, three questions must be stressed before we start analysing how *guanxi* underpins international co-operation: why is international co-operation in the higher education sector necessary? Why do we need to analyse co-operation between China and the UK? And finally, it is necessary to establish why this research chose to focus on the arts within the context of *guanxi*.

1.1. Internationalisation Orientation

'Internationalisation and globalisation became key themes in the 1990s, both in higher education policy debates and in research on higher education' (Enders, 2004, p. 361). This is firstly due to the UK's examining criteria for evaluating institutions, such as League Tables and Ranking Systems (LTRS) (Drummond,

¹ 3+1 undergraduate programme refers to a programme that students study first three years in China, and spend the final year with a overseas institution where signed a joint degree programme with their home institution.

² 2+1 postgraduate programme stands for a programme that students study the first and third year in China, and spend the second year with a overseas institution.

Torrance, and Mason, 1993; Salmi, and Saroyan, 2007), Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and Research Excellence Framework (REF) (Elton, 2000; RAE, 2009; Martin, 2011; Simth, Ward, and House, 2011; and Mryglod, Kenna, Holovatch, and Berche, 2015). There is interconnectedness between international co-operation and LTRS. On the one hand, international co-operation influences the results of LTRS, while on the other, according to Hazelkom (2007), peer ranking is the main indicator for international collaboration and co-operation. LTRS impacts how universities formulate strategy, which influences decision-making in international co-operation. Therefore, we can discern that, to a certain extent, these metrics ultimately serve to encourage international cooperation, thereby influencing the rankings of HEIs globally.

The results of REF and LTRS can 'lever opportunities' (p.9) and encourage institutions to engage in active international co-operation (REF review, 2016). The reputational leverage REF provides help to develop new collaborative research opportunities internationally and enables universities to attract and retain better students (Stern, 2016). Simultaneously, REF and LTRS give a clear picture of the positions of UK institutions, which provides guidance for partner universities to become more familiar with each other in a broad sense. Furthermore, the system depends on an assessment of the impact of research on society, together with citation information and peer review. This ensures that research contains a strong international perspective (Stern, 2016). Secondly, universities in the West, and especially the UK, are under more economic pressure than ever before because of the changes in government-funding regimes. This has led them to become more economically independent, and internationalisation has been a core way to achieve this (Johnes, 2006). This means that international co-operation presents

the opportunity to establish an increased rate of student recruitment, in order to achieve greater institutional economic independence.

In the early 20th century, it would be uncommon to link higher education (HE) to business. However, in recent years, all major European countries and governments have reduced their direct intervention in higher education and instead tried to shape them through target-setting and performance-based funding, such as REF, TEF and RAE, which were discussed in the previous section. Recent studies (Teichler, 2004) indicate that higher education institutions or individual departments are expected to become stronger strategic actors with respect to internationalisation than previously. Teichler (2004) also illustrates how governments of different countries try to shape the world order of higher education by determining the intricacies of market forces. Suddenly, marketization becomes a central phenomenon in higher education. Therefore, Murgatoryd and Morgan (1993) stress that education has changed from being 'a public service driven by professionals towards a market-driven service, fueled by purchasers and customers' (as cited in Chan, 2004, p.34).

Gray (1996) also indicates that universities have become market-oriented organisations, which are required to maintain good relationships not only with students and staff, but also with the parents of students, and so on. Therefore, effective marketing and international relationships become strategically important for the success of universities, and international co-operation also plays an important role in strategies in terms of marketing and external relations (Chan, 2004). In recent years, universities have become more financially independent, which makes them no different to any firm where survival is rooted in the constant creation of competitive advantages. The competitive advantages of HEIs, such

as rankings, quality of research and teaching, are all entangled with international co-operation.

Additionally, research indicates that innovation and development in higher education requires student engagement: Christensen and Eyring (2011) discuss how universities need to change their 'DNA' to be able to climb ahead of their competitors, and students need to be engaged in the process. This argument indicates that in addition to teaching and research, universities might need to prioritise issues related to student needs, such as student services and welfare. Moreover, Garrison and Vaughan (2008) explain that students need to be involved in the rethinking and redesigning of the educational environment and learning experience. Slaughter and Rhoades (2004), when discussing academic capitalism in the USA, suggest that student feedback and engagement is influencing practical institutional settings towards the market. These arguments all affect student recruitment in general, and how international co-operation might contribute to it. International cooperation, however, provides an opportunity to understand a given culture from multiple perspectives. It creates platforms for students to participate in internships and exchange programmes with other partner universities, in order to enrich the student experience.

This study focuses on international co-operation between the UK and China. According to the data from HESA (2020), there has been a dramatic increase of Chinese students studying in the UK from 2006/07 to 2018/19. There were 25,000 Chinese students who came to study in the UK in the 2006/07 academic year, and the number of students increased to over 85,000 in the 2018/19 academic year, composing 32% of all first year non-UK domiciled students (see Appendix 1.). According to the report of Universities UK (2017), there are £13.1 billion total

exports from international students in 2014-15, which includes tuition fees, subsistence spends, and their visitors' expenditure (Appendix 2.), and the gross benefit of international students has reached 22.6 billion in 2018 (HEPI, 2018)³. Overall, international students generate more than £25 billion for the economy and provide a significant boost to regional jobs and local businesses (see Appendix 3.). Moreover, 46% of postgraduate students are from outside the EU; the number of Chinese students at 91,215 in 2015-16 shows that China is the top contributor from non-EU countries (see Appendix 4.), and the only country showing a significant growth of numbers (UKCISA, 2018). China is still the highest ranked country for outgoing international students in the 2018/19 academic year and saw an increase of 13% of students compared to 2017/18, based on results from *International Facts and Figures 2020* (see Appendix 5.). According to these statistical reports, from an economic perspective, international co-operation with Chinese universities is necessary for maintaining the economic growth of the higher education sector as a whole in the UK.

Thirdly, Sino-British relations have a long history in terms of international co-operation, and there are increasing opportunities in a variety of different areas, including education - especially since the EU referendum (Xinhuaawang, 2018; and Gov.UK, 2017). According to a review of the Chinese Education section by the Embassy of the People's Republic of China (2014), educational co-operation between China and the UK begins in 1850 when the first group of Chinese students came to the UK to study. In 1957, Britain accepted the first group of

³ HEPI (2018), New study shows the benefits of international students are ten times greater than the costs – and are worth £310 per UK resident. [Online]. Accessed on 28 November 2020. <https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2018/01/11/new-figures-show-international-students-worth-22-7-billion-uk-cost-2-3-billion-net-gain-31-million-per-constituency-310-per-uk-resident/>

government-funded students, and since 1959, the Chinese government has offered scholarships for English students who have come to China to study. Bilateral co-operation comes in a variety of forms, which encompasses higher education areas, further education, vocational education, and language and cultural exchanges. In the report, research collaboration between UK and China has increased by 70.2% since 2014, and China ranks as the Asian country with the highest number of co-authored publications (56,556) with the UK between 2016-2019 (International Facts and Figures, 2020) (see Appendix 7.).

Given that Britain will be leaving the EU in January 2021 after a transition period, there will be an increased need for bilateral international alliances to offset the disadvantages caused by Brexit. According to the *UK Research and Development Roadmap (2020)*, the UK government plans to make the UK a global centre for research and innovation after Brexit, which defines the way HEIs should develop from 2021. *Universities UK International (2020)* indicates that the UK has the strongest collaborative research links with countries such as the US, China, and Germany. Therefore, working with Chinese institutions could potentially aid the longer-term research development of UK HEIs, and leverage additional international funding opportunities.

According to 'UK-China ties flourish at 2016 High Level People to People Dialogue' (2016), the UK and Chinese governments have signed 10 agreements in education, arts, culture, science, and media, such as the UK-China Television Coproduction Treaty; Memorandum of Understandings between National Art Museum of China; and the Tate Museum to present a British Landscapes Exhibition, to name a few key examples. In education, there are 6 main areas of co-operation: high-level reciprocal visits, student exchanges, language teaching,

joint programmes, co-operation between higher education institutions, and vocational educations (Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 2016). According to the Embassy (2016), Beijing University and The University of Edinburgh have built a joint cultural research centre; Tsinghua University, while the University of Cambridge and MIT jointly designed a low carbon research centre. In the arts, the Wuhan Conservatory of Music has set up a programme of student and staff exchange with the Royal Birmingham Conservatory; and the Shanghai Conservatory has established a joint campus in Shanghai with the Royal Academy of Music, to provide some examples.

Moreover, the recent trade war between the U.S. and China⁴, and the U.S. policy of tightening student visas⁵ has created potential opportunities for the U.K. to receive more international students from China⁶ (this may change with the presidency of Joe Biden, but at the time of writing, US-China relationships remain as described). According to international student data from the *2020 Open Doors'* report⁷, the overall annual enrollment of international students in US universities has declined 1.8% in the 2019/20 (851,957 enrolled international students) academic year compared to the 2018/19 academic year (872,214 enrolled international students), and the total number of international students has reduced from 1,095,299 students in 2018/19 to 1,075,496 students in 2019/20. It is the first time that the number of international students has declined in the U.S. in the last 15 years (see Appendix 8.). Internationalisation has brought significant economic and social benefits to the UK and a high level of cooperation is undeniably encouraged by the UK and Chinese governments, whereas there is a clear

⁴ BBS News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-45899310>

⁵ Made for Minds News: <https://www.dw.com/zh/中国教育部发布美国留学预警/a-49019316>

⁶ BBC News: <https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/world-49420707>

⁷ See more information: <https://opendoorsdata.org/data/international-students/enrollment-trends/>

political state of uncertainty between the U.S. and China, which has created significant opportunities for UK institutions.

This study is focused on co-operation within music. Currently, the Chinese government provides strong support and policies for the arts nationally. According to the Ministry of Education of People's Republic of China (from 2011 to 2018), there are existent policies which demonstrate a need for the development of staff in Arts-related HEIs. In addition, the government provides funding for a one-year arts visiting scheme for academic staff to visit an institution abroad. The arts can be recognised as a form of soft power relating to national identity, and as a vessel of national culture, knowledge, and politics (Shambaugh, 2015; Gill, and Huang, 2006; and Li, 2008). Therefore, the Chinese government directly encourages international activities for promoting Chinese culture through the Arts.

Secondly, as the arts cross international boundaries (Nussbaum, 2010; and Lazarus, and Angelo, 1949), they have a unique way of transmitting cultural information. Within the context of co-operation, the arts bring their own benefits to collaboration, creating a common cause which could be potentially understood through a variety of different languages.

Co-operation with Chinese HEIs is still facing problems – explored later in this thesis (see Chapter 3, 4, and 5), such as a lack of further communication after institutional visits; curriculum differences between partner institutions; and cultural differences (Huang, 2006; and Welch and Zhen, 2008). In order to analyse the relationship formation and maintenance, it is necessary to understand how *guanxi* applies in each case. For example, what level of co-operation is needed to involve *guanxi*? What categories of *guanxi* are used within higher educational

relationships? The utilisation of *guanxi* and its influences in different stages of international co-operation will also be addressed.

In recent studies, *guanxi* has been theorised and analysed mainly within the corporate sector in China (Lee and Dawes, 2005; Chung, Yang, and Huang, 2015; Zhang, Li, Harris, 2015; Murray, Fu, 2016; Badi, Wang, Pryke, 2017; and Yu, Nahm and Song, 2017; and Zhan, Tan, Chung and Chiu, 2018). This study seeks to understand the mechanism of *guanxi* in relationship between long-distance partner organisations, as well as to assess the tendency of its influences from a long-term perspective. This will generate an overview of the implications for management strategy in establishing international co-operation.

Lastly, this is an interdisciplinary study and *guanxi* will be analysed from societal, humanist and cultural perspectives. To the best of my knowledge, this is a relatively new perspective, as although *guanxi* has been applied to the higher educational sector during international co-operation, there is little concrete analysis, information or data regarding this phenomenon.

1.2. *Guanxi*

This section is divided into three parts. Firstly, definitions of *guanxi* are given to explain the meanings and the connections within its main elements (see the Section 1.2.1.), some researchers think that these are key for the creation and management of interpersonal relationships (Xin and Pearce, 1996; Tsang, 1998; Lee, Pae, and Wong, 2001; Butt, Shah, and Sheikh, 2020; Abosag, Yen, Barnes, and Gadalla, 2020), organisational relationships (Hui, and Graen, 1997; Park, and Luo, 2001; Gan, and Yusof, 2019; and Yang, 2019) and leader-member relations. Consideration of leader-member exchange (LMX) is previously analysed within

the work of Farh, Tsui, Xin, and Cheng 1998; Chen, and Tjosvold, 2007; Nie, and Lämsä, 2015. Moreover, the social philosophy of *guanxi* illustrates its formulation within the specific context of Chinese cultural society, in order to understand its strengths and weaknesses as a relationship creation tool. Secondly, *guanxi* is further analysed from a theoretical perspective and its influences will be collated and summarised. Finally, a comparative study is applied between *guanxi* and its theoretical carriers, such as relationship marketing, leader-member exchange (LMS), and strategic *guanxi* orientation (SGO) (Fu, 2016; Nie and Lämsä, 2015; Yu, Nahm, and Song, 2017; Zhang and Keh, 2010; Tan et al, 2009; and Chen, Chen, and Huang, 2013), to identify its accessibility and the practicality of *guanxi* in current research areas. Most importantly, using the idea of *guanxi dispositif*, this research assesses the relationship between the different *guanxi* elements and how they function in assembling complex, and sometimes contradictory identities.

In *guanxi* research literature, there are broad typologies of *guanxi* ties and theories of Dyadic *guanxi* (Chen, Chen, and Huang, 2013; Lee and Zhong, 2020). *Guanxi* ties include family – non-family *guanxi* (King, 1991; and Tsang, 1998), affective – instrumental *guanxi* (Hwang, 1987; and Yang, 1999), Personal/informal – impersonal/contractual *guanxi* (Yang, 1999; and Davies, Leung, Luk and Wong, 1995), and mixed *guanxi* (Hwang, 1987 and Yang, 1994). In order to analyse more specific characteristics of relationships, dyadic *guanxi* research has three aspects: *guanxi* bases (Tsui and Farh, 1997; Chen and Chen, 2004), *guanxi* quality (Hwang, 1987; Yang, 1999 and Peng and Yang, 1999), and *guanxi* dynamics – strategy, practices and processes (Luo, Huang and Wang, 2012; Chen and Chen 2004, and Su et al, 2007). These pieces of research help

me understand the categories and basis of *guanxi*, and further explore the identity of *guanxi* in the specific relationships within the international co-operation.

Guanxi, on the one hand, can provide significant positive implications for business. Luo (2008) and Davies, et al. (1995) indicate that *guanxi* plays a significant role in modern Chinese business environment. Business transactions need to be approached with individual *guanxi* networks. Ambler, Styles, and Wang (1999) also explain that *guanxi* is the most significant element for setting up a new business in China. Moreover, in the supervisor-subordinate relationship, understanding *guanxi* provides critical guidance for Western managers, highlighting that 'personal feelings' and 'face' are particularly important in Chinese leader-member relationships (Nie and Lämsä, 2015; and Zhang, Li, and Harris, 2015). Therefore, *guanxi* is common in business sectors, especially regarding setting up business, as well as within relationships between superiors and subordinates.

Guanxi can also cause problems within society. Dunfee and Warren, (2001) state that using *guanxi* harms the interests of the third party or the larger community, from economic, legal, and ethical perspectives. Luo (2008) and Fan (2002) also shows that *guanxi* can be linked to corruption and bribery, which enables businesses to set up *guanxi* with high-ranking officials, and to use their power to create benefits for specific companies. Also, Murray and Fu (2016) stress that 'foreign firms may be incompatible with internal *guanxi*, and managers from foreign firms are typically less enthusiastic about internal *guanxi* than managers from domestic firms' (p.11). Therefore, these arguments indicate that *guanxi* is a relatively insular space, where 'insiders' will gain benefits from using it, whereas 'outsiders', who are not familiar with the system, might not have access to it.

According to Chen, Chen, and Huang (2013) empirical *guanxi* research focuses mainly on interactions at the level an individual firm. At the theoretical level of *guanxi*, ego-pragmatics (in sociological and organisational literature), community-ethical (corrosive aspects, and organisational and social practices) and Confucian-relational perspectives (a social, organisational, and moral system) have been assessed to generate the understanding presented here. As this work focuses on international relationships, it is necessary to understand the social and organisational system of *guanxi*, and its related moral system, in order to formulise a framework adoptable for relationships with the subjects and objects within a *guanxi* society. The interpersonal (capacity, mobility) and organisational (strategy) level of *guanxi* and its theoretical and empirical applications for international co-operation will be highlighted.

Most recently, *guanxi* has been studied from an anthropological perspective (Bian, 2019). For example, Ruan and Chen (2019) elaborate on how *guanxi* (*renqing*) works as a form of social exclusion in two Chinese villages, as well as how *guanxi* influences woman in entrepreneurship (Zhang, Kimbu, Lin, and Ngoasong, 2020). From a capitalistic standpoint, Feng and Patulny (2020) claim that *guanxi* ties are hardly able to transform into social capital, as well as the linkage between *guanxi* and financial performance in firms (Bari, et. al, 2020). Most importantly, there was a review paper in 2019 illustrating the role of *guanxi* in international business-to-business relationships (Dobrucail, 2019), which indicates that most of the literature from 1995 to 2018 in marketing, business, and management about *guanxi* lacks theoretical foundations.

1.2.1. *Guanxi* – a social concept

Guanxi, as a noun, literally has two meanings: firstly, it means relation and relationship between human beings; secondly, it has the more profound connotations of 'bearing, impact and significance' (Youdao, 2017). The character *Guan* on its own means to 'close up', while *xi* means 'tie up'. Metaphorically, *guan* and *xi* put together means 'inside a door', i.e., it creates a perception that you are one of us and could therefore have a close relationship with us (Luo, 1997). According to Alston (1989), *guanxi* refers to a specific relationship that two people have with each other. On a deeper level, MacInnis (1993) explains that *guanxi* is the carrier of power and implications. A more detailed definition (Luo, 1997) indicates that *guanxi* refers to the 'concept of drawing on connections in order to secure favours in personal relations,' which contains 'implicit mutual obligation, assurance and understanding and governs Chinese attitudes toward long-term social and business relationships' (p.44). Therefore, we can understand *guanxi* as the relationship between two people or two parties, but with complex implications that even encompass the moral system of society.

As a verb or adjective, *guanxi*, when combining other words together, creates different meanings, such as *la guanxi* (拉关系) and *guanxi wang* (关系网) (Yang, 1994; Davies, Leung, Luk, and Wong, 1995). *La guanxi* literally means 'pull connections', meaning to get on someone's good side, and to invest political capital in them within a Chinese context (MacInnis, 1993). Yang (1994) explains that *guanxi wang* is an exclusive network that contains ongoing relationships. Luo (1997) stresses that *gua guanxi* (挂关系) means work on *guanxi*; *li shun guanxi* (理顺关系) means 'to put a *guanxi* back into proper or normal order, often after a

period of difficulty or awkwardness' (p.44-45); *guanxi hu* (关系户) means 'a person, organisation, even government department, occupying a focal point in one's specially connected *guanxi* network' (p.45). These *guanxi* phrases make *guanxi* into different social contents, and indicate its related activities.

Previous research into *guanxi* has discussed Confucianism, one of the most important value systems in China, which is the root of Chinese history and social culture (Luo, 1997; Davies, et al., 1995; Hui and Graen, 1997; Nie and Lämsä, 2013; and Hu, et al., 2017). *Guanxi* derives from this philosophical system and its *wu lun* (a hierarchical system) (King, 1991; Hui, and Graen, 1997; Luo, 1997; Nie, and Lämsä, 2015). *Wu lun* (五伦: *wu* 五 means five, *lun* 伦 means ethics) is a hierarchical system (Chen and Chen, 2004), demarcating the roles of emperor–courtier, father–son, husband–wife, elder–younger siblings, and friend–friend. Yang (1994) defines that in these five interpersonal relationships, with the exception of friend–friend, the former occupies higher positions and needs to be fully respected by the latter (in the lower positions) (see Figure 1.). According to the hierarchical system of Confucianism, Chinese people are highly sensitive to authority in different forms. Chen et al. (2011) argue that the more positional power a person presents the more obedience employees will show.

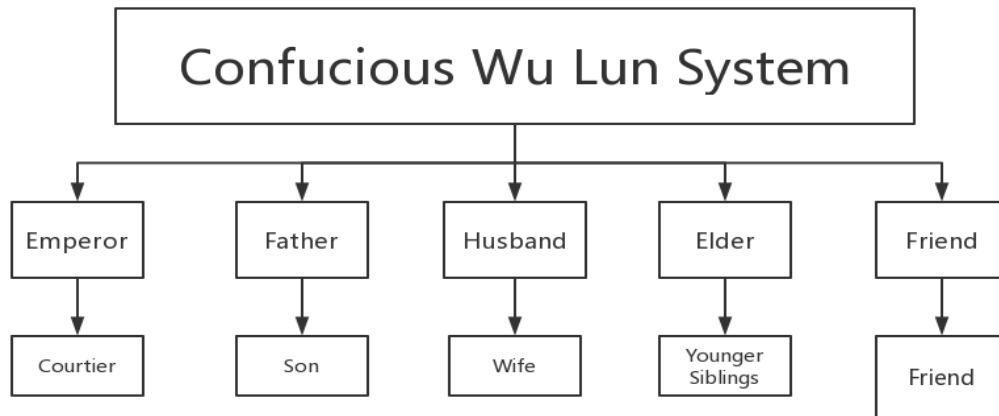


Figure 1. Confucius *Wu Lun* System from Yang 1994

Moreover, *guanxi* has two bases: family-based and society-based (Tsang, 1998; Hui, and Graen, 1997). Family-based *guanxi* is built up by family and kinship, which is the strongest and most exclusive form of *guanxi*, while society-based *guanxi* is formulated by friendship and business, which has comparatively open access, and is correspondingly weaker than the family based one (Tsang, 1998). Therefore, *guanxi* has a clear pattern of obligation and benefits connections (Ambler, et.al, 1999; Wang, 2007; and Chen, Chang and Lee, 2015). Family based *guanxi* forms the most stable and strong relationships and is used in a number of ways. For example, firms employing the children of powerful officials or returning favours (*renqing*) to family members (Hui and Graen, 1997 and Yang, 1999) are common ways of setting up relationships with powerful officials. In other words, using family *guanxi* ties indirectly is sometimes a way of breaking into the family *guanxi* itself in order to set up a new *guanxi*.

Wang (2007) points out that 'Chinese people are unlikely to communicate their preferences and opinions openly, so as to avoid offending or for fear of being rejected by others' (p.84). In other words, Chinese people will not tell you if they feel affronted. This anticipatory communication style makes *guanxi* very important

in a high-context culture⁸. Incorporating *guanxi* into certain situations can help to reduce the distance from one another, and to some extent, avoid awkward situations which might cause offence to the other party. Cheng (1987) indicates that infinite interpretation is one of the main principles of Chinese communication. Yum (1988) emphasises that 'with the emphasis on indirect communication, the receiver's sensitivity and ability to capture the under-the-surface meaning and to discern implicit meaning becomes critical' (p.385). Simultaneously, in general, Chinese society can be seen as a 'low trust' society, which means that people only say 70% of what they really mean, sometimes even lower (Zhang, and Ke, 2003; and Ward, Mamerow, and Meyer, 2014). Therefore, Yau, et. al (2000) stress that to know how your business partners are feeling without asking is very important. *Guanxi* establishes *ganqing*, which helps partners understand each other via empathy, further enhancing their *guanxi* relationships, which will be established in the next section.

1.2.2. Theorised *guanxi*

As a theoretical system, *guanxi* encompasses a wide range of branching concepts (which I will refer to as the 'elements of *guanxi*'), such as *Renqing* (人情, 'human feelings' or 'favour exchange' in English), *Ganqing* (感情, 'affection' or 'empathy' in English), *Xinyong* (信用 'credit' in English) and *Mianzi* (面子 'face', public reputation in English). According to Tsang (1998), *ganqing* means affection, which is one of the essential elements of *guanxi*. To build up *ganqing*, it requires a certain degree of shared experience, life interaction or working or studying

⁸ Hall (1977) explains a high-context culture is that people are deeply involved with each other within the cultural society. Also, a structure of social hierarchy exists, individual inner feelings are kept under strong self-control, and information is widely shared through simple messages with deep meaning. In other words, relationships between people within a high-context culture rely on interpretations.

together. To a large extent, good *ganqing* has a positive correlation with *guanxi*, and vice versa. However, if two people have a *guanxi* base that does not necessarily mean they have *ganqing*, as their *guanxi* can be established from different perspectives. *Mianzi* is another important element of *guanxi*, which literally means 'face'. Within a Chinese social context, according to Tsang (1998), this is an 'individual's public image', which depends partly on his/her power within *guanxi* networks. The more *guanxi* a person has indicates the more powerful the people they are connected with, therefore correlating with more 'face' overall (Hwang, 1987).

Moreover, *renqing* is the favour exchange element of *guanxi*. When one partner receives a favour from another, the receiver is obliged to pay back the favour in the future (Lee, Pae, and Wong, 2001). The last element of *guanxi* is *xinyong*, which means personal trust and credit (Leung, Lai, Chan, and Wong, 2005). This trust is based more on the ability to return favours than on people's integrity and competency (Wang, 2007). If a partner does not return *renqing* (favours), the *xinyong* might break, which in turn might risk breaking *guanxi*. In contrast, *xinyong* can be built up through favour exchange. Yau, et. al (2000) demonstrate relationship marketing (which is illustrated in later sections) in the Chinese way - reciprocity could be relevant to *renqing*; trust is relevant to *xinyong*; empathy is relevant to *ganqing*. Through the use of a relationship marketing (RM) model, they explain that 'they complement each other. Reciprocity and bonding are linked in that a reciprocal arrangement indicates cooperation. Without empathy, it is hard to reciprocate favours appropriately. Continuing reciprocity will gradually increase bonding and trust between parties' (p.20). This RM model explains the relations between *ganqing*, *renqing*, *xinyong* and *guanxi*, which have an internal positive

correlation with each other.

Guanxi is initially generated on a personal level, but it can have high mobility when staff move from company to company, or when government officials move from their positions (Bian, 2002). However, recent research suggests there is a possibility that *guanxi* can transcend the interpersonal level and reach an organizational level, which requires *guanxi* strategy and regular evaluation (Tsang, 1998). Moreover, Chen and Chen (2009) claim that strong social and emotional personal identification between *guanxi* parties might damage collective interests for the personal benefit and self-interest. This could be a problem for international cooperation; relationships will get stuck if one partner or party is more interested in the benefit of self-interest or self-benefit, especially co-operation against the benefit of self-interest at the personal level.

Can *guanxi* itself be viewed as a resource or competitive advantage? This is a debatable phenomenon in the literature: Shou et al. (2014) indicate that *guanxi* is a unique resource that contains advantages for successful venture creation and Chen et al. (2015) state that family *guanxi* ties improves information accessibility and resource availability. On the contrary, Fan (2002) states that *guanxi* cannot be a competitive advantage, as it is not a strategic asset. Tsang (1998) explains that, according to a resource-based view, a strategic resource may not be movable from firm to firm. However, the mobility of *guanxi* inherently disproves this assumption. *Guanxi* can be seen as a competitive advantage because of the unique features it can bring to a company, but it cannot be considered a core competence due to its mobility. If a company overestimates the benefits of *guanxi*, it increases the uncertainty of its own success.

Guanxi strategies are very important in *guanxi* transformation and sustainability. Luo et al (2012) established that *guanxi* strategies affect firm performance, which also has a significant impact on market entry and international expansion (Ellis, 2000; Luo and Liu, 2009), and could help reduce the risk of relational perception (Liu et al, 2008), and increase the efficiency of problem-solving and cooperative planning between partners (Jiang and Jin, 2008). Also, interpersonal *guanxi* can be stabilised into organisational *guanxi*, by signing formal co-operation agreements between two organisations, and having regular *guanxi* audits (Tsang, 1998). Moreover, Murray and Fu (2016) indicate that interpersonal *guanxi* needs to be transformed into organisational *guanxi* and utilised as a strategic resource for long-term competitive advantage.

Therefore, although *guanxi* is unstable and cannot be considered as an operand resource, it can be transformed strategically into a relatively stabilized operand resource (Arnould, Price and Malshe, 2006). However, knowledge of how to effectively manage of *guanxi* networks is relatively weak in marketing literature (Yang and Wang, 2011). To the utilisation of *guanxi* to set up relationships, and the methods by which these relationships can be stabilised for the development of international co-operation is one of the outcomes of this thesis (see chapter 6)

Last but not the least, Fan (2002) explains that 'the ethics of *guanxi* has so far received little attention in the literature' (p.20). He stresses that the *dark side* of using *guanxi* has not yet been fully understood: using *guanxi* might result in business becoming unfair, which could lead to corruption and scandal. Lee and Dawes (2005) indicate that the presence of reciprocal favours reduces trust, which also might lead to suspicion of corruption. Moreover, Murray (2016) mentions that strategic *guanxi* orientation can be a double-edged sword (see

more details in later sections), which could easily bring negative consequences such as corruption. Therefore, finding a solution of controlling *guanxi* and centralising it from an institutional level is necessary. Also, firms should not over-rely on *guanxi*, as its inherent mobility means that *guanxi* cannot guarantee the core competence of ensuring competitive advantages. Reducing this overemphasis on *guanxi* might reduce the chance of firms becoming embroiled in corruption and scandal. Please note that this study establishes a theoretical understanding of *guanxi* within the context of Chinese politics and Confucian culture, as well as a positive and effective mechanism of *guanxi* usage that is based on an appropriate and ethical usage.

1.2.3. *Guanxi* and theory

1.2.3.1. Relationship marketing

According to Morgan and Hunt (1994), 'relationship marketing refers to all marketing activities directed toward establishing developing and maintaining successful relational exchanges' (p.22). The key to every relationship is reciprocity and the nature of exchanges (Duck, 1991), which can be divided into two types – a formal relationship and a personal relationship (McCall, 1970, cited at Conway, and Swift, 2000). The relationship is influenced by reputation and respect both from an individual and institutional level. Relationship marketing is based on relationship development and *psychic distance* (Conway, and Swift, 2000). The model of relationship marketing, which has been introduced in the previous section, of relations of reciprocity, bonding, and empathy, explained relations between *renqing*, *ganqing* and *guanxi*. In these dimensions, relationship marketing can be seen to overlap with *guanxi*. However, there are several

significant differences between a Western view of relationship marketing and the operation of *guanxi*.

Firstly, *guanxi* is applied mainly on a family-based, personal level and operates within an exclusive network, whereas relationship marketing normally operates at the instrumental or impersonal level (Badi, Wang, and Pryke, 2017). For example, reciprocal exchange in Western culture is based on legality and rules, whereas in China, it is driven by morality and social norms (Arias, 1998). Secondly, relationship marketing is more inclusive of exchanging partners due to common conventions, which are of a universalistic nature. On the other hand, *guanxi* is a highly exclusive network with a particular nature, which means that only insiders can access its relational resources (Wang, 2007 and Yang and Wang, 2011). Furthermore, from a governmental perspective, Western society is underpinned by a social structure that prioritises individualism, whereas Chinese culture is highly collectivist and stresses the importance of family and hierarchal respect (Redding, 1993). Therefore, these differences indicate that *a combination of relationship marketing and guanxi* is needed when Sino-joint business or co-operation takes place. Westerners undoubtedly need to consider *guanxi* for business settings and long-term growth in China. Chinese people who deal with international relationships need to synthesise the differences of these theories in order to find a mediating approach for international business and co-operation. In the area of international co-operation, *guanxi* and relationship marketing might both exist in empirical practices, an idea which is tested in Chapter 3.

1.2.3.2. Leader-member exchange theory

Leader-member exchange theory (LMX) 'incorporates an operationalisation of a

relationship-based approach to leadership' (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995, p.225). The concept of the theory is to gain access to the benefits that the relationships between leaders and followers bring. In China, many researchers combine *guanxi* into the LMX theory to analyse relationships with Chinese subordinates (for example - Yi, 2002; Law, et. al, 2000; Chen, et. al, 2007; and Zhang, Li, and Harris, 2015). International joint ventures almost need to synthesise a third, intermediate culture in order to combine Western-style relationships and Chinese *guanxi* for the optimisation of organisational efficiency. This third culture would be created out of negotiation from both sides and possesses adequate transcultural development in understanding the differences between *guanxi* relationships and networks and those found in Western companies. This is supported by Nie and Lämsä (2013), who indicate the importance of personal feelings and 'face' in Chinese Leader-member relationships. Western managers in China therefore need to find different ways of communicating with Chinese subordinates, while still being conscious about 'face'.

Leader-member relationships therefore should be considered when assessing international co-operation in HEIs, especially in joint campus and joint programmes. As joint campus sites are usually located in China, *guanxi* has to be applied in this social context and the effects of it need to be analysed carefully. However, the scope of this study is to concentrate on the external relationships research between two parties in the co-operation, rather than on internal business. Therefore, this theory of the leader-member system's relation with *guanxi* will not be developed in more detail, as it is different compared to the *guanxi* in the Chinese social hierarchy system that is tested in Chapter 3, 4, and 5 to identify its efficiency when used in relationships within UK-China international co-operation

in the arts.

1.2.3.3. Strategic *Guanxi* Orientation (SGO)

Murray and Fu (2016) introduce the idea of the *SGO framework*. This describes how firms acquire *guanxi* through a process of conscious effort in gaining *guanxi* as a resource, institutionalising *guanxi* from the individual to the firm level, and utilising *guanxi* as a strategic tool to achieve long-term competitive advantages (p. 2). Murray and Fu (2016) show the level of *guanxi* that can be recognised as organisational *guanxi*, and also confirm the role of institutional environmental uncertainties in shaping SGO of both domestic and foreign firms. However, the SGO can be a double-edged sword, 'on the one hand, it may lead to desirable outcomes such as superior sales growth and a better relationship quality with channel partners. On the other hand, it may lead to undesirable outcomes such as employees' unethical behaviors' (p.14), the nature of this risk needs to be considered by organisational senior management.

Nie and Lämsä (2015) have established that *guanxi* is an important and useful tool for business in China, especially as Chinese communication is highly contextual and indirect, and Yu, Nahm, and Song (2017) agree that *guanxi* is important for Western companies who want to set up business in China when the market system is imperfect⁹. However, after the reform and opening-up policy in 1979 (Duan, 2010), with market-oriented economic reform and the establishment of market institutions, the influences of *guanxi* are decreasing (Zhang and Keh, 2010 and Tan et al, 2009). Chen, Chen, and Huang, (2013) illustrating that as business practices are becoming similar in Western and Eastern countries,

⁹ The period that the related law and regulations are not comprehensive in China

‘Eastern business practices will rely more on rules and regulations’ (p.179).

To this point, *guanxi* can be seen as a stepping-stone for setting up a relationship in China efficiently. As the Chinese market becomes more and more open, and younger generations are increasingly influenced by Western culture and knowledge (Nie and Lämsä, 2015), the influence of *guanxi* might become weaker than before. Good interpersonal and organisational *guanxi* will help institutions to develop a sustainable relationship with Chinese institutions, but the cost and benefit of *guanxi* also need to be reassessed. However, China is presently trying to increase self-awareness of historical and contemporary Chinese cultural identity among its people, and to spread Chinese culture throughout the world. Chapters 3,4 and 5 assess the role of *guanxi* as a force for establishing cultural identity in relationship formation.

1.3. *Dispositif*

Foucault explains that *dispositif* is a social mechanism that includes discourse and non-discourse practices (Foucault, 1977). To some extent, *Dispositif* has structural similarities to *guanxi* as it arguably encompasses how *guanxi*, as a cultural concept can be applied to Chinese society. However, Foucault is more known for his theory of ‘discourse’ (Fairlough, 1992; Wodak, and Meyer, 2015; Johnstone, 2017; Fairclough, and Wodak, 1997; Gumperz, 1982; and Graesser, Millis, and Zwaan, 1997), as it is useful analytical tool for interpreting the networked and layered nature of knowledge. This section establishes the differences between Foucault’s ideas of *dispositif* and discourse, as well as the reasons why this study has chosen to use *dispositif* as a theoretical framework.

1.3.1. Discourse

Foucault (1971) writes:

...in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers, to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous, awesome materiality... Discourse is no longer much more than the shimmering of a truth about to be born in its own eyes; and when all things come eventually to take the form of discourse, when everything may be said and when anything becomes an excuse for pronouncing a discourse, it will be because all things having manifested and exchanged meanings, they will then all be able to return to the silent interiority of selfconsciousness... Whether it is the philosophy of a founding subject, a philosophy of originating experience or a philosophy of universal mediation, discourse is really only an activity, of writing in the first case, of reading in the second and exchange in the third. This exchange, this writing, this reading never involves anything but signs. Discourse thus nullifies itself, in reality, in placing itself at the disposal of the signifier (pp. 8-21)

Therefore, discourse is knowledge, information text, and languages as they are used for generating interpreted *truth* in the history. Hall (1997) elaborates:

A group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment. ...Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language. But... since all social practices entail meaning, and meanings shape and influence what we do – our conduct – all practices have a discursive aspect (p44).

Hall (1997) asserted that Foucault's definition of discourse was as much about *ways of thinking and practices* as it was about language. Hall believes that according to Foucault, meaning and meaningful action are only made meaningful 'within the constitutive abstract space of a discourse' (cited in Hobbs, 2008, p.7). Discourse has different sources that consist of what Foucault called 'principles', such as principle of discipline ('one can envisage a certain number of studies in this field'), will to truth (will to knowledge, a certain system of exclusion in the process of development) in its continuity, as well as its discontinuity, principles of

specificity (that a particular discourse cannot be resolved by a prior system of significations) and *exteriority* (we should look for its external conditions of existence to fix its limits). More specifically for this research, regarding the discourse of education, Foucault (1971) explains that:

Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it. I am well aware of the abstraction I am performing when I separate, as I have just done, verbal rituals, 'fellowships of discourse', doctrinal groups and social appropriation. Most of the time they are linked together, constituting great edifices that distribute speakers among the different types of discourse, and which appropriate those types of discourse to certain categories of subject. In a word, let us say that these are the main rules for the subjection of discourse (p.19).

Foucault (1971) also expresses the importance of the discontinuity and exteriority of discourse, as he insists that discourse has its own limitations; we need to think about the knowledge which surrounds discourse in order to break the limits of discourse. Foucault's approach to discourse is complemented by his treatment of the related concept of *Dispositif*, which was influenced by Althusser, and by Canguilhem's *temporalization of the concept of the norm* (Lambert 2015). The principle of discontinuity and exteriority of discourse are not the discourse itself, rather a series of activities, events and practices that have been done around discourse. It is such events which would be perfectly located in the theoretical area of *dispositif*.

1.3.2. *Dispositif*

Deleuze (1992) indicates that *Dispositif* is often recognised as an analytical tool. Basu (2011) explains that 'the term *dispositif* usually refers to a constellation of heterogeneous elements within a system, and the relationships between them, which produce a particular tendency' (p.34). He articulated the first point of

dispositif is that it is a system of relations between a particular *arrangement of elements*, which are relations of power, and knowledge, and constitute subjectivities. Secondly, Basu understands a *dispositif* as a historic formation, in Foucault's view, *dispositif* has a strategic function, though the strategy itself is not restricted to any one subject. *Dispositif* is a historical formation, which changes over time.

Foucault specifically addressed his use of the term in a roundtable in 1977 (cited as Lambert, 2015, p.1):

What I'm trying to pick out with this term is, firstly, a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements. Secondly, what I am trying to identify in this apparatus is precisely the nature of the connection that can exist between these heterogeneous elements. Thus, a particular discourse can figure at one time as the program of an institution, and at another it can function as a means of justifying or masking a practice which itself remains silent, or as a secondary re-interpretation of this practice, opening out for it a new field of rationality. In short, between these elements, whether discursive or non-discursive, there is a sort of interplay of shifts of position and modifications of function which can also vary very widely. Thirdly, I understand by the term “apparatus” a sort of—shall we say—formation which has as its major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an urgent need. The apparatus thus has a dominant strategic function. This may have been, for example, the assimilation of a floating population found to be burdensome for an essentially mercantilist economy: there was a strategic imperative acting here as the matrix for an apparatus which gradually undertook the control or subjection of madness, sexual illness and neurosis.

There are three perspectives of understanding *dispositif*. Firstly, it encompasses discourse and its related activities, measures, physical forms, and scientific understanding of the world (from the interpretive perspective). Secondly, it also includes the relations and practices between these discursive elements. Thirdly,

the most important point is that *dispositif* is a formation, apparatus, and integration that has strategic functions as a matrix within reality to control subjection. *Dispositif* is a wider phenomenon than discourse, not a subset of it.

1.3.3. The nature of study with *Dispositif* and Discourse

Peltonen (2004) stresses that Foucault was interested in a wide range of phenomena for studying practice and abstraction, by which Foucault meant 'historically specific totalities of discourses and practices' (p.206). In *guanxi* studies, it is undeniable that discourse analysis is a suitable approach to explain *guanxi* phenomenon in research, as the specific methods of studies, such as questionnaires and interviews, are linguistic tools. However, *guanxi* itself is not only about cultural and moral roles in discourse, but also includes practices and actions, as illustrated earlier in the *guanxi* literature. In other words, it includes discourse and non-discursive practice. Moreover, as *guanxi* is a part of Chinese culture, it dictates human behaviour to a certain extent, and exists 'in the DNA of Chinese people', lending it a greater complexity than pure discourse can account for. Therefore, when we conduct research to gain a comprehensive understanding of how *guanxi* underpins society, we need to look at *guanxi* from the *dispositif* perspective.

Taking the information above into the consideration of *guanxi*, *dispositif* maps onto *guanxi* in unique ways. Firstly, *guanxi* is a formation or a system where relationships and related elements function through power, knowledge and subjectivities, and produces a particular tendency according to the literature. Secondly, *guanxi* is also a historical formation that changes by demographic generation. Therefore, *guanxi* can be seen as a particular form of social *dispositif* in China to quite a large extent.

Van Fraassen (1974) believes *dispositif* is an objective reality where the relations of particular elements change with time and space. Although *dispositif* involves subjectivity, the nature of *dispositif* as a concept does not change according to individual subjects: subjectivity is merely the vehicle for *guanxi*, its existence and changes do not rely on it. According to Chinese culture, things left unsaid are just as important as those directly said in the *guanxi* context. For example, the seeming non-communicative speaking behavior and empathy - one of the important elements of *guanxi* – all require non-discursive practices in order to break into a *guanxi* network or to improve *guanxi* relationships.

Canguilhem (2008) indicates that 'with the exception of vertebrates, living beings and their forms rarely display to the scrupulous observer devices [*dispositifs*] that could evoke the idea of a mechanism, in the sense given to this term by scientists' (p.76). Basu (2011) claims that '*dispositif* analysis allows us to examine the wide range of phenomena and their relations that constitute a cultural memory, without being stalled by debates as to what is and is not a 'text'. It would mean identifying the constituent elements within a given *dispositif*, the relations between them, and the subject positions they bring about (p.35). Therefore, *dispositif* is much wider than discourse, which means that when using *dispositif* analysis, one does not need to be conscious about text or practices, as they are all included, which satisfies the nature of this research.

Moreover, from Western researchers' point of view, *guanxi* has been studied as a knowledge-based, cultural and communicating practice primarily through language, which is largely gained from subjective perspectives and interpretations. However, as a Chinese researcher, I claim that *guanxi* as an object can exist in the society with a *variety of different layouts and connections encompassing both*

discursive and non-discursive practice. Therefore, this research applies *dispositif* analysis to help develop the concept I will call '*guanxi dispositif*'.

1.3.4. Guanxi Dispositif

In *guanxi dispositifs*, there are three elements of relation: mobility, transformation, and power. These three aspects and sets of relations in *guanxi* are all subject to shifts and changes over time. According to Wang (2013), power in Foucauldian philosophy is bound up with knowledge, and is produced through a network of social relationships. The power of *guanxi* denotes politics, knowledge, and hierarchical power; in other words, it guides people through the knowledge of politics and follows the rule of social/cultural hierarchical systems. Understanding the power of *guanxi* is a way to unpack the existent meaning of *guanxi* and its usage in contemporary China, and further establishes the function of *guanxi* in international co-operation.

The *mobility of guanxi* is identified with subjects; the *transformation of guanxi* relates to the *guanxi* strategy. In the *guanxi dispositif*, these three elements all interact and correlate with each other. As Bryukhovetska (2010) explains, it is 'a purely conceptual and immaterial arrangement that functions to position the subject as a point of view, understood as an effect of address or, more precisely, an effect of the particular form of address that Althusser defined as interpellation'.

Althusser (2001) establishes that *dispositif* 'can contain and express all of these as elements of a general strategy of power' (p.113). This means that its category is obvious and its function is spontaneous, self-evident, immediate, universal, and thus necessary to all possible experience by concrete subjects. In other words, obviousnesses is obviousnesses, and by extension this means that as a part of

Chinese culture, the function of *guanxi* is spontaneous. Althusser's argument: 'the category of the subject is invented at the same moment when forms of time and space are subordinated to the function of Ideological Representation of the conditions of experience' (cited as Lambert, 2015, p.3).

However, Althusser (2001) points out that there is no such thing as a purely repressive apparatus by ideology alone. In terms of *guanxi dispositif*, the elements of power, mobility and transformation are applied to the subject, and experienced and interrelated with the movements within space and time towards the objective reality of *guanxi*. It contains the cultural ISA (ideological state apparatus), the political ISA, the family ISA, and the educational ISA; at the same time, it remains under control of the RSA (repressive state apparatus). Such a complex double functioning apparatus is itself interactive and contradictory.

Furthermore, the *dispositif* can be recognised as a mechanism, and the small elements are the cogs in the machines. Lambert (2015) also indicates that machines do not create other machines, requiring human input to function, much like Foucault's description of *dispositif* as something that is artificial and constantly being updated, but also vulnerable to change due to fluctuating social relations. Therefore, the history of *guanxi dispositif* is required to identify the mechanism of *guanxi* studies in the research. Subjects are important for the mechanism, as the elements will not create themselves and react with each other, subjects are the carriers. However, the exact nature of their interaction and the work of their relations toward *guanxi* in terms of identity construction have not yet been investigated by previous literature, the concept of *guanxi dispositif* introduced here is intended to be a helpful tool to allow us to do so.

Chapter 2: Methodology

The aim of this study is to present an understanding of cooperation between UK and China higher education institutions in the Arts and Humanities in order to shape a methodology for examining relationship settings. This study provides an idea of the framework for developing *guanxi* relationship in HEIs, as well as guidance for practitioners in setting up sustainable relationships. It also aims to identify a theoretical framework for using *guanxi* during relationships and collaboration with Chinese institutions, as well as providing suggestions on a strategic and managerial level for HEIs. This chapter addresses the research methodology and design necessary to achieve these aims. It identifies the nature of a mixed methods research paradigm and the reasons for adopting such methods, which is followed by research design underpinned by the Methods-Strands Matrix (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2006). After the introduction of the participants of the study, it establishes the quantitative and qualitative research methods and the design of the instruments. This section will then give a clear procedure of data collection and the coding system for data analysis to identify the validity and reliability of the study. Finally, ethical considerations are illustrated to avoid operational bias.

2.1. Research questions and context

2.1.1. Research questions

According to the background information and literature review of *guanxi*, the research identifies the following research questions below:

RQ1. How deep is the involvement of *guanxi* in co-operative categories in

arts related HEIs?

As the literature indicates that *guanxi* exists in Chinese societies, *guanxi* has been used heavily in business sectors in the 1990s but has weakened in modern China. This research question tests the views contained in current literature on this subject.

RQ2. How widely of *guanxi*'s involvement in the area?

This research question is the second level of testing to find out the frequency of *guanxi*'s usage in the area.

RQ3. How do higher education organisations use *guanxi* in their relationships with their partner institutions in the Arts and Humanities?

This research question is design to discover people's willingness of *guanxi*'s usage and the approaches of their utilisation within different *guanxi* elements. Also, to test if *guanxi* increases the efficiency of co-operation as literature mentioned.

In order to answer these questions, this study first mapped the existence of *guanxi* within relationships and co-operation in the higher education sector. In this first step, participants have been taken into consideration. As the concept of *guanxi* would not necessarily be familiar to Western participants, the questions, elements and scenarios were described in detail (see Appendix 9.). Secondly, the usage and depth of *guanxi* were analysed quantitatively to generalise the antecedents and consequences of arts-related international co-operation at the higher educational level. In order to analyse the **depth** of *guanxi* in relationships, depth

was observed from the perspectives of organisational behaviour, human behaviours, relationship structure, politics and the strategy for co-operation in HEIs.

Moreover, as *guanxi* has characteristics, such as mobility and flexibility, these characteristics are related with the types of *guanxi* and its depth in relationships, which have a variety of different combinations of usage in relationships. Therefore, individual analysis was required for each case, which in this research required the application of qualitative research methods – interviews relating to six cases for unpacking the details of the concept of *guanxi* in individual relationships in both countries in order to answer the RQ2, and to expand the understanding of *guanxi* from quantitative statistics (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2004b). Overall, this research used a mixed methods approach, using methods and procedures from both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Bryman, 2006; and Ivankova, Creswell and Clark, 2007).

2.2. Mixed methods research

2.2.1. Mixed methods research

Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner, (2007) establish that mixed methods research has dominated evaluation as a field, given the practical nature of evaluation research and the needs for multiple sources of evidence when judging social programs. Moreover, Schwandt (2000) declares that because all research is interpretive, this means there is a multiplicity of methods that are suitable for different kinds of understandings, which means the traditional means of coming

to grips with one's identity as a researcher by aligning oneself with a particular set of methods is rendered obsolete. In my opinion, research needs to be more pragmatic, as a simple identification of data or evaluation as qualitative or quantitative often cannot satisfy the nuances and complexities of research.

Most importantly, Sieber (1973) and Jick (1979) indicate that methods have their own limitations and strengths, and no single technique can claim a monopoly on inference. A combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods could enhance results more comprehensively than if the results had come from a single method. Another reason for why I chose a mixed method methodology is that this is a research-question-dominated research paradigm, which focuses on the research process, and the methodology was also used to generate the results of the research. This perfectly aligns with my philosophical view, as well as the nature of this interdisciplinary study. On the one hand, it contains statistical estimation; on the other hand, it studies and analyses the phenomenon at hand from both a cultural and humanist standpoint.

Methodologists have varying opinions about the definition of mixed methods research. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) indicate that:

Mixed methods research is formally defined here as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study. Philosophically, it is the 'third wave' or third research movement, a movement that moves past the paradigm wars by offering a logical and practical alternative. Philosophically, mixed research makes use of the pragmatic method and system of philosophy (p.17).

Furthermore, Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner, (2007) conducted a research on the definition of mixed methods, collating different definitions of mixed methods research from 19 methodologists and aggregating them into the following

definition:

'Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration' (p.123).

This definition establishes a clear function of mixed methods research, and its broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration will be the target of this research. As far as I am concerned, there are no other studies that have analysed how *guanxi* is used in relationships and co-operation in Higher Education sectors, which meant that the quantitative approach was necessary to display an overall understanding of *guanxi* from participants in Chinese institutions. The results of the interviews had to then be compared with qualitative outcomes to identify the similarities and contradictions between the findings, which increased the richness and reliability of the results. Therefore, a mixed methods approach matched the nature of the research.

2.2.2. Pragmatic paradigm

Pragmatism (Appendix 10.) is a relatively new (the third) paradigm of philosophical stance, described as a middle ground between philosophical dogmatism and skepticism that rejects traditional dualisms. It recognises the existence and importance of the nature of the physical world as well as the emergent social and psychological world, which encompasses language, culture, human institutions, and subjective thoughts (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Morgan, 2007). For this research, it respects both the physical reality of *guanxi* existence and usage in HEI relationships, as well as the social world of cultural and subjective thoughts in terms of how *guanxi* is understood and used. Therefore,

this paradigm matches the principle of the research in a broad sense.

For the process of research, pragmatism replaces the historically popular epistemic distinction between subject and external object with the 'naturalistic and process-oriented organism-environment transaction' (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.18). In this research, process is very important. According to the research questions, it needs to have a process of quali-QUAN-QUALI¹⁰ to identify the value of the research. The small qualitative interview indicated the variables of the capital QUANTITATIVE analysis. The results of QUANTITATIVE analysis helped further narrow down the specific questions of interview for the capital QUALITATIVE research, and to compare the statistics with literal results to enhance the reliability of the findings. By using this process, the variables and the literal interview questions would be more precise, which could reduce bias to a certain extent and thicken the results. This process will be discussed in more detail in the procedure section.

More importantly, as I mentioned earlier, there appears to be no research analysing *guanxi* in co-operation in the higher education sector. Therefore, to date, no theoretical framework exists to test this kind of research. By conducting a research question-dominated and process-oriented research, one can assume that these results would lead to a robust theoretical framework. At the same time, by following the research process, the research will determine the extent to which the mechanism of *guanxi* underpins the Arts and Humanities, with a specific focus on music in this paper. These results paint a comprehensive picture of the research objective from a macroscopic to microcosmic level. However, if this

¹⁰ Using different letters (small and capital) to distinguish the different stage of this research process.

research had not adopted this methodology, the results would have only come from one method, either quantitative or qualitative, which would have yielded results not rich enough to demonstrate the phenomenon to an extent that would satisfy the research aim.

Furthermore, pragmatism stresses that the research question should 'drive the method' (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005; and Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). This is an anti-philosophy paradigm, which identifies the importance of research questions and the nature and formulation of research itself. These precepts confirm the belief that the researcher believes how the research should be conducted, especially at the doctoral level.

2.2.3. Methods-strands matrix research design (MM)

Sieber (1973) stresses that the combination of quantitative and qualitative research can be effective at the research design, data collection, and data analysis stages of the research process. For example, at the research design stage, quantitative data can assist the qualitative component by identifying representative sample members, as well as outlying cases. Conversely, at the design stage, qualitative data can assist the quantitative component of a study by helping with conceptual and instrument development.

This paper's research design uses the design for mixed method research, called the Methods-Strands Matrix design (MM) (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2006). Teddlie and Tashakkori indicate that MM design is used in social and behavioral sciences, which includes mono-method designs (qualitative or quantitative) and mixed methods research designs. There are four families in the mixed methods designs:

concurrent, sequential, conversion, and fully integrated. Specifically, Teddlie and Tashakkori (2006) illustrate that 'sequential mixed designs answer exploratory and confirmatory questions chronologically in a pre-specified order... these designs are easier to conduct by the solo investigator... because it is easier to keep the strands separate and the studies typically unfold slower and in a more predictable manner' (p.22). In this study, it used sequential design, because its length, complexity and accuracy can be conducted by a single researcher.

On the contrary, concurrent mixed designs require expertise in different approaches, as its results integration may not be able to show a coherent set of inferences, meaning problems may develop when results are discrepant. Therefore, it requires a team to collaborate and contribute to the complex, simultaneous evolution (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2009; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2006; Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007). The conversion mixed design is a 'multistrand concurrent design in which mixing of QUAL and QUAN approaches occurs in all components/stages, with data transformed (qualitised or quantitised) and analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively' (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003, p.706, cited as Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2006). In other words, it is an iterative process at every individual stage of the research, which is more complex than sequential designs, and more time consuming than the other two designs. Therefore, it is also not suitable for the length of a PhD research.

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2006), present the standard graphic presentation of sequential mixed design in Figure 2. It is divided into four processes, including conceptualisation, experiential stage (methodological), experiential stage (analytical), and inferential stage; the former inferential stage influences the latter conceptualization stage. It receives results and findings from both processes, and

compares the results to be able to conclude the final Meta inference.

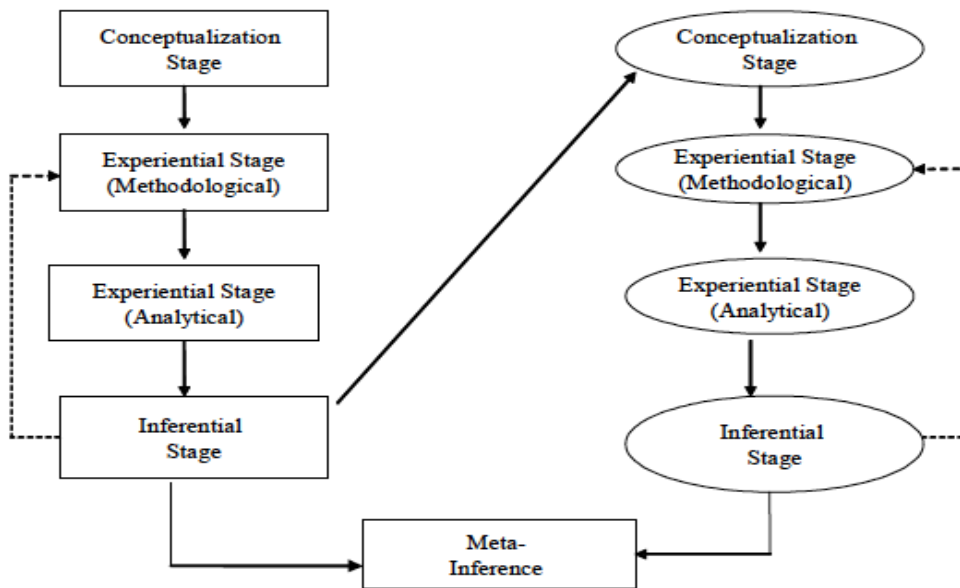


Figure 2. The standard graphic presentation of sequential mixed design (Teddie and Tashakkori, 2006, p.19)

In this research, the design is slightly different. As discussed in the earlier section, this study used the process of quali-QUAN-QUALI. The first part of the qualitative study is a pilot study, which evaluates the indication of variables and its related hypotheses of the capital QUANTITATIVE questionnaire for a general understanding of how HEIs use *guanxi* the arts. The questionnaire focused on the activities, successes and difficulties of their current international relationships and co-operation, as well as an understanding of *guanxi* within these arts-related institutions. The results from the QUAN then further narrowed down the interview questions of the QUALITATIVE research for the depth from the perspectives of organisational behaviours, human behaviours, relationship structure, and the strategy for co-operation in the arts as the examples of case studies to evaluate the details in depth.

Therefore, the first pilot interview was conducted under the sequential process,

the results from it are solid, which was essential for providing legitimation for the survey questionnaire, affording a basis for formulating a sampling frame, as Sieber (1973) indicates that this process will contribute fundamentally to the development of the survey instrument. The function of the first qualitative interview study was similar to a pilot study (Tateishi-Yuyama, et al, 2002); the results of it was not included in the comparison in the final Meta inference (see Figure 3.).

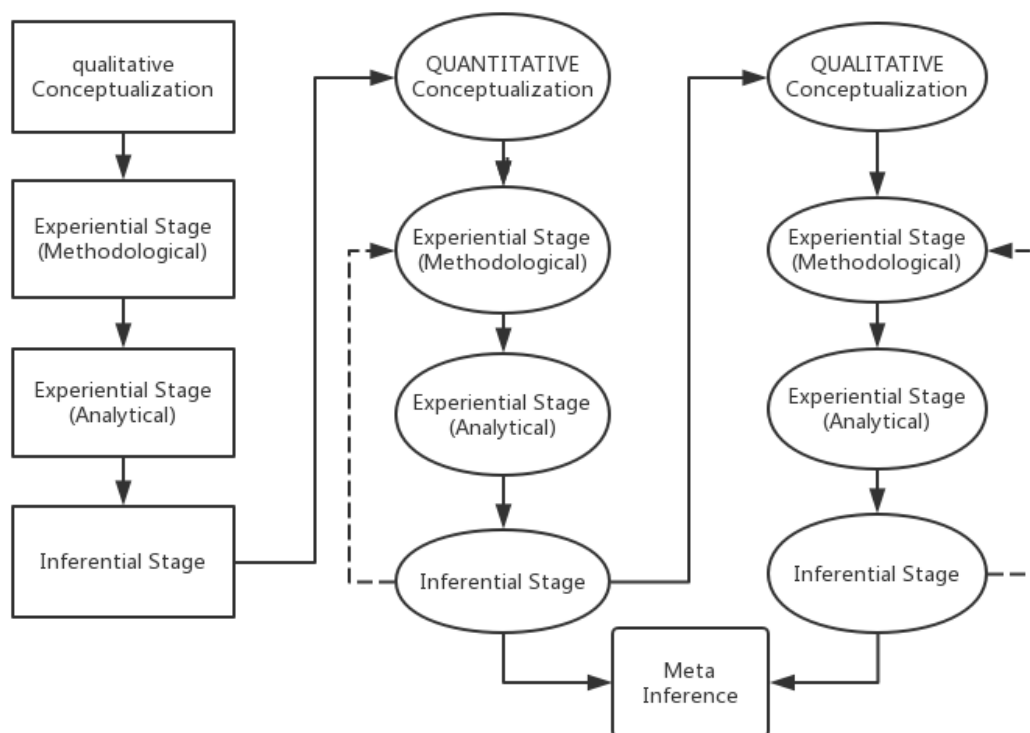


Figure 3. The graphic presentation of sequential mixed design of this research

The subsidiary design for the quantitative study was survey (Pinsonneault and Kraemer, 1993); and for qualitative study was case study (Yin, 1994) to explore the research questions separately. A survey is generally defined as a means of gathering information about the characteristics, actions, or opinions of a large group of people, which is a quantitative method primarily concerned either with

relationships between variables, or with projecting findings descriptively. The questions are structured and predefined, and the way that information is generally collected allows surveyors to easily generalise these findings across a large population (Pinsonneault and Kraemer, 1993). In this study, it is hugely important that information can be gathered to generalise the phenomenon of the existence, usage and consequences of *guanxi* in the HEIs sector, especially in the arts. As mentioned previously, to the best of my knowledge, there is not much existent research that identifies *guanxi's* characteristics and values in the area, so conducting a survey research can present us with a clear understanding of *guanxi* in this research area and provides clear indications for individual case studies.

Case studies aim to illuminate a decision or set of decisions with why, how and what questions. In other words, these open questions leave spaces to develop the answers in detailed scenarios with rich contexture. In this research, detailed information of relationships and co-operation in HEIs is requested for comparison analysis with the results from the quantitative survey, Similarly, other topics linked to individuals, organisations, processes, programs and so on, are the focus of the case study (Yin, 1994) and as discussed in Gomm et al., (2000), the case study may prevent generalisation. From this point, a case study might help to test if the general roles of *guanxi* usage in HEIs from the survey can be applied to the case studies.

Overall, the characteristics of case study methodology gives more room for this *guanxi* study by looking into individual details for specific condition analysis. Yin (1981) stresses that case studies can use both qualitative and quantitative evidence. Greenes (2006) indicates that 'a case study methodology honors these assumptions of contextuality and meaning and guides the inquirer to construct

and re-interpret an inside or emic portrait of meaningfulness in that context' (p.94). As *guanxi* is a highly contextual social concept, general statistics and words cannot sufficiently represent the *guanxi* phenomenon in relationships. It requires the research to look into details of individual cases. Therefore, in this research, it was necessary to analyse individual cases for *guanxi* relationships, which needs to explore the relationship between higher education music institutions in the UK and China, as well as from the strategic level of institutions in order to examine international co-operation performance so as to establish the benefits of international cooperation towards university capabilities, strategy and decision making (Helfat, 1997). Finally, comparing the results from the survey's quantitative and descriptive statistics to individual literal results boosted the richness and depth of the research.

2.2.4. Research methods – questionnaire and interview

Research data was gathered through questionnaires (Young, 2015) and semi-structured interviews (Drever, 1995; and Wengraf, 2001) with international officers and related employees at participating institutions from both China and the UK. Documentary analysis was applied with the final QUALITATIVE study, which is discussed in the instrument design section.

This research used online questionnaires (OLQ): the respondents replied to questions on their personal computer, which could be web-based or emailed (Gomm, 2008). It was highly controlled by the respondent and the low influence of the interviewer; Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava, and John (2004) indicate that online questionnaires have the unique advantage of facilitating more serious response, which significantly increases data validity and boost the rigour of

the quantitative results. However, it has its own limitations, namely low response rates (Sivo, Saunders, Chang, and Jiang, 2006; Cummings, Savitz and Konrad, 2001; and Heberlein, and Baumgartner, 1978), which might be problematic for gathering a large sample size to represent the population. Increasing the sample size and sending regular reminder emails helped to increase the rate of valid responses. This research was conducted with Likert scales (Allen and Seaman, 2007; and Norman, 2010).

Moreover, to further enhance the richness of the results, face-to-face interviews have been conducted alongside the results from the questionnaire, which aimed to gain a deeper understanding of personal feelings and behaviours. Opendakker (2006) explains that face-to-face interviews synchronise communication in time and place, allowing interviewers to receive additional information like tone of voice, intonation, body language for examples, which help interpreting data beyond literal meanings. Furthermore, this can often result in more truthful results, as interviewees tend to be more spontaneous in a face-to-face interview. Although this makes the data more natural and reliable. it poses the challenge of encouraging interviewers to interact with further related questions when the interview is semi-structured or unstructured, which could potentially result in difficulties during data collection. This research used a semi-structured interview method, which enabled me to receive reliable and valid answers, design a detailed outline of the question areas, and detect key words for potential questions.

2.2.5. Instrument design

This research has three different research instruments in three parts. The first pilot study uses online and face-to-face interviews to test the validity of the

questions and filters the items for the quantitative study. The pilot interview was semi-structured, with questions divided into four parts: a) the background information of the participants; b) the factual realities of UK-China co-operation; c) experience in China-UK relationships in the Arts and Humanities area; d) the experience of *guanxi* in these co-operations. These four question-sections indicate the existence, awareness, usage of and peoples' behaviour towards *guanxi*. Four participants all work in music departments, conservatories, and/or arts universities in both the UK and China; these participants also have significant experience with China-UK co-operation at the university level. The brief questions are below:

1. **Personal background: Would you please introduce yourself?**

Points for follow-up questions:

- **Job duties**
- **Education background**
- **Experience of visiting China (when, why, what)**

2. **Facts: Would you please tell me a little bit about your co-operations with China?**

Points for follow-up questions:

- **When did it start**
- **How many/what types**
- **Explain one or two cases**

3. **Judgmental Experience: What are the benefits your institutions have received from cooperation**

Points for follow-up questions:

- **Problems, how to solve**
- **Important elements in building relationships (what, why, how)**
- **Experience of visiting China (when, why, what)**

4. **Guanxi (for UK participants)**: Do you know the Chinese term for relationships, *guanxi*?

* If the answer is no, this part will go through the elements from part 3 individually.

Points for follow-up questions:

- **Meaning**
- **Existence, why?**
- **Usage**
- **Advantages and disadvantages**
- **Willingness to use**

4.1 **Guanxi (for Chinese participants)**: what do you think about *guanxi*?

Points for follow-up questions:

- **Meaning**
- **Existence, why?**
- **Usage**
- **Advantages and disadvantages**
- **Willingness to use**

From the pilot interviews, I expected to find the details of how the relationships and co-operation work individually, and the awareness of *guanxi* from both Western and Chinese participants. Based on these two detailed conditions, I was able to further interpret if the awareness of *guanxi*'s tendency is similar to the literature or contradictory, in order to indicate the variables for the next stage of quantitative study (see the results in Chapter 3).

For the next stage, the questionnaire in the following quantitative study is established in four parts to analysis *guanxi*: a) background information of the participants, such as age, education, gender and professional background; b) the current state of their international co-operation and relationship setup; c) the correlation of *guanxi* factors, such as face (*mianzi*), reciprocal favour exchange (*renqing*), Credit (*xinyong*); d) using regression analysis to measure *guanxi* with

people, and its positive and negative significance with strategic performance. This was necessary even for Chinese participants, since although they are undoubtedly familiar with the concept of *guanxi*, they may not be conscious of the existence of *guanxi* in their international cooperation. It was interesting to explore and compare the facts and peoples' opinions, even though they often concluded in contradictory results.

Table 1 Construct and items of quantitative analysis

Construct	Item
Personal	Age
Background	What is your highest education background
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Senior high school - Vocational high school - Bachelor's degree - Master's degree - Doctoral degree
	What is your gender
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Female - Male - Self-describe - Prefer not to tell
Institutional Background	What is your professional background (according to the highest degree)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arts and Humanities - Business and management - Engineering - Science - Agriculture and bio-technology - Medicine - Design - Other
	What type of institution are you are working at
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conservatory - University - Arts College
Purpose of International Co-operation	How many years have you been dealing with international co-operation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1-10 years - 11-20 years - 20-40 years - 40-60 years
	What was/were the reason(s) for doing international co-operation in the last two years (please pick all that apply)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student/staff exchange - Concert, cultural exchange - Increase institution's reputation, or position of ranking - Increase income - Others

Partner Selecting Methods	<p>What was/were the criteria of choosing a partner in last two years (please pick all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The partner has good relationships with famous oversea institutions - The partner has good relationships with large institutions - The partner has a comparatively higher position in the HEIs - The Partner has similar organizational values - Others
Expertise	<p>Please rate your agreement with the following statements on a scale from 1= Extremely Disagree to 5= Extremely Agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The partner, in the most recent co-operation, is knowledgeable in their area - The partner, in the most recent co-operation, is knowledgeable in the market - The partner, in the most co-operation, was able to provide solutions to improve your existing operation - The partner, in the most co-operation, was able to propose alternative products to suit your applications
Success of the co-operation	<p>Please rate your agreement with the following statements on a scale from 1= Unsuccessful to 5= Very Successful</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall - Student programme - Joint research project - Cultural exchange - Others
Difficulties	<p>Please rate your agreement with the following statements on a scale from 1= Extremely Disagree to 5= Extremely Agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall, you have difficulties promoting international co-operation - You met misunderstandings, or communication failure - You do not have enough funding - You received low interest from students - You received low interest from staff - You received low Interest from the top managerial staff - Co-operation was influenced by policies - Other
Solutions	<p>Do you have any solutions to the problems that you have encountered so far in your co-operation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes. (Please elaborate) - No
Definition of <i>Guanxi</i>	<p>Do you know the Chinese term '<i>guanxi</i>'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes - No
Usage of <i>Guanxi</i>	<p>Do you think you have used '<i>guanxi</i>' for the relationship with UK Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes - No

Partnership Setup	<p>Please rate your agreement with the following statements on scale from 1= No relationship to 5= Close relationship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you have close relationships with the top people at partner institutions? - Do you have close relationships with one of staff members at partner universities/conservatories - Do you have close relationships with the top people at the Education Ministry in your home country - Do you have close relationships with the top people at the Education Ministry in your partner's country - Do you have relatives who are working at partner universities/conservatories - Do you have relatives who are top people at your partner universities/conservatories - Do you have relatives who are the top people at the Education Ministry - Others
Face	<p>Please rate your agreement with the following statements a scale from 1= Extremely Disagree to 5= Extremely Agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both we and our partners care about 'face' - The more respect we receive, the more 'face' we have - We give 'face' to our partners, and they also give us 'face'
Reciprocity	<p>Please rate your agreement with the following statements a scale from 1= Extremely Disagree to 5= Extremely Agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We do favour exchanges based on legality and rules - We do favour exchanges based on morality and social norms - We will do the partner a favour if they did one for us before - The partner will do us a favour if we did one for them before
Empathy	<p>Please rate your agreement with the following statements a scale from 1= Extremely Disagree to 5= Extremely Agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The partner sometimes presents us with gifts or souvenirs - We sometimes present souvenirs or gifts to our partners - The partner sends greeting cards to us when there are marriages, promotion, and so forth - We send greeting cards to our partner when there are marriages, promotion, and so forth - The partners are our good friends, we care about each other wholeheartedly - We like our partners, and they like us
Credit	<p>Please rate your agreement with the following statements a scale from 1= Extremely Disagree to 5= Extremely Agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We always do what was agreed with partners - We always change what was agreed with partners - We sometimes have to change what was agreed with partners - We never do what was agreed with partners - Partners always do what was agreed with us - Partners always change what was agreed with us - Partners sometimes have to change what was agreed with us - Partners never do what was agreed with us
Basis of Trust	<p>Please rate your agreement with the following statements a scale from 1= Extremely Disagree to 5= Extremely Agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Face ('<i>Mianzi</i>') - Reciprocal exchange ('<i>Renqing</i>')

- Empathy ('*Ganqing*')
- Credit ('*Xinyong*')

The final capital QUALITATIVE study used face-to-face interviews and documentary analysis. The participants were further narrowed down to the directors of international affairs in music conservatories and arts universities in both countries. The interview questions were modified from the quantitative results: in the 'facts' section, questions about the influences of social hierarchy in the quality of relationships have been added; in the 'experience' section, questions about methods of initiating collaboration, institutional success measures, and trustworthiness have been added. The recruitment brochures and the historical material of internationalisation from these selected institutions were required for the documentary analysis to establish the quality, development, and the tendency of their international relationships and co-operation.

2.3. Data Collection of the Quantitative and Qualitative studies

2.3.1. Participants

In the participant section, it is important to establish sample size, techniques, and types, as these are comparatively different in quantitative studies and qualitative studies. The process of this research might be affected if the techniques were not precise.

2.3.1.1. Sampling

This research has a relatively small sample size compared to the general population. Questionnaires were sent to the international officers in Chinese arts-related institutions known to have international co-operation with the UK. From these universities, three approachable universities from each side were evaluated

as case studies. These institutions are top arts related universities in both China and the UK that qualify as samples to be represented in the research. This also gives a practical demonstration of the results of international co-operation in the arts faculties of higher education institutions in the United Kingdom and China, an area largely uncovered in current research literature.

In terms of the sample techniques, the quantitative study used probability sampling (Gomm, 2008; Hansen, Madow and Tepping, 1983). According to Gomm (2008), probability sampling means 'each person in the population has an as near as possible chance of being chosen. This requires some kind of listing (or sampling frame) from which people can be chosen, which lists everyone in the population of interest' (p.135). The population of interest in this case is the group of directors in the international office at HEIs engaged in relationships with UK institutions in the Arts and Humanities. These directors were chosen at random to ensure the representativeness of the samples. The advantages of using this technique are a) It is easy to approach, and it is cheaper financially (Gomm, 2008), which is suitable for this study from both an accessibility and financial perspective; b) The probability sampling is more likely to be representative with previously unknown characteristics, and the results can be subjected to statistical analysis (Gomm, 2008). Therefore, this is an equal sampling technique to reduce research bias in terms of sample selection.

In the qualitative study, the samples were chosen from the arts institutions which have the most active international co-operation between these two countries. By doing so, the research more significantly displays the correlation, advantages and disadvantages of *guanxi* usage. The aim of this study is to identify international co-operations in these institutions and to evaluate the quality of these

relationships and the consequences and influences from these co-operations, in order to give implications for this research area. By analysing these samples, from a macro perspective, the benefits of international co-operation are established, which might have different contributions towards institutional strategy (see more details in Chapter 4 and 5).

Though cooperation in music was the specific focus of this paper, they took different institutional forms: Music departments within a university, Conservatories of music (top level music focused institution) and arts universities. Therefore, analysing these samples illustrated the different processes of relationship formulation. For example, a music department in a university might set up the relationship autonomously, and then inform the senior and managerial staff in the university, whereas in music conservatories, it would begin from the top level and work its way down to the individual department, though the opposite can also be true. This will be explained more clearly in the results. Moreover, as music occupies a different hierarchal position in these institutions, these international relationships may have an overall different contribution towards management strategy at the institutional level in these two countries (see more details in Chapter 4 and 5).

From a micro perspective, data access is very important for research. This research has great access to the data and approach for the interview, as all contacts had already been set up before fieldwork began.

2.3.1.2. Criteria of selecting participants

- Directors of internationalisation at higher education institutions with music

departments, or at arts-driven institutions.

- Directors who are involved in co-operation with Chinese/UK universities, or who have collaborative experience in the Arts and Humanities.

2.3.2. Tools of data analysis

This analysis used Nvivo as a coding tool for first-step transcript analysis. It also illustrates the iterative ways of conceptualisation and categorisation (Neuman, 2005) for coding interviews. Additionally, thematic analysis (Grbich, 2012) was applied in this research (see Figure 4).

D: What is your dream job?

T: Well, that's a good question. I haven't really thought about that before. Er... I think I would like to become a **CTO** in **science** and **technology company**.

D: Can I ask why?

T: Because I like **science and research**, I **want to know** how things work in terms of the nature property and how to use these properties to **service human future**. And also, **er...** design tools and facilities in order to know and **analyse old and new things**.

D: Would you please introduce briefly about your current job?

T: I am a **research** associate at the Department of Electric Engineering. My research topic focuses on physical layer in a telecommunication system, such as coding design, optimization algorithms design and network protocols design. Basically, it's about to achieve higher data rate, less energy cost, quick switching between transmission schemes and lower error rate.

D: That's really interesting! My next question is do you like your current job, and why?

T: **Yes, I do**. Because I **like research**. Research is to **find out the nature of things** and you can use tools and make things better and **achieve sense of achievement**.

D: Did you have any other jobs in your life? What were they?

T: **Yes**. I was a **teaching assistant** in my department during my PhD study period. This job was to guide master students to finish their projects and assessments. I taught on workshops and a few lectures.

D: Did you like it and why?

T: Yes. Because these jobs were the opportunities to talk to the students, also it's opportunity to teach what you know to the others. It **feels very good**, when you see they finish their work by learning from you.

D: Which one of your job you like the best, and why?

T: The current job, as I **prefer to be researcher** rather than a teacher.

D: What is your plan for the future from career perspective?

T: **Er...** Firstly, I need to find another **research** job due to my current contract is going to the end. Then, during the next job, I will accumulate more experience, knowledge and publications which I could use them to apply for a lecture position at universities. After that, I **do like to** apply for new **research projects**, which I am

Figure 4. An example of thematic analysis from my pervious reserach

Figure 4 is an example of a previous interview examining the topic of working life from my previous research¹¹. I used different colours to represent different themes or concepts. Red indicates feelings, Yellow indicates frequently occurring words, green indicates job titles, and blue indicates the reasons for a person's preference. In this case, we could use these colour schemes to summarise that this participant

¹¹ An assessment from the module of Qualitative Methods at the Management School, the University of York.

would like to become a scientific researcher, because he could design or use tools to analyse the unknown in order to serve humanity. Thematic analysis is further discussed in the analysis section.

2.3.3. Research procedure

This research applies sequential triangulation, which utilises the results of one approach to plan the next method (Morse, 1991). This partly establishes the process of the procedure, and the satisfactory level in each stage and the options for risk management. A detailed timetable is illustrated at the end.

2.3.3.1. Pilot Study

This research is designed to have two participants selected respectively from both sides for this stage as we discussed before, it managed to have two Chinese participants but ultimately only one UK participant, as another UK participant took a last-minute sick leave. In order to receive high quality results from the pilot study, the research questions have been checked carefully to avoid misunderstanding of questions and any leading questions. The interview environment was pleasant and both interviewer and interviewees were comfortable in the environment: the interview with the UK participant took place in the participant's office, which was quiet enough for a good conversation, as well as providing the interviewer with easy access to materials that he wanted to show me during the interview. The interviews with the two Chinese participants were an online interview in a quiet setting, and the interview was conducted in Chinese.

During the interview, the interviewer was conscious not to influence subjects' responses. After the completion of interviews, self-evaluations were attached in

four key tasks, which are according to Fox, Hunn, and Mathers (1998): a) whether to locate the respondent, for example, the interviewee should be informed of the length of the interview; b) whether to obtain agreement to the interview, for example, interviews should be confidential and anonymous; c) whether to ask the questions appropriately, for example, the interviewer needs to be consistent in the way of interaction; and d) whether to record the answers securely, for example, using multiple equipment to record answers, and saving it in password protected files. After the self-evaluation, I can confirm that the interviews achieved these tasks, and these interviews could be considered as valid interviews, and the results can then be analysed to indicate the variables for questionnaires.

2.3.3.2. Questionnaire design

Hypotheses were established after the first pilot study, and the questionnaire was designed in both English and Chinese, and a clear induction was provided in the email to ensure that participants understood the meaning of participating in the survey questionnaire and why they have been chosen for this study. In order to avoid sampling bias, I increased the sample size to satisfy the diversity of the samples. One disadvantage of online questionnaires is the low response rate, but simply increasing the overall sample size provided a solution, I also sent weekly reminder emails to the selected participants to increase the response rate. In consideration of the fact that the overall population of music-related institutions is relatively small, this research received 18 valid return questionnaires from China, confirming these results as satisfactory.

2.3.3.3. Interview design

After the rejection or confirmation of the hypotheses, interview questions were modified accordingly. Three directors or principals of international relations from music conservatories and arts universities in both countries were selected to participate in the interviews (see Table 1.). The reasons for choosing these institutions are: a) they are music/arts institutions, which is the main area of this research; b) they are representative music/arts institutions in both countries, which have relatively high active international cooperation, and provided rich data during interviews. The process of validity testing was the same as the pilot study. However, as this part of the interview involves international travel, interview arrangements were confirmed in advance to reduce the failure risk of data collection, and the cost of this research. Eventually, interviews were done in China over one Easter holiday, and then UK interviews were conducted during the summer holiday.

Table 2. Participating institutions from both China and the UK

Country	P.R. China			United Kingdom		
Institution	ZGY	XAY	NY	SHY	BHY	DFYX

The timetable for the duration of data collection was established (see Appendix 11.). It is worth noticing that because this research uses sequential mixed design, which involves data analysis in the process of data collection, it took longer to complete data collection compared to single method research. In fact, the process was two months longer than planned, due to the complexity of this research process. However, as data was analysed alongside the process of data collection, research time was reduced in the data analysis section (see Chapter 3, 4, and 5).

2.4. Data Analysis

Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007) argue that during the data analysis stage, quantitative data can facilitate the assessment of generalizability of the qualitative data and shed new light on qualitative findings. Alternatively, during the data analysis stage, qualitative data can play an important role by interpreting, clarifying, describing, and validating quantitative results, as well as through grounding and modifying' (p.117). This research adopts both qualitative analysis – thematic analysis, and quantitative analysis – regression analysis (exploratory factor analysis might be applied if the variables are too many). This section illustrates what these analyses are and explains why they are useful. A small sample of analysis demonstration is added to prove the validation of these analyses.

2.4.1. Thematic analysis

According to Braun, Clarke and Terry (2014), thematic analysis (TA) 'is a method for systematically identifying, organising, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set' (p.57), which allows researchers to clarify the meanings and experience shared from the collective data; also, the patterns need to be meaningful and important for research questions. There are two main reasons for using TA as one of the analytical methods, which are accessibility and flexibility (Clarke, and Braun, 2013; Braun, Clarke and Terry 2014; and Griffiths, Ryan, and Foster, 2011). For accessibility, TA provides a way of conducting research that is not seen as vague, mystifying, conceptually challenging, and overly complex; it also offers a way of 'separating qualitative research out from these broader debates, where appropriate, and making qualitative research

results available to a wider audience' (Braun, Clarke and Terry 2014, p.58). Its flexibility means that TA can straddle inductive vs. deductive or theory-driven data coding and analysis, an experiential vs. critical orientation to data, and an essentialist vs. constructionist theoretical perspective (Braun, Clarke and Terry 2014)

When considering the complexity of conducting fieldwork for this research, it required a relatively simple method for data analysis. The accessibility of thematic analysis satisfies this nature of research analysis. Moreover, at the pilot study stage, data was analysed through an inductive approach to generalise the topics and concepts for the literature. Furthermore, this research used both an inductive approach and a deductive approach together, because quantitative data, of *guanxi* existence and the depth of engagement in the cooperation between higher education institutions, presents the guidance, topics and themes for qualitative data analysis, which is a form of deductive approach. However, when analysing qualitative data, it is impossible to ignore that some content and ideas from the coding might be brought to the data analysis to modify the results. Therefore, thematic analysis brings a comprehensive flexibility to analysis data.

The data analysis of qualitative data generated five major themes. Purple has been used for political issues; yellow represents information related to *guanxi*; orange highlights materials linked to existent co-operation; red indicates advantages in co-operation and *guanxi*; and black indicates problems of collaborations and *guanxi*. It is worth noting that culture could not be isolated as a theme, as it attached with *guanxi* in this context. Therefore, from the thematic coding process, we can determine that *guanxi* has strong connections with culture in reality.

2.4.2. Regression analysis

Draper and Smith (2014) indicate that regression analysis is a set of processes for estimating the relationships among variables. In this research, *guanxi* existence and its usage needs to be estimated, and how the persistence and success of co-operation is affected by the relationships of *guanxi* categories and components needs to be analysed. Therefore, regression analysis matched the nature of this research. The 'Y' in the equation stands for the persistence and successfulness of international co-operation between higher education institutions. The 'x' stands for ranking, as discussed in the early sections describing the function of ranking in the relationships and collaborations. By installing G (*guanxi*) into the equation of regression, it would indicate the positive correlation ('+') or negative correlation ('-') of *guanxi* towards the persistence of cooperation in general.

$$Y = \alpha + \beta x + G + \varepsilon,$$

where

$$Y = \begin{cases} Persistence \\ Successfulness \end{cases},$$

$$x = ranking,$$

$$G = \begin{cases} \begin{cases} familyties \\ businessties \\ friendshipties \end{cases} categories \\ \begin{cases} ganqing \\ mianzi \\ xinyong \\ renqing \end{cases} components \end{cases}.$$

This analysis then further estimates the categories of *guanxi*, including family ties,

business ties, and friendship ties, into the equation instead of G, to indicate the strongest tie and the weakest tie towards co-operation. *Guanxi* components were included in the deeper regression to underpin the correlation of these components in relationships, in order to analyse *guanxi* comprehensively in all dimensions. By completing the analysis above, the request of quantitative analysis was fulfilled.

2.4.3. Sample demonstration

Six cases are selected from three UK institutions and three Chinese universities, respectively for the final qualitative interviews. When analysing data, two sets of comparisons were launched: the quantitative results were compared with the final qualitative results, while the qualitative results were compared between cases. The former comparison tried to identify whether the general role of *guanxi* existence and usage in the Arts and Humanities sector matched with cases in the music area, in order to theoretically stress the unique capacities of *guanxi* in the area. The latter comparison looked into the details of individual *guanxi* usage and tried to provide suggestions for strategic management. Small examples are given here, including a demonstration of data reduction and display, data transformation, data consolidation and correlation, and data comparison and integration.

There are obvious findings from the quantitative data, such as 100% of the participants being familiar with *guanxi*, and over two thirds of them having used *guanxi* in their current international co-operation. The data also found that trust is the absolute basis for relationship setup. These findings were confirmed from the qualitative interviews with Chinese participants, who all knew the term *guanxi*, and two out of three of them confirmed their usage in their co-operation, while trust was confirmed with all participants as the priority for relationship setup (see

Chapter 3, 4, and 5). These matching findings both from quantitative and qualitative data are the keys for the establishment of the theoretical framework in Chapter 6.

Comparing data from the UK and China, allowed the researcher to ascertain implications and suggestions for strategic management. For example, Chinese participants claimed that it is unfair to use monolingual (English) communication methods in China-UK relationships; while UK participants confirmed that they sometimes experienced communication misunderstandings. This example implies that monolingual communications would cause bias due to the decoupling of culture and language (see chapter 4 and 5), which suggests that UK delegations might need to become more familiar with Chinese culture and language to create more equal relationships.

Therefore, the integration of quantitative data and qualitative data, and the comparison of UK and Chinese data from the qualitative perspectives provided solid evidence to prove the importance of this study, and the value of the outcome, which further indicates the validation of the theoretical framework that will be formulated in Chapter 6.

2.5. Legitimation – the Triangulation of Methodologies

This research focuses on triangulation to validate the research methods applied in the study. Denzin (2017) indicates that ‘the last criterion under the category of validity is the triangulation of methodologies’, and that the combination of using multiple methods facilitates the researcher to carefully consider rival causal factors, leading to better results. Morse (2015) explains that methodological

triangulation is the use of at least two methods to address the same research problem. Sequential triangulation used for the results of one method is necessary for planning the next method.

By applying triangulation, Jick (1979) argues that research generally leads to more valid results, which is the strategy of triangulation. Jick (1979) also notes the advantages of triangulation: it allows researchers to be more confident in their results; it stimulates the development of creative collecting data methods; it can lead to richer, more complete data; it can lead to the synthesis or integration of theories; it can uncover contradictions, and by virtue of its comprehensiveness, it may serve as the litmus test for competing theories. Moreover, Morse (2015) indicates the advantage of triangulation is that this is 'not incompatibility between the different assumptions of the two paradigms. This is achieved by being aware of and adhering to the rules and assumptions inherent in each method related to the selection of the sample, the purpose of the method, and the contribution of the results to the overall research plan' (p122). Triangulation may also help to uncover the deviant or off-quadrant dimension of a phenomenon (Jick, 1979). Therefore, although the triangulation is more complicated and time-consuming than other normal forms of single method research, it was worth conducting for the benefits of results.

According to Morse (2015), this section analysed the validity of triangulation through three parts: a) the independency of each method, because all the methods must be completely independent to meet appropriate criteria for rigour, for example, qualitative methods cannot serve the domination of a quantitative survey, which is especially important for sequential triangulation research; b) the usage of accusation and appropriation of the samples; c) the results of the data,

which was an informed thought process, involving judgment, wisdom, creativity, and insight and includes the privilege of creating a theoretical framework.

2.6. Ethics

I ensure that my work conforms to the University of York's guidelines on ethics and engaged fully with the procedure before taking any action. Participants were recruited by e-mail invitations and WeChat¹² arrangements. An induction was then held to explain the details of the study to the participants, all the interviewees used pseudonyms, and no personal entrenched questions were asked in the interviews. A consent form (Myers, and Cairns, 1987) was read and signed by participants before the interviews started. Moreover, participants were assured that all information would be kept confidential, and I would store the data in password-protected files on my Google drive and my university account, which requires a password for access. The interview data was checked by participating institutions before being published. The interview transcripts were written in the original languages used by participants and will not be published in any form. All transcripts have not been attached with this thesis as the total length of these transcripts is larger than the thesis itself, but they are available if needed. All electronic data will be destroyed after successful completion of the research for this PhD study.

¹² It is a communication software that used by most of Chinese people.

Chapter 3. Quantitative Study

According to the results of the pilot study, participants from the UK and China both understand the term of *guanxi*. The difference is that the Chinese participants were more willing to use *guanxi* for their international co-operation, whereas the UK participant illustrated their experiences with *guanxi* when they tried to setup institutional relationships with Chinese institutions. The difference between these two participants is that the Chinese participant was actively using *guanxi*, and the UK participant experienced it passively. This information from the pilot interview provided sufficient evidence for this research and provided reasons to move to the next step of fieldwork.

3.1. Aim of the quantitative study

The purpose of this chapter is to explain from a macro level how international co-operation works from a Chinese perspective, the success and difficulties that they are facing, and the extent to which *guanxi* is engaged with during co-operation. Firstly, measurements are introduced, and constructs are analysed accordingly in the Descriptive Results section. Significant correlations are established in the third section and followed by a discussion section provided at the end of this chapter. The response from Chinese participants provide an understanding of their views towards *guanxi* in their international collaborations, which allows us predict tendencies in how *guanxi* is used in UK-China co-operation. The aim of this work is to demonstrate specific individual attitudes and viewpoints, rather than generalise across many organisations. However, due to this small sample size (18 respondents), this chapter illustrates the descriptive results and significant correlations between different variables in themes according to the hypotheses.

The aims of this study were first to find out if the success rate of international co-operation is influenced by *guanxi* elements (face, reciprocity, empathy and credit). We also tested the connections between the difficulty rate of international co-operation and *guanxi* elements; then we identified the involvement of *guanxi* in the process of selecting partnerships; finally, the interactions between *guanxi* elements have been tested in order to illustrate a mechanism of *guanxi* usage in UK-China co-operation. The following hypotheses have been tested in the current study.

3.1.1 Hypotheses

According to the research questions, there are five hypotheses that need to be tested in this section:

- H1: Elements of *guanxi* evoke different levels of success in international co-operation
- H2: Elements of *guanxi* evoke different levels of difficulties within international co-operation
- H3: *Guanxi* usage is associated with expertise of partnerships
- H4: The existence of *guanxi* is associated with partnership setup
- H5: There are significant correlations between *guanxi* elements

3.2. Method

The numerical data was coded in SPSS. It then used confidence intervals (CIs) to test the significance of results, and Bivariate Correlations to test the

relationships between *guanxi* elements and the success and difficulties of their existing co-operation. Regression tests also have been conducted to indicate if there is any significance between the independent variables of *guanxi*'s elements and outcome dependent variables according to the hypotheses.

All constructs, other than age, were measured using multiple indicators (age was measured by numbers), the majority of which were taken from the *guanxi*, marketing and relationship literatures (Luo, 2008; Wang 1999; Ruan and Chen 2019; Conway and Swift, 2000; Badi, Wang, and Pryke, 2017). More specifically, the measures for variables like partner selection methods, expertise, for examples, were based on the scales that used in the studies of relationship marketing. In addition, new scales were developed specifically for this research: basis of partnership for instance. These scales were based on the literature discussed in Chapter 1 and piloted amongst respondents. The scales used are summarised as Table 1 (see Chapter 2).

In order to indicate correlations between the success rate of international co-operation and elements of *guanxi*, the 'difficulty rate' and its *guanxi*'s influences, the items of success rate and difficulty rate have been tested with the *purpose of international co-operation, partnership setup, expertise* of partner institutions, and elements of *guanxi* (**H1** and **H2**). Moreover, elements of *guanxi* have been tested with *expertise* and *relationship setup* to identify the relationship between *guanxi* and international co-operation (**H3** and **H4**). **H5** required correlation tests between all items comprising *guanxi*'s elements. Therefore, the next section provides details of descriptive results.

3.3. Descriptive results

3.3.1. Background information

This research managed to receive 18 valid responses which covered 12 out of 34 provinces (including Special Administrative Region Hong Kong and Macao) (see Figure 6.) and included a range of institutions: conservatories (45%), universities (33%), and arts colleges (22%) (see Figure 5.). The mean age of the participants is 40, and all participants had master's degrees or PhD degrees (see Figure 7.), with a gender makeup of 61% females and 33% males (see Figure 8). In terms of their education background, 66% of them were from the Arts and Humanities, 17% of them were from Business and Management, and another 17% of them were from Law and Education (see Figure 9.). 50% of them, who are working as international officers, have been employed at their position for over 10 years, of which 39% of them had more than 20 years' experience in international co-operation (see Figure 10.).

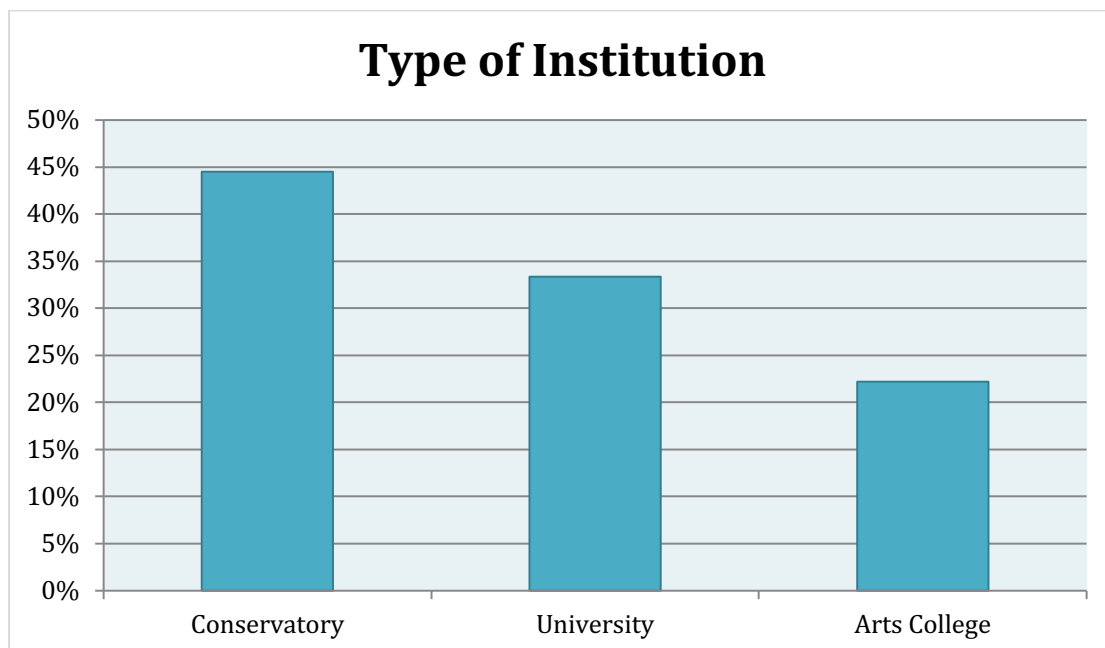


Figure 5 The distribution of institutions that participants worked at

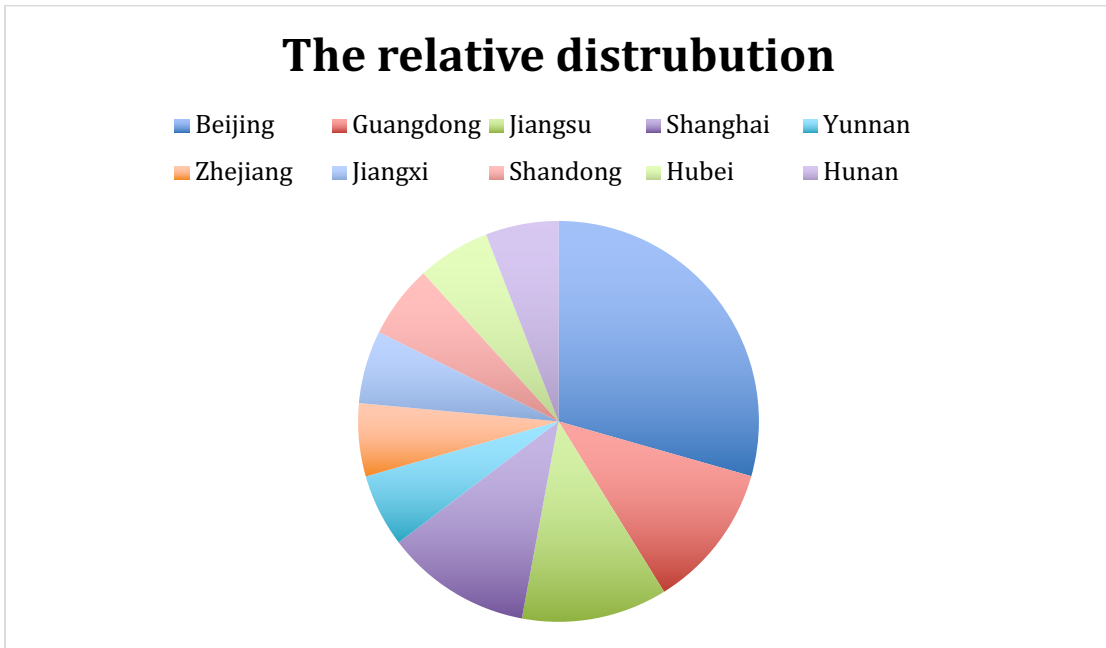


Figure 6 The relative distribution of the provinces covered in this survey

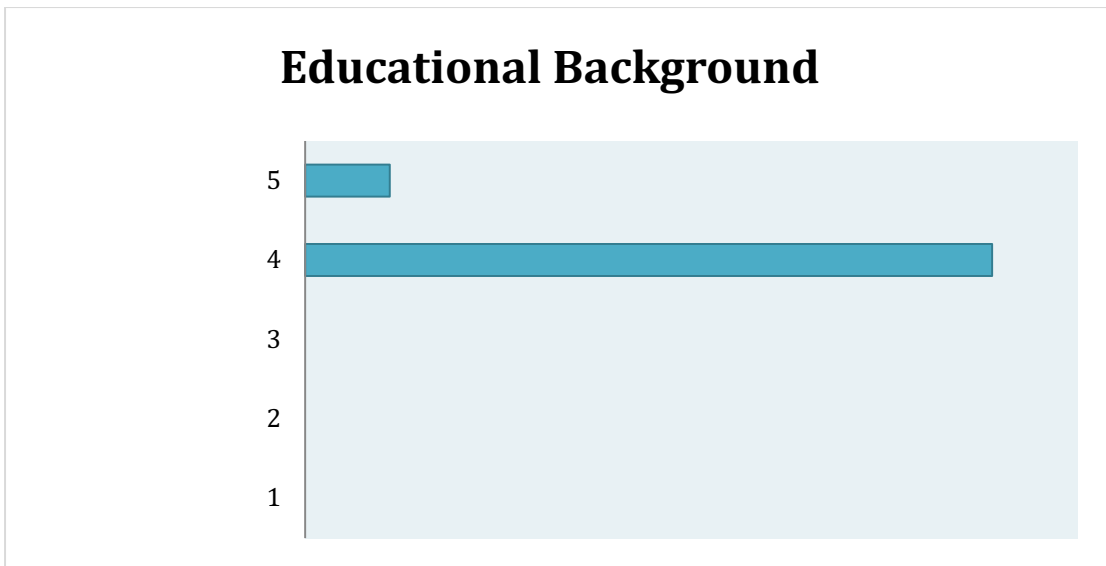


Figure 7 The education level of participants

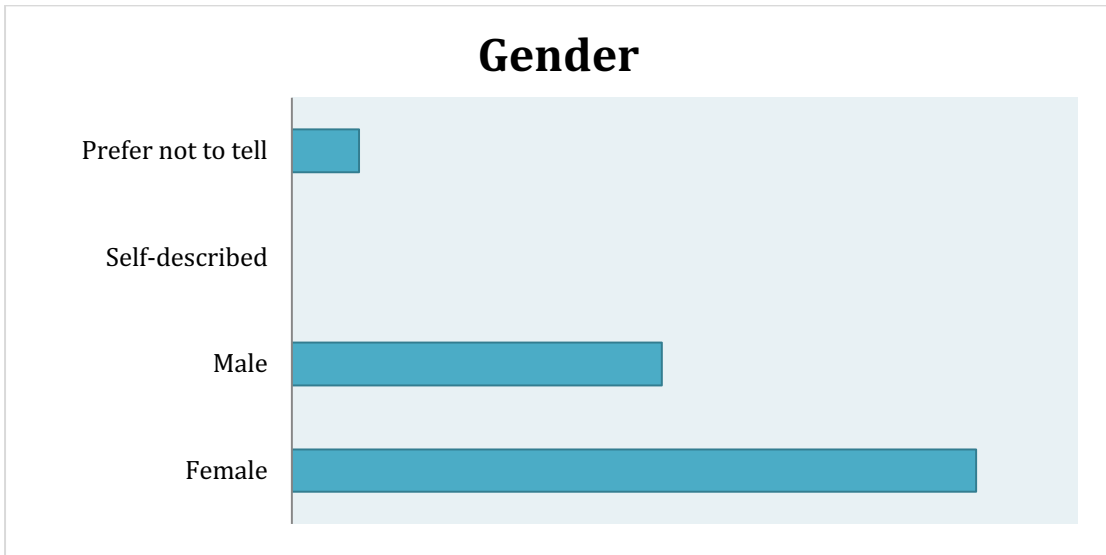


Figure 8 Gender of participants

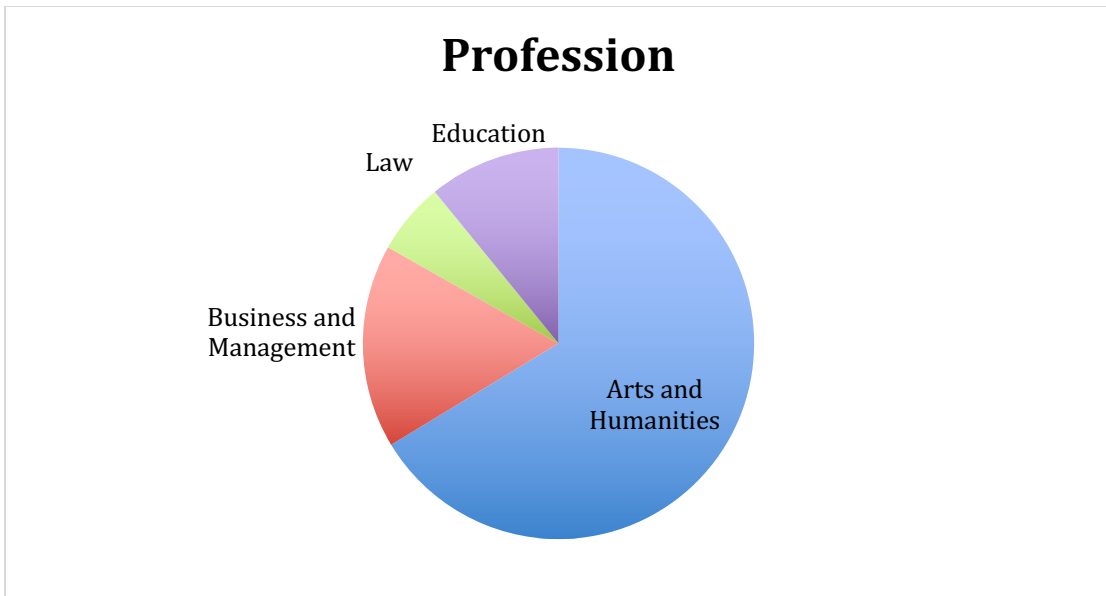


Figure 9 The professional background of participants

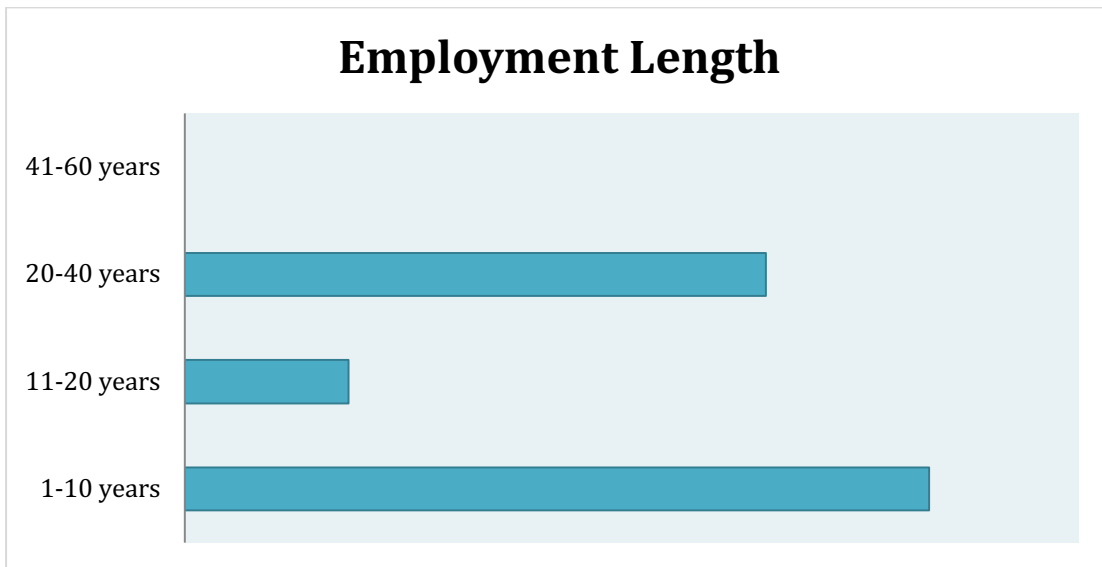


Figure 10 The employment length of participants

3.3.2. Current co-operation

'Student/staff exchange' and 'Concerts/cultural exchange' were the most significant reasons given by Chinese institutions for conducting international co-operation, which contained 89% and 83%, respectively. The second reason was to 'increase institution's reputation/ranking', 50% of the participants selected this reason (see Figure 11).

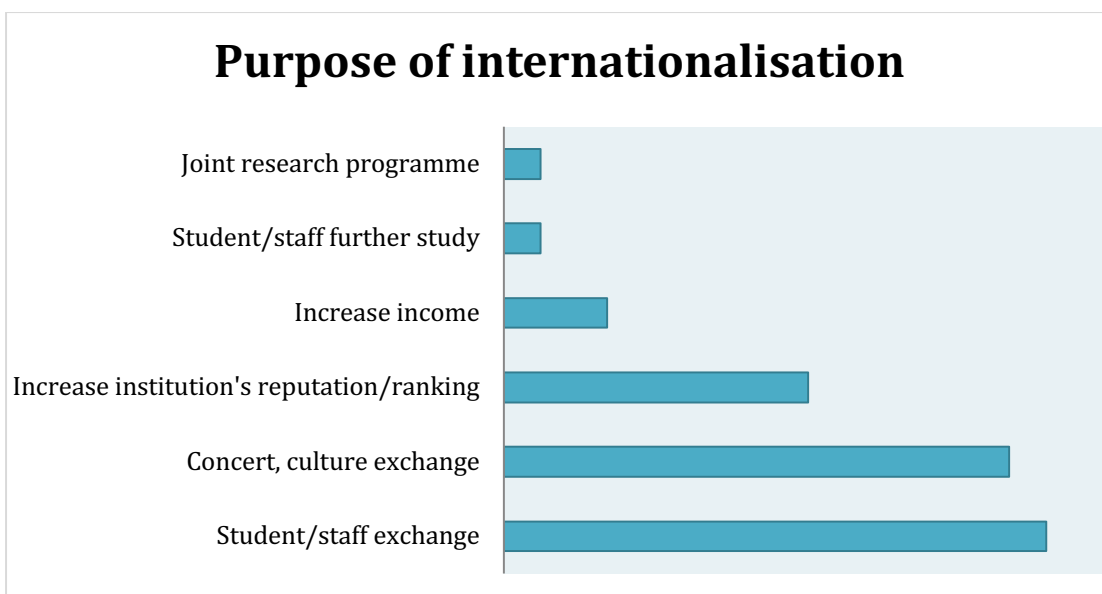


Figure 11 The purpose of conducting international co-operation

In terms of the partner selection method, 95% indicated that they chose said

partner primarily because ‘the partner has a relatively higher position in the HEIs’; the second important criteria was ‘the partner has good relationships with famous overseas institutions’ (see Figure 12).

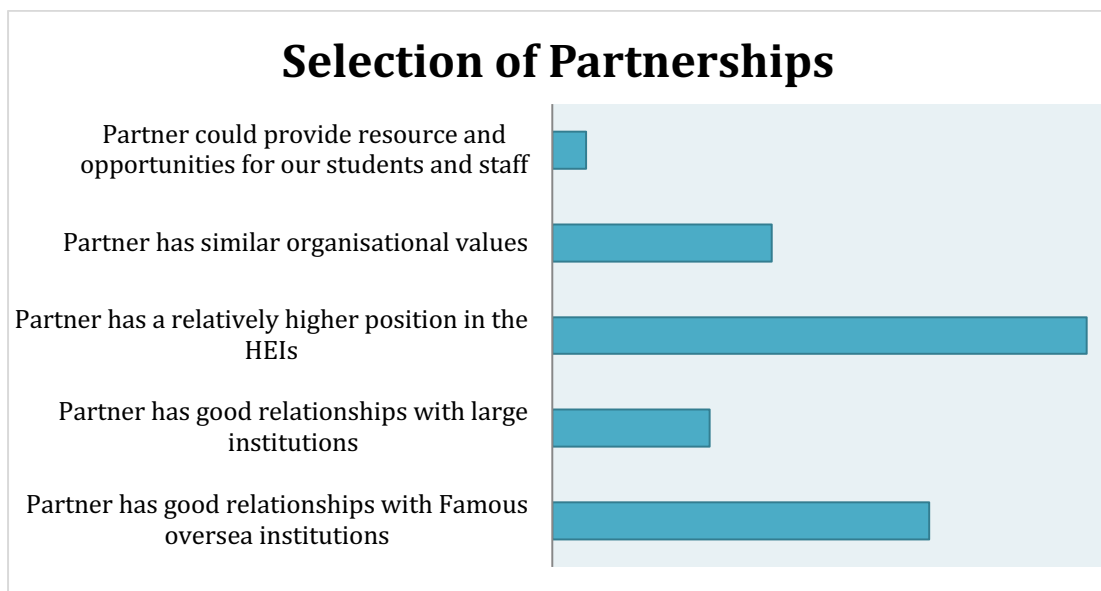


Figure 12 Selecting methods of partnership

Chinese institutions held positive impressions towards their existing partners (see Figure 13). 78% tended to agree that ‘the partner, in our most recent co-operation, is knowledgeable in their area’. 89% agreed or strongly agreed that ‘the partner, in our most recent co-operation, is knowledgeable in the market’. 83% agreed or strongly agreed that ‘the partner, in our most recent co-operation, was able to provide solutions to improve the existing operation’, and 89% agreed that ‘the partner, in our most recent co-operation, was able to propose alternative products to suit applications’.

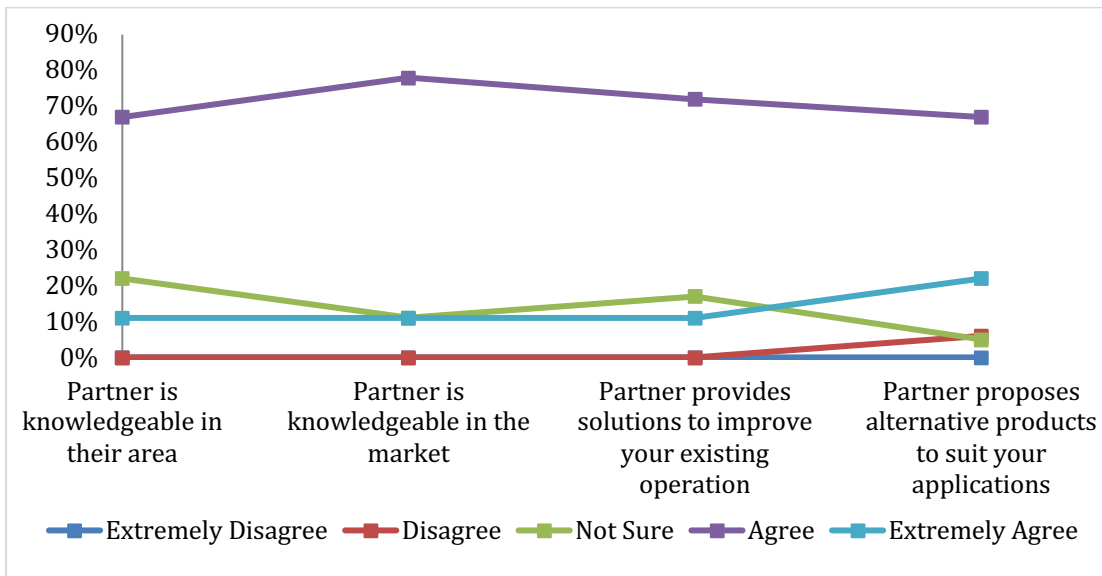


Figure 13 Existing partnerships

The overall success rate was around 77%, which was reasonably positive, and the most successful collaboration was ‘Cultural exchange’ – 83% of the participants considered this indicator as successful or very successful. 61% of them indicated that ‘Student programmes’ were successful (44% saying successful, and 17% saying very successful). In contrast, the ‘Joint research project’ was the one with the lowest rate of success, 22% of them claimed that they have been unsuccessful in this collaboration, and 50% of them gave ‘not sure’ as the answer (see Figure 14).

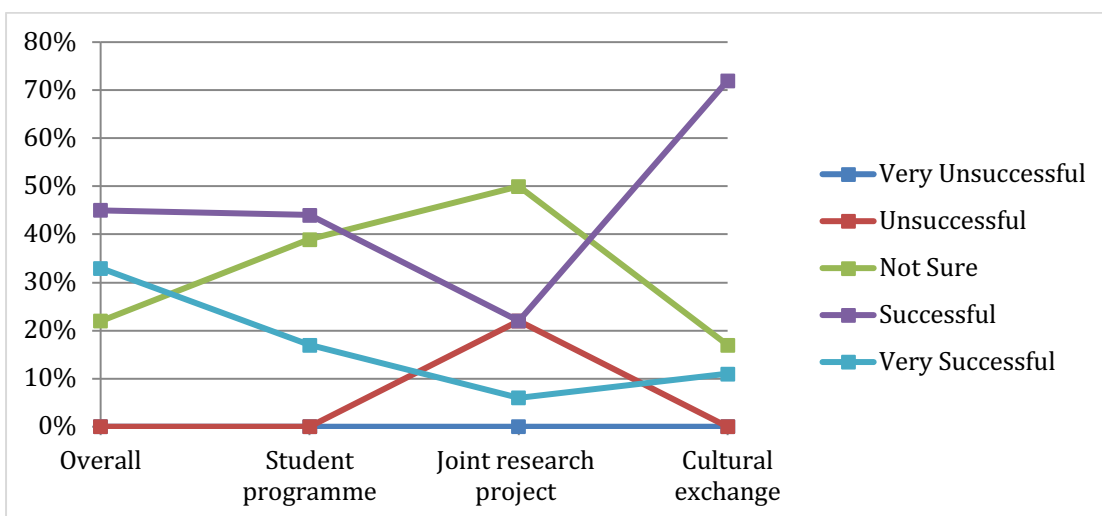


Figure 14 The success rate of existing programmes

In terms of the difficulties, 44% of participants denied that they had any difficulties in international co-operation overall. Specifically, 28% of them believed that they did not have misunderstandings or communication failures during their collaboration; 39% indicated that they did not encounter financial difficulties; and only 22% thought they were not affected by political influences. On the other hand, more than half disagreed that there was low interest from students, staff and the top managerial staff (see Figure 15). However, these questions received high levels of uncertainty, for example, 45% of the participants were not sure if they had misunderstandings or communication failure, and 33% of them did not know if they have financial difficulties.

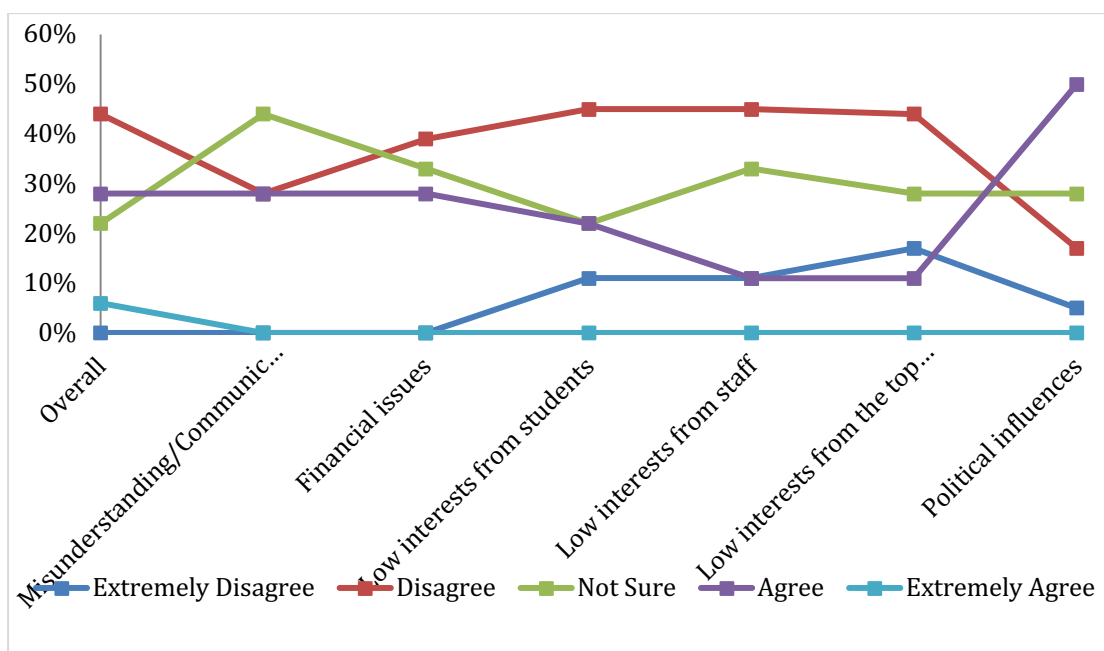


Figure 15 The difficult rate of existing programmes

Although only 34% of the Chinese participants believed they had difficulties in international co-operation, 56% of them claimed that they had no solution once they met difficulties (see Figure 16.). The 42% of the participants who indicated they had solutions for their existing co-operation, were asked to provide a detailed explanation in an open-ended space. 80% of them mentioned communications.

They believe the solution is to have more communications to discuss and explore Win-Win solutions. 15% of the solution was to skip over problematic collaborations and find new ones, as they believed they had enough options.

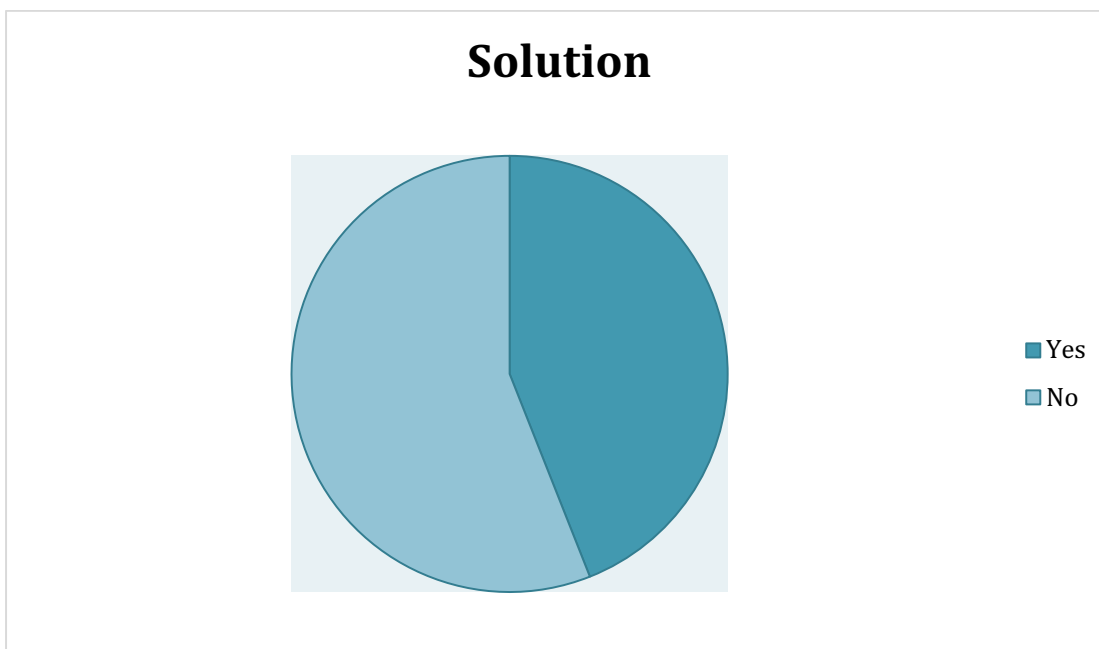


Figure 16 Abilities of participants to provide solutions

3.3.3. *Guanxi*

100% of the participants confirmed that they know the term *guanxi* (see Figure 17), and 72% believed they used *guanxi* for China-UK relationships (see Figure 18). 73% of the participants indicated that they had close relationships with high-ranking figures at partner institutions when they began their relationships. 67% of the participants chose to start their relationship due to the good relationships they had with one of the staff members at partner universities or conservatories. They chose the levels 'no relationship' and 'completely unfamiliar' for the questions: 'Do you have close relationships with the top people at the Education Ministry in your home country?' (45%, and 44% in not sure); 'Do you have close relationships with the top people at the Education Ministry in your partner country?' (73%); 'Do you have close relatives who are working at partner universities/conservatories?'

(89%); 'Do you have close relatives who are top people at your partner universities/conservatories?' (94%); and 'Do you have close relatives who are the top people at education ministry?' (100%) (see Figure 19.).

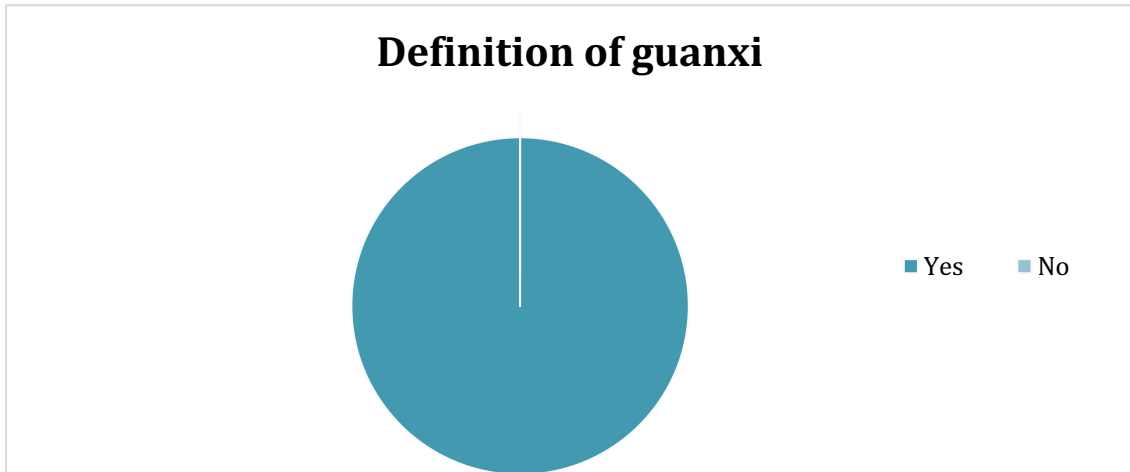


Figure 17 Understanding the definition of *guanxi*

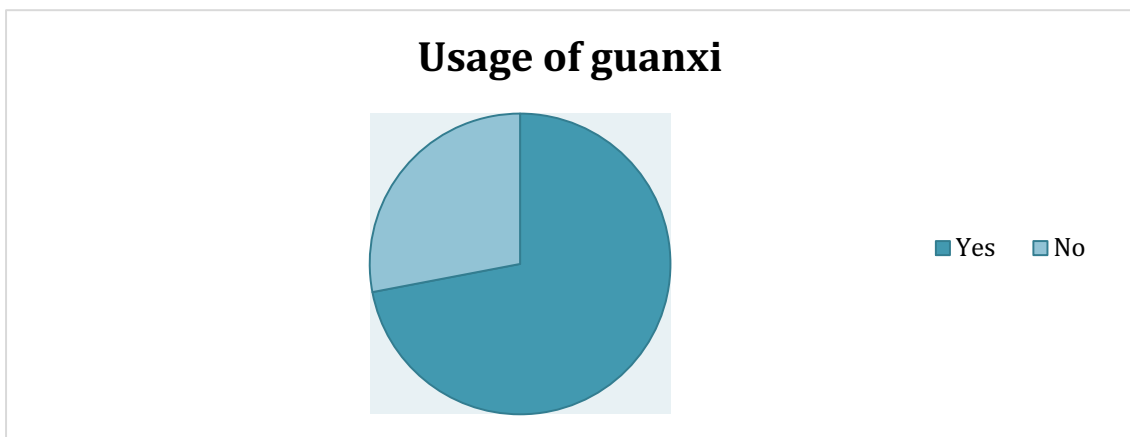


Figure 18 Usage of *guanxi*

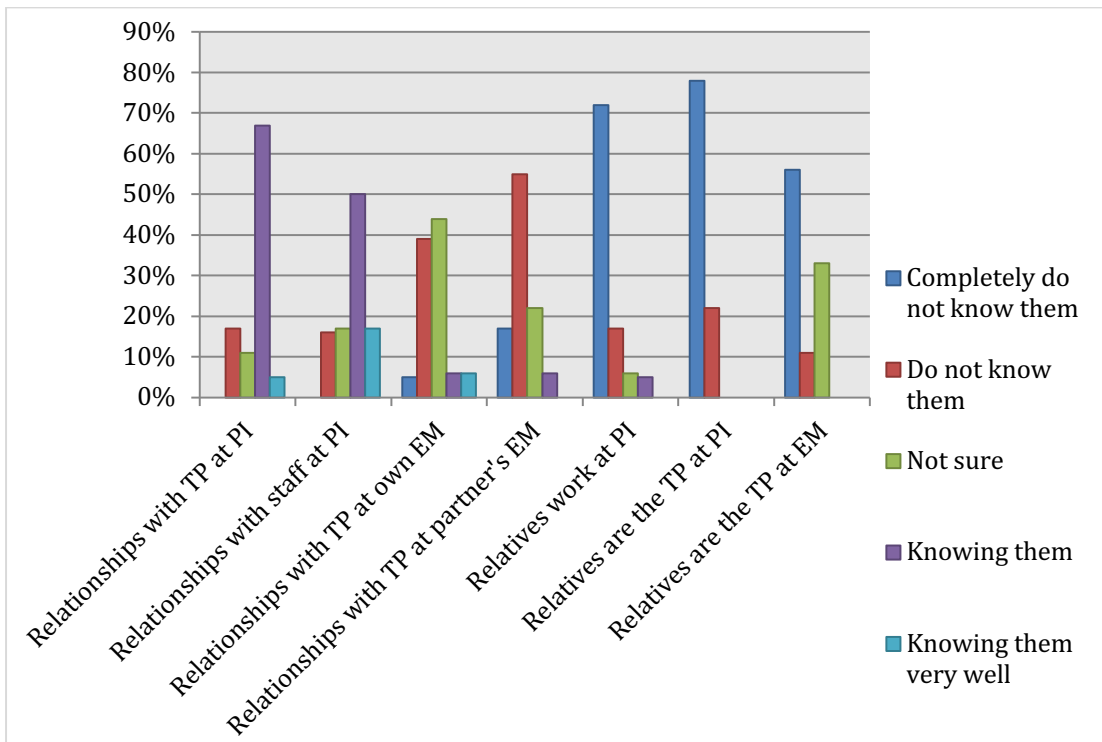


Figure 19 Relationship's setup for co-operation

In terms of the *guanxi* element of face, '*mianzi*' – the public image of people or institutions - participants had different opinions towards the question 'we both care about face', which had a relatively equal percentage in the categories of disagreement, unsureness, and agreement. 62% of them agreed or strongly agreed that 'the more respect we receive, the more face we have', and 67% of them agreed or strongly agreed that 'we give face to the partner, and they also give us face' (see Figure 20). Participants had comparatively high agreements regarding all favour exchange items: 62% and 56% of agreements indicated 'we do favour exchange based on legality and rules', and 'we do favour exchange based on morality and social norms'. 83% and 84% of the agreements indicated that Chinese participants were willing to do favour exchange with their partners in the international co-operation (see Figure 21.).

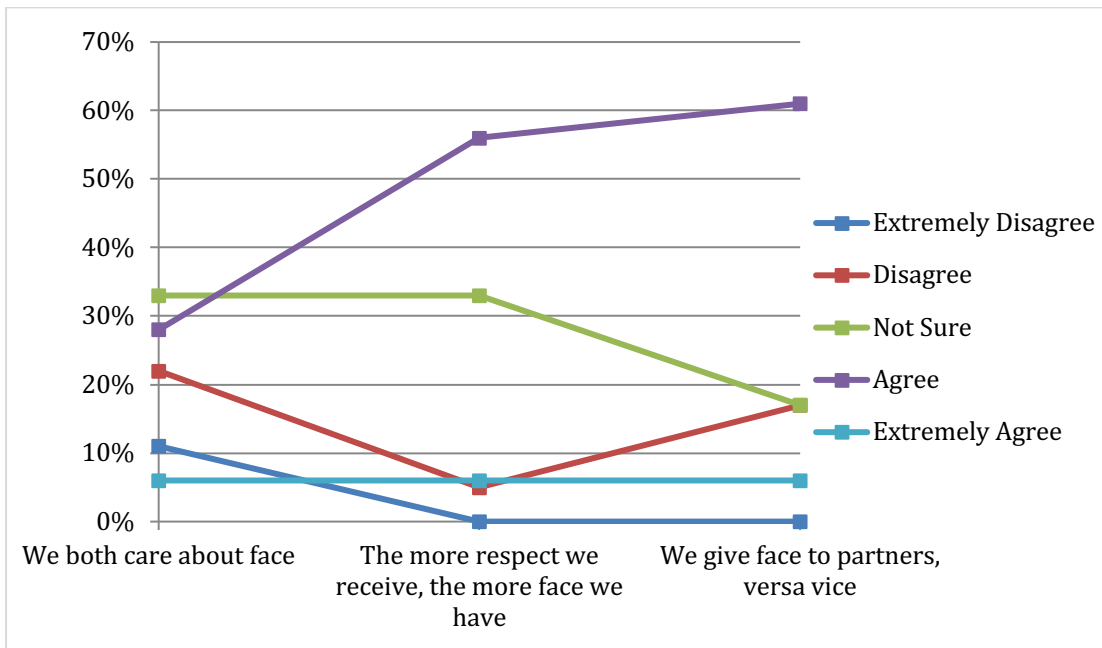


Figure 20 Face

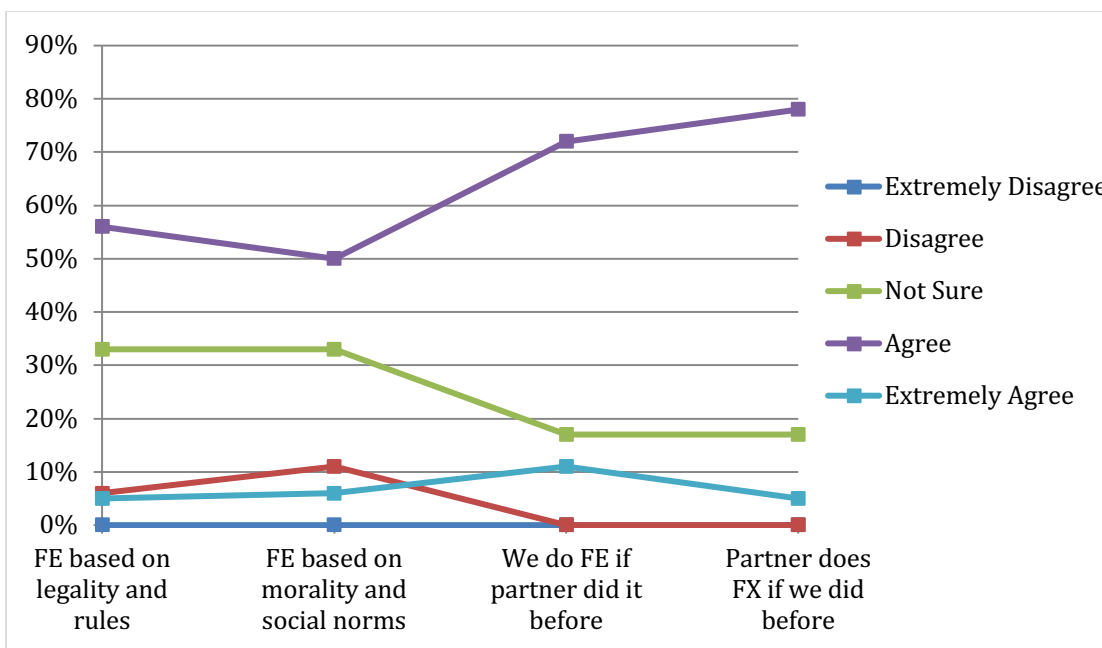


Figure 21 Favour exchange

In the affection/empathy section, there was no disagreement on gift exchanges upon meeting (89% of them agreed that ‘their partner sometimes presents souvenirs to us’, and 95% of them indicated that ‘we sometimes present souvenirs to our partners’). It also received no disagreement on ‘they are our good friends, and we care about each other’ and ‘we like the partner, and they like us’. There was little agreement on sending greeting cards: 32% of them agreed that partners

sent them greeting cards, and 37% of them agreed that they sent greeting cards to their partners (see Figure 22.).

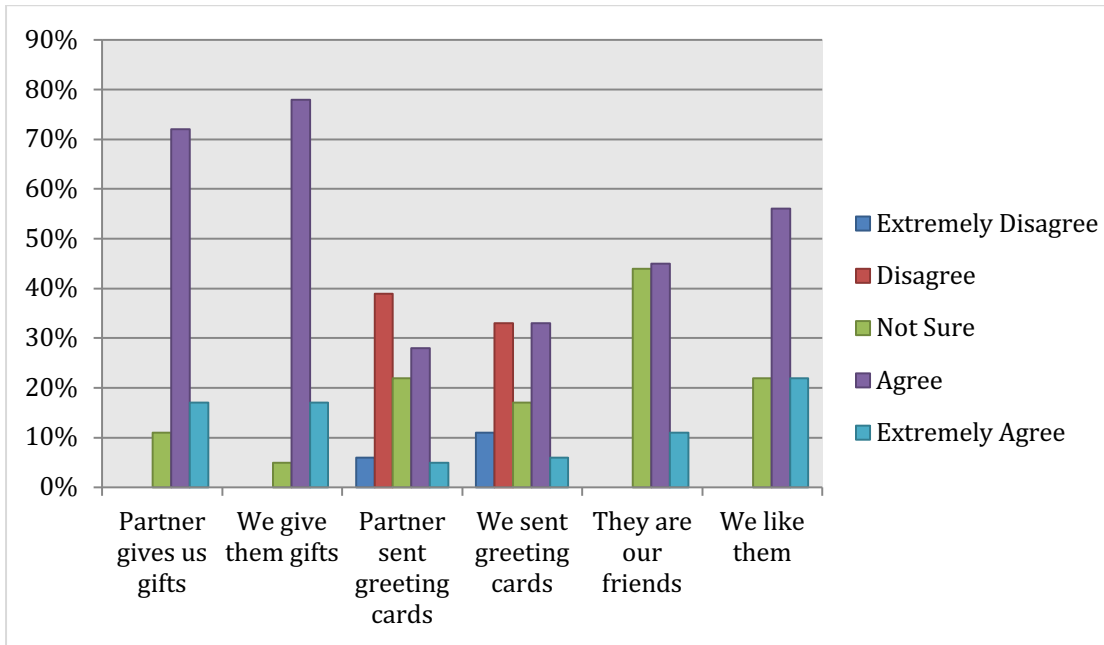


Figure 22 Empathy

In terms of credit, 94% of them tended to agree that ‘we always do what was agreed with partners’, while there were no agreements on the items of ‘we always change what was agreed with partners’, and ‘we never do what was agreed with partners’. There was high volume of ‘not sure’ in the item ‘we sometimes have to change what was agreed with partners’ (56%). Simultaneously, there was a high level of agreement (89%) for ‘partners always do what they have agreed with us’, and complete disagreement on ‘partners never do what was agreed with us’. There was no agreement on ‘partners always change what was agreed with us’, and there was a high volume of ‘not sure’ – 61% of them indicated their partners sometimes had to change what was agreed (see Figure 23.).

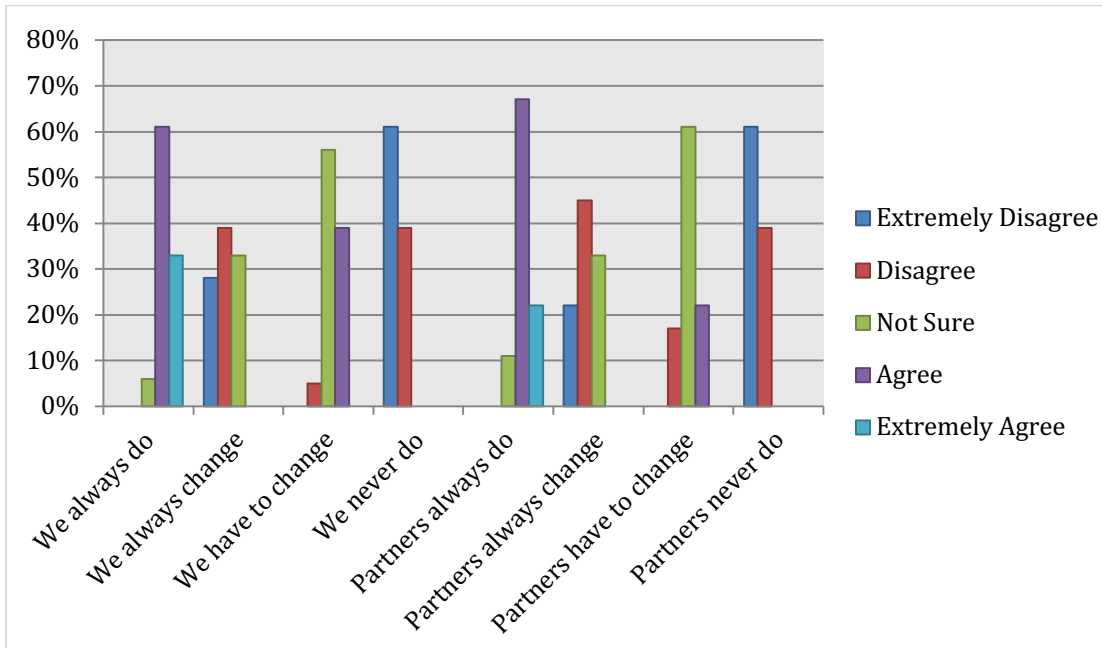


Figure 23 Credit

In terms of the foundation of trust, Credit received the highest rate of agreement, 89% of the participants agreed that credit is the basis of trust (44% agree and 45% agree extremely); affect/empathy received 50% of the agreement. While elements of face and favour exchange, participants were more uncertain and disagreed about them (see Figure 24). Therefore, in sum, credit is the most important element for trust, and empathy is the second most important element of *guanxi* in terms of building up trust for relationships.

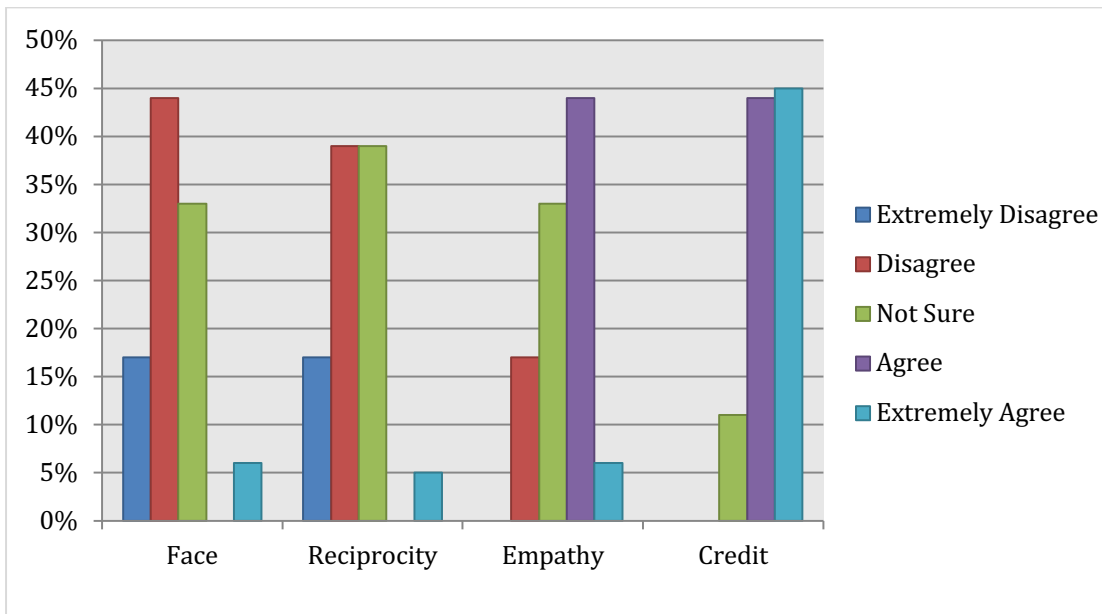


Figure 24 Basis of trust

3.3.4. Open questions

There were two open questions asked at the end of the questionnaire. The first question was to 'list the three most successful things that you have done to set-up a relationship with UK universities in last five years'. However, two participants refused to provide details, and there were 12 different types of activities mentioned. The most frequent answer was 'signing new MoUs', which was mentioned by 7 participants, and 'Delivering joint degree programmes' which was mentioned 5 times. 'Formal visits', 'student exchange' and 'staff exchange' were mentioned 4 times each (see Figure 25).

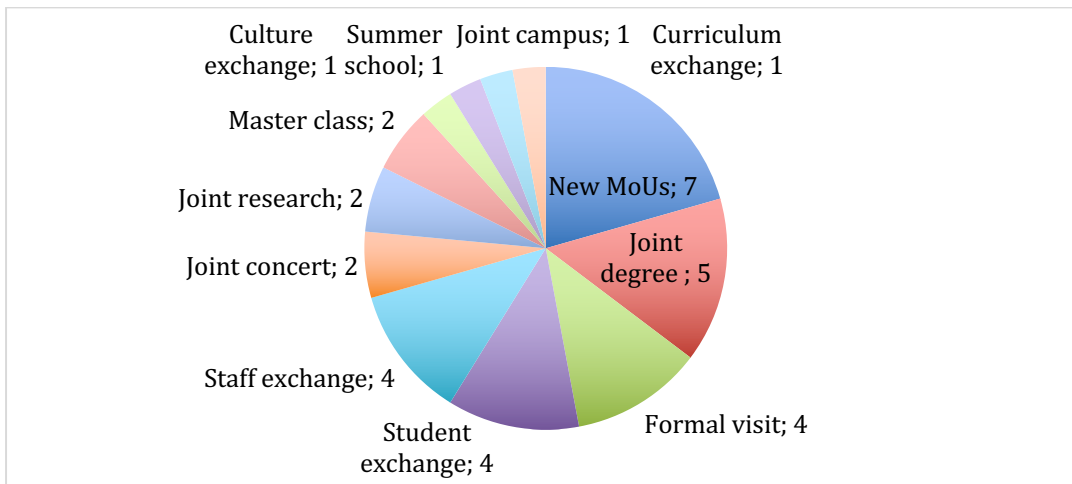


Figure 25 The frequency of the first open question

The second question was to 'list three the most useful things you did to stabilise a relationship with UK universities in the last five years'. Other than three blank answers, there were 15 valid responses, which could be potentially divided into three parts:

- a) Communication through exchanges and visits;
- b) Positive engagements in existing programmes;
- c) Multiple developments in different subjects.

For communications, they believed that they could understand each other better through formal visits; and their students could gain a better understanding of UK culture and English teaching methods through master classes and short exchange programmes. This would also be the fundamental condition for the joint degree and joint research programmes. In terms of engagements, Chinese institutions would provide assistants for their partners' recruitments; co-organise music festivals in the UK; invite their partner institutions to visit China for festivals and international conferences. Finally, the multiple developments that they explained were to develop links from existing area to multiple subjects, as well as

to develop multiple links between their staff and the staff from their partner institutions (establishing additional friendships also).

In sum, these descriptive results show that these participants are professional for conducting international co-operation, and their international co-operation focuses on short exchange programmes. Also, *guanxi* exists in international co-operation from the Chinese perspective. In particular, most of the participating institutions use *guanxi* on purpose for their relationship setup.

3.4. Correlation results

Bivariate correlations were tested, and Pearson's data analysis was used in this correlation test. The Pearson's r ranges in value from -1 to +1. The further r is from zero, the stronger the correlation. According to Taylor (1990), weak correlation is $|r| \leq .35$, moderate correlation is $.35 < |r| < .68$, and strong correlation is $|r| \geq .68$. Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) of each item is illustrated when the item first appears in this section. The shortened phrase of each item replaces the full title from the second time it appears in the context, and it only shows the significant results.

3.4.1. The success rate of international co-operation

There are five variables in the success rate calculation, which are 'overall', 'student programme', 'joint research project', 'cultural exchange' and 'others'. In 'others', the name of the programme was required to be specific in an open space. However, there was no programme nominated in the 'others', and the scale of 'others' was not valid to be tested in this section.

The results indicated that the success rate was correlated with the purpose of

conducting international co-operation. Specifically, relationships with success rates regarding 'student programme' ($M=3.78$, $SD=.732$) and the purpose of student/staff exchange ($M=.83$, $SD=.383$) were tested. Pearson's r data analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation, $r=.489$. The success rate of cultural exchange ($M=3.94$, $SD=.539$) saw a moderate negative correlation ($r=-.521$) with the purpose of increase income ($M=.17$, $SD=.383$).

The success rate of student programmes was also tested with partnership setup. It was moderately positively correlated ($r=.609$, and $r=.635$) with the items of '[having] a close relationship with the top people at partner institution when you start your relationship' ($M=3.61$, $SD=.850$) and '[having] a close relationship with one of the staff at partner universities when you start your relationship' ($M=3.67$, $SD=.970$). Also, the P values were both at the level of 0.01. Therefore, it is easier for a student programme to succeed when Chinese institutions have close relationships with high-ranking figures at partner institutions or have close relationships with one of the staff at partner universities when setting up relationships.

The overall success rate ($M=4.11$, $SD=.758$) of international co-operation and the success rate of student programmes had a significant positive correlation ($r=.683$), with a P of .002, which is < 0.01 (see Table 10.). Which means the more successful the student programme is, the higher the overall success rate will be.

3.4.1.1. H1: Elements of *guanxi* evoke different levels of success in international co-operation

There are four *guanxi* elements, and each of them has a calculated mean to present the group of items. The items of success rate have been tested with all

guanxi's elements and indicated that there is no significance between *guanxi*'s elements and the success rate of international co-operation (see Table 3.). Therefore, the H1: **Elements of *guanxi* evoke different levels of success in international co-operation** has been rejected.

Table 3. The Pearson correlation between the items of success rate and *guanxi*'s elements

Correlations										
		Overall	Student programme	Joint Research project	Cultural exchange	Education level	MeanFace	MeanRenqing	MeanGanqing	MeanXinyong
Overall	Pearson Correlation	1								
	Sig. (2-tailed)									
Student programme	Pearson Correlation	.683**	1							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002								
Joint Research project	Pearson Correlation	0.259	.526*	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.300	0.025							
Cultural exchange	Pearson Correlation	0.447	0.116	0.015	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.063	0.647	0.954						
Education level	Pearson Correlation	0.187	-0.387	-486*	0.375	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.459	0.113	0.041	0.125					
MeanFace	Pearson Correlation	0.231	0.263	0.055	-0.235	-0.018	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.356	0.291	0.828	0.349	0.944				
MeanRenqing	Pearson Correlation	0.189	0.298	0.105	-0.367	-0.077	.864**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.453	0.230	0.679	0.135	0.761	0.000			
MeanGanqing	Pearson Correlation	0.041	0.294	0.245	-0.366	-0.280	0.372	.483*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.873	0.236	0.327	0.136	0.261	0.129	0.042		
MeanXinyong	Pearson Correlation	-0.263	-0.385	0.021	-0.360	-0.042	0.171	0.187	0.110	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.293	0.115	0.935	0.143	0.867	0.498	0.457	0.665	
		N	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

3.4.2. The difficulty rate of international co-operation

In terms of the difficulties encountered during international co-operation, there were seven variables to be tested, which were 'overall rate of difficulties', 'misunderstanding/communication failure', 'financial issues', 'low interest from students', 'low interest from staff', 'low interest from the top managers', and 'political influences'. There are correlations between the items in the section of difficulties.

The overall difficulty rate ($M=2.94$, $SD=.998$) and the difficulty rate of low interest – staff ($M=2.44$, $SD=.856$) were tested, and Pearson's r indicated a moderate correlation ($r=.513$) – the overall difficulty rate was positively correlated with low interest – staff. The less interest from staff, the more difficult co-operation.

There were positive correlations between the difficulty rate of low interest – students, low interest – staff, and low interest – managers. Correlation between the difficulty rates of low interest – students ($M=2.56$, $SD=.984$) and low interest – staff ($M=2.44$, $SD=.856$) were strong ($r=.878$), and the P value was at the level of 0.01. Low interest from managers ($M=2.33$, $SD=.907$) moderately correlated with low interest from students ($r=.505$), and from staff ($r=.631$). There was a moderate correlation ($r=.527$) between the difficult rates of low interest from top managers and various political influences ($M=3.22$, $SD=.943$) at the P value level ≤ 0.05 . The stronger political influences towards the co-operation, the lower interest there was from the top managers.

3.4.2.1. H2: Elements of *guanxi* evoke different levels of difficulties within international co-operation

The difficulty rates were tested with the *guanxi* element 'face'. There were negative correlations indicated between 'low interest of students', 'low interest of staff', and 'the more respect received', 'the more face earned' (respect, face) ($M=3.61$, $SD=.698$); 'face was given to the partner', and 'partners give us face in return' (give and receive) ($M=3.56$, $SD=.856$). Low interest from students was negatively correlated with 'the more respect we receive, the more face we have' ($r=-.524$); and was also negatively correlated with 'we give face to the partner, and they also give us face' ($r=-.598$). Moreover, low interest of staff had a moderate negative correlation with 'we give face to the partner, and they also give us face' ($r=-.518$). Therefore, the lower the interest received from students and staff, the less face that they received from or gave to their partner institutions (see Table 4).

Table 4. The Pearson correlation between the items of difficulty rate and items of *guanxi*'s element - Face

Correlations											
	Pearson Correlation	Overall	Misunderstanding/ Communication failure	Not enough funding	Low-interest from student	Low-interest from staff	Low-interest from the top managerial staff	Political influence	Both care	The more respect, the more face	We give, they give
Overall	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1									
	N	18									
Misunderstanding/Communication failure	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.384 0.116	1								
	N	18									
Not enough funding	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.204 0.416	0.369 0.132	1							
	N	18									
Low-interest from student	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.333 0.177	0.234 0.350	0.008 0.975	1						
	N	18									
Low-interest from staff	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.513* 0.030	0.359 0.144	0.156 0.536	.878** 0.000	1					
	N	18									
Low-interest from the top managerial	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.281 0.258	0.085 0.739	-0.026 0.919	.505* 0.032	.631** 0.005	1				
	N	18									
Political influence	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.326 0.186	0.244 0.329	-0.042 0.870	0.303 0.221	0.454 0.059	.527* 0.025	1			
	N	18									
Both care	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.003 0.991	0.138 0.584	-0.198 0.431	-0.078 0.759	0.028 0.914	0.195 0.439	0.125 0.621	1		
	N	18									
The more respect, the more face	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.202 0.422	0.000 1.000	0.124 0.625	-0.524* 0.026	-0.285 0.252	-0.062 0.807	0.139 0.582	.578* 0.012	1	
	N	18									
We give, they give	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.306 0.217	0.000 1.000	-0.239 0.340	-0.598** 0.009	-0.518* 0.028	-0.025 0.921	-0.089 0.725	.592** 0.010	.580* 0.012	1
	N	18									

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation between the difficulty rates and the *guanxi* element of ‘empathy’ were tested. Low interest from top managers was negatively correlated ($r=-.472$) (see Table 20.) with the item ‘we like the partner, and they like us’ (we like each other) ($M=4.00$, $SD=.686$). The lower the interest that top managers had, the less likely they were to like each other (see Table 5.).

Table 5. The Pearson correlation between the items of difficulty rate and items of *guanxi*'s element - Empathy

Correlations													
	Overall	Misunderstanding/Communication failure	Not enough funding	Low-interest from student	Low-interest from staff	Low-interest from the top managerial staff	Political influence	Partner gives gifts and souvenirs	We give gifts and souvenirs	Partner sends greeting cards	We send greeting cards	Good friends, we care about each other	We like each other
Overall	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 18											
Misunderstanding/Communication failure	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.384 0.116 18	1										
Not enough funding	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.204 0.416 18	0.369 0.132 18	1									
Low-interest from student	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.333 0.177 18	0.234 0.350 18	0.008 0.975 18	1								
Low-interest from staff	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.513* 0.030 18	0.359 0.144 18	0.156 0.536 18	.878** 0.000 18	1							
Low-interest from the top managerial staff	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.281 0.258 18	0.065 0.739 18	-0.026 0.919 18	.505* 0.032 18	.631** 0.005 18	1						
Political influence	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.326 0.186 18	0.244 0.329 18	-0.042 0.870 18	0.303 0.221 18	0.454 0.059 18	.527* 0.025 18	1					
Partner gives gifts and souvenirs	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.552* 0.017 18	0.000 1.000 18	-0.116 0.645 18	0.271 0.277 18	0.326 0.187 18	0.200 0.425 18	0.206 0.413 18	1				
We give gifts and souvenirs	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.514* 0.029 18	0.000 1.000 18	0.033 0.896 18	0.113 0.656 18	0.162 0.521 18	0.046 0.857 18	0.206 0.412 18	.900** 0.000 18	1			
Partner sends greeting cards	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.267 0.284 18	.498* 0.036 18	0.313 0.206 18	0.117 0.644 18	0.375 0.125 18	0.220 0.380 18	.488* 0.040 18	0.026 0.723 18	0.026 0.919 18	1		
We send greeting cards	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.144 0.569 18	.519* 0.027 18	0.286 0.251 18	0.056 0.825 18	0.284 0.253 18	0.146 0.563 18	0.445 0.064 18	-0.082 0.746 18	0.023 0.926 18	.958** 0.000 18	1	
Good friends, we care about each other	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.143 0.571 18	0.143 0.372 18	0.137 0.587 18	-0.145 0.565 18	-0.033 0.895 18	-0.189 0.453 18	0.212 0.398 18	0.053 0.835 18	0.303 0.221 18	.749** 0.000 18	0.000 1	
We like each other	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.086 0.735 18	0.086 1.000 18	0.206 0.412 18	-0.262 0.294 18	-0.200 0.425 18	-.472* 0.048 18	-0.182 0.470 18	0.318 0.198 18	.546* 0.019 18	0.318 0.198 18	.625** 0.006 18	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation between the difficulty rates and the *guanxi* element 'credit' were tested. The overall difficulty rate saw a moderate positive correlation ($r=.475$) for 'partners always change what they agreed with us' ($M=2.11$, $SD=.758$). Communication failure was also moderately positively correlated ($r=.480$) with 'partners sometimes having to change what was agreed with us' ($M= 3.06$, $SD=.639$). The more difficulty that Chinese institutions faced overall, as well as failures in communication, the higher likelihood that their partners would change what had been agreed (see Table 6.).

Table 6. The Pearson correlation between the items of difficulty rate and items of *guanxi*'s element - Credit

		Correlations											
Overall		Low-interest from student	Low-interest from staff	Low-interest from managerial staff	Political influence	We do what agreed	We change what agreed	We have to change what agreed	We never do what agreed	Partners do what agreed	Partners change what agreed	Partners have to change what agreed	Partners never do what agreed
Pearson Correlation	1												
Sig. (2-tailed)													
N	18												
Misunderstanding/Communication failure	0.384												
Sig. (2-tailed)	1												
N	18												
Not enough funding	0.204												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.389												
N	18												
Low-interest from student	0.333												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.234												
N	18												
Low-interest from staff	0.177												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.350												
N	18												
Low-interest from managerial staff	0.359												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.156												
N	18												
Low-interest from the top managerial staff	0.281												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.085												
N	18												
Political influence	0.326												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.244												
N	18												
We do what agreed	0.166												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.329												
N	18												
We change what agreed	0.028												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.911												
N	18												
We have to change what agreed	0.143												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.096												
N	18												
We never do what agreed	0.572												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.706												
N	18												
Partners do what agreed	0.165												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.258												
N	18												
Partners change what agreed	0.512												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.301												
N	18												
Partners have to change what agreed	0.163												
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000												
N	18												
Partners never do what agreed	0.518												
Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000												
N	18												

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
 **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Apart from the correlations between success rate and difficulty rate, this section also illustrated correlations between different *guanxi* elements, expertise (partner institutions) and partner selection methods (interpersonal relations). There were four main elements of *guanxi* that have been tested in this research. Moreover, there were internal correlations between *guanxi* elements themselves, which are also included in the second part of this section.

3.4.3. H3: *Guanxi* usage is associated with expertise of partnerships

The *guanxi* element of face, more specifically, the item 'we both care about face' ($M=2.94$, $SD=1.110$) had moderate positive correlation ($r=.535$) with expertise: 'the partner, in the most recent co-operation, is knowledgeable in their area' ($M=3.89$, $SD=.583$). The more knowledgeable their partner, the more face those Chinese institutions have. Also, Face (the more respect we receive, the more face we have) ($M=3.61$, $SD=.698$) also was positively correlated ($r=.510$) with 'the partner in the most recent co-operation is able to propose alternative products to suit your applications' ($M=4.06$, $SD=.725$). The more practical products that partners provide, the more face those Chinese institutions receive.

Reciprocity was tested with expertise. The reciprocity item, 'we do favour exchange based on legality and rules' ($M=3.61$, $SD=.698$) had positive correlation ($r=.521$) with the expertise item, 'the partner, in the most recent co-operation, is knowledgeable in the market'. Moreover, the reciprocity item 'we do favour exchange based on morality and social norms' ($M=3.5$, $SD=.786$) was positively correlated ($r=.514$) with the expertise item 'the partner, in our most recent co-operation, is knowledgeable in the area' ($M=3.89$, $SD=.583$). Therefore, the more knowledgeable the partner is in the area and in the market, the more favour

exchange would happen (see Table 7).

Table 7. The Pearson correlation between the items of expertise of partnerships and items of *guanxi's* element – Face and Reciprocity

Correlations												
		Knowledge able in their area	Knowledge able in the market	Provide solutions	Suitable products to your applications	Both care	The more respect, the more face	We give, they give	Based on legality and rules	Based on morality and social norms	They did it, we will do	We did it, they will do
Knowledgeable in their area	Pearson Correlation	1										
	Sig. (2-tailed)											
	N	18										
Knowledgeable in the market	Pearson Correlation	.624**	1									
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.006										
	N	18	18									
Provide solutions	Pearson Correlation	0.353	0.000	1								
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.150	1.000									
	N	18	18	18								
Suitable products to your applications	Pearson Correlation	0.015	0.000	.610**	1							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.951	1.000	0.007								
	N	18	18	18	18							
Both care	Pearson Correlation	.535*	0.437	0.289	0.150	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.022	0.070	0.244	0.552							
	N	18	18	18	18	18						
The more respect, the more face	Pearson Correlation	0.466	0.348	0.408	.510*	.578*	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.051	0.158	0.093	0.031	0.012						
	N	18	18	18	18	18	18					
We give, they give	Pearson Correlation	0.367	0.425	0.198	-0.053	.592**	.580*	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.134	0.079	0.430	0.836	0.010	0.012					
	N	18	18	18	18	18	18	18				
Based on legality and rules	Pearson Correlation	0.466	.521*	0.252	0.278	.882**	.638**	.580*	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.051	0.026	0.313	0.265	0.000	0.004	0.012				
	N	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18			
Based on morality and social norms	Pearson Correlation	.514*	0.463	0.347	0.258	.708**	.697**	.612**	.697**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.029	0.053	0.158	0.301	0.001	0.001	0.007	0.001			
	N	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18		
They did it, we will do	Pearson Correlation	0.166	0.225	0.393	0.309	.584*	.564*	0.326	.564*	.486*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.510	0.370	0.106	0.212	0.011	0.015	0.187	0.015	0.041		
	N	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	
We did it, they will do	Pearson Correlation	0.166	0.257	0.206	0.191	.662**	.576*	0.308	.576*	.476*	.900**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.509	0.303	0.413	0.447	0.003	0.012	0.214	0.012	0.046	0.000	
	N	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

3.4.4. H4: The existence of *guanxi* is associated with partnership setup

Face parameters and partnership setup parameters were tested. There were positive correlations between 'the more respect we receive, the more face we have' and 'you have close relationships with the top people at partner institutions' ($M=3.61$, $SD=.850$) ($r=.623$); and between 'the more respect we receive, the more face we have' and 'you have close relationships with the top people at Education ministry in your home country' ($M=2.67$, $SD=.907$), ($r=.526$). The more relationships that Chinese institutions have with top people in their partner institutions and in their Education Ministry, the more face they receive.

The items of reciprocity were tested and positively correlated with items of partnership setup, and the item 'we do favour exchange based on legality and rules' had a positive correlation with 'you have close relationships with the top people at partner institutions' ($r=.524$) and was positively correlated with 'you have close relationships with the top people at Education Ministry in your home country' ($r=.619$). Also, the item 'we do favour exchange based on morality and social norms' had a significant positive correlation ($r=.742$) with 'you have close relationships with the top people at Education Ministry in your home country', and the P value was at 0.01. The closer relationships Chinese institutions have with top people at partner institutions and at their own Education Ministry, the more favour exchanges they would do.

Furthermore, the item 'we will do the partner a favour if they did one for us before' (partner did it) ($M=3.94$, $SD=.539$) was tested and positively correlated with 'you have close relationships with the top people at partner institutions' (Top people at PIs) ($r=.592$), and with 'you have close relationships with one of the staff at your

partner institution’ (Staff at PIs) ($r=.525$). Also, the item ‘the partner will do us a favour if we did one for them before’ (we did it) ($M=3.89$, $SD=.471$) had positive correlation with ‘top people at PIs’ ($r=.620$), and ‘Staff at PIs’ ($r=.558$). Therefore, the closer the relationships they have with people at partner institutions, the more favour exchanges they will do for each other (see Table 8).

Table 8. The Pearson correlation between the items of partnership setup and items of *guanxi*'s element – Face and Reciprocity

Correlations														
		The more respect, the more face	We give, they give	Based on legality and rules	Based on morality and social norms	They did it, we will do	We did it, they will do	Close relationships with top people at PI	Close relationships with staff at PI	Close relationships with the top people at EM in your home country	Close relationships with the top people at EM in your partner's country	Relatives work at PI	Relatives as top people work at PI	Relatives work at EM
Both care	Pearson Correlation	1												
	Sig. (2-tailed)													
N		18												
The more respect, the more face	Pearson Correlation	.578*	1											
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.012												
N		18												
We give, they give	Pearson Correlation	.592**	.590*	1										
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.010	0.012											
N		18	18											
Based on legality and rules	Pearson Correlation	.882**	.580*	1										
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.004											
N		18	18	18										
Based on morality and social norms	Pearson Correlation	.708**	.612**	.697**	1									
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.001	0.001										
N		18	18	18	18									
They did it, we will do	Pearson Correlation	.584*	.564*	.564*	.486*	1								
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.011	0.015	0.015	0.041									
N		18	18	18	18	18								
We did it, they will do	Pearson Correlation	.662**	.576*	.576*	.476*	.900**	1							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.003	0.012	0.012	0.046	0.000								
N		18	18	18	18	18	18							
Close relationships with top people at PI	Pearson Correlation	.350	.623**	.524*	.308	.592**	.620**	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.155	0.006	0.026	0.213	0.010	0.006							
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18						
Close relationships with staff at PI	Pearson Correlation	0.146	0.405	0.094	0.145	0.309	.525*	.476*	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.564	0.095	0.709	0.566	0.213	0.025	0.016	0.046					
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18					
Close relationships with the top people at EM in your home country	Pearson Correlation	0.448	.526*	.480*	.619**	.742**	0.441	0.458	.508*	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.062	0.025	0.044	0.006	0.000	0.067	0.056	0.031	0.425				
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18				
Close relationships with the top people at EM in your partner's country	Pearson Correlation	0.146	0.447	0.379	0.340	0.333	-0.116	-0.106	0.279	-0.077	.495*	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.563	0.063	0.121	0.168	0.176	0.648	0.676	0.262	0.761	0.037	0.146	1	
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	
Relatives work at PI	Pearson Correlation	0.213	0.011	0.125	0.011	0.087	0.184	0.130	-0.072	0.047	0.051	0.146	0.146	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.395	0.966	0.621	0.966	0.730	0.465	0.608	0.777	0.852	0.842	0.564	0.564	0.000
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
Relatives as top people work at PI	Pearson Correlation	0.208	0.047	0.077	0.047	0.126	0.245	0.140	0.039	0.102	0.109	0.126	.964**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.407	0.852	0.761	0.852	0.618	0.328	0.579	0.878	0.687	0.666	0.618	0.000	0.000
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
Relatives work at EM	Pearson Correlation	0.275	0.109	0.286	0.109	0.175	0.312	0.130	-0.072	0.047	0.051	0.233	.839**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.269	0.665	0.250	0.665	0.487	0.208	0.608	0.777	0.852	0.842	0.352	0.000	0.000
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Items of empathy were tested with items of partnership setup. The item 'the partner sends greeting cards to us when there is a marriage, promotion, and so on' (greeting cards to us) ($M=2.89$, $SD=1.079$) was positively correlated with 'top people at PIs' ($r=.528$) and with 'you have a close relationship with top people at Education Ministry in your partner's country' (top people at PEM) ($r=.578$). There was also a strong positive correlation with 'top people at EM' ($r=.801$), and the P value was at level of 0.01. The closer relationships Chinese institutions have with high-ranking figures at PIs, PEM, and more specifically at the Chinese Education Ministry, the more greeting cards that they will receive from those people.

Simultaneously, the items of 'top people at PIs', 'top people at EM', and 'top people at PEM' were positively correlated with 'we send greeting cards to them when there is a marriage, promotion, and so on' (greeting cards to partners) ($M=2.89$, $SD=1.183$). More specifically, 'greeting cards to partners' has a significant positive correlation with 'top people at EM' ($r=.731$), and the P value was at the level of 0.01. Therefore, the closer the relationships Chinese institutions have with these top people, especially in the Education Ministry, the more greeting cards they will send to each other.

The last item from the empathy section, which was correlated again at partnership setup, was 'they are our good friends, and we care about each other' (good friends) ($M=3.67$, $SD=.686$). It saw positive correlation with 'top people at PIs' ($r=.572$), and 'top people at EM' ($r=.567$). Therefore, the closer the relationships that Chinese institutions have with top people at their partner institutions and at the Chinese education ministry, the more they can claim good friendships (see Table 9.).

Table 9. The Pearson correlation between the items of partnership setup and items of *guanxi*'s element – Empathy

Correlations												
	Close relationships with top people at PI	Close relationships with staff at PI	Close relationships with the top people at EM in your home country	Close relationships with the top people at EM in your partner's country	Relatives as top people work at PI	Relatives as top people work at EM	Partern gives gifts and souvenirs	Partern gives gifts and souvenirs	We give gifts and souvenirs	Partern sends greeting cards	We send greeting cards	Good friends, we care about each other
Close relationships with top people at PI	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 18										
Close relationships with staff at PI	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.476* 0.046 18	1 18									
Close relationships with the top people at EM in your home country	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.508* 0.031 18	0.200 0.425 18	1 18								
Close relationships with the top people at EM in your partner's country	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.279 0.262 18	-0.077 0.037 18	.495* 0.037 18	1 18							
Relatives work at PI	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-0.072 0.777 18	0.047 0.852 18	0.051 0.842 18	0.146 0.564 18	1 18						
Relatives as top people work at PI	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.039 0.878 18	0.102 0.687 18	0.109 0.666 18	0.126 0.618 18	.964** 0.000 18	1 18					
Relatives work at EM	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-0.072 0.777 18	0.047 0.852 18	0.051 0.842 18	0.233 0.352 18	.839** 0.000 18	1 18					
Partern gives gifts and souvenirs	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.307 0.216 18	0.150 0.553 18	-0.080 0.752 18	-0.301 0.225 18	-0.057 0.823 18	0.061 0.809 18	1 18				
We give gifts and souvenirs	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.408 0.093 18	0.086 0.735 18	-0.046 0.857 18	-0.053 0.835 18	-0.130 0.608 18	0.900** 0.000 18	1 18				
Partern sends greeting cards	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.528* 0.024 18	0.187 0.457 18	.801** 0.000 18	.578* 0.012 18	0.120 0.634 18	0.153 0.544 18	-0.090 0.723 18	0.026 0.919 18	1 18		
We send greeting cards	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.598** 0.009 18	0.273 0.272 18	.731** 0.001 18	.527* 0.024 18	0.110 0.664 18	0.140 0.581 18	-0.065 0.799 18	0.023 0.926 18	.958** 0.000 18	1 18	
Good friends, we care about each other	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.572* 0.013 18	0.000 1.000 18	.567* 0.014 18	0.436 0.070 18	-0.134 0.597 18	-0.144 0.568 18	-0.334 0.175 18	0.053 0.835 18	.742** 0.000 18	.749** 0.000 18	1 18
We like each other	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.404 0.097 18	0.000 1.000 18	0.189 0.453 18	0.218 0.384 18	0.100 0.692 18	0.000 1.000 18	0.000 1.000 18	.546* 0.198 18	0.318 0.198 18	0.363 0.139 18	.625** 0.006 18

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The *guanxi* element of credit was tested with partnership setup. The items ‘we always do what was agreed with partners’ (we do what agreed) ($M=4.28, SD=.575$) and ‘partner always do what was agreed with us’ (partners do what was agreed) ($M=4.11, SD=.583$) (see Table 45.) were positively correlated with ‘top people at PIs’ with similar r values ($r=.596$ and $r=.567$) (see Table 46.). Therefore, the closer the relationship that Chinese institutions have with top people at their partner institutions, the more likely they are to do what was agreed with each other (see Table 10.).

Table 10. The Pearson correlation between the items of partnership setup and items of *guanxi*'s element – Credit

		Correlations													
		Close relationships with top people at PI	Close relationships with top people at PI staff at PI	Close relationships with the top people at EM in your home country	Close relationships with the top people at EM in your partner's country	Relatives as top people work at PI	Relatives as top people work at EM	We do what agreed	We change what agreed	We have to change what agreed	We never do what agreed	Partners do what agreed	Partners change what agreed	Partners have to change what agreed	Partners never do what agreed
Close relationships with top people at PI	Pearson Correlation	1													
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18													
Close relationships with staff at PI	Pearson Correlation		1												
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18												
Close relationships with the top people at EM in your home country	Pearson Correlation			1											
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18											
Close relationships with the top people at EM in your partner's country	Pearson Correlation				1										
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18	18										
Relatives work at PI	Pearson Correlation					1									
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18	18	18									
Relatives as top people work at PI	Pearson Correlation						1								
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18	18	18	18								
Relatives work at EM	Pearson Correlation							1							
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18							
We do what agreed	Pearson Correlation								1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18						
We change what agreed	Pearson Correlation									1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18					
We have to change what agreed	Pearson Correlation										1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18				
We never do what agreed	Pearson Correlation											1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18			
Partners do what agreed	Pearson Correlation												1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18		
Partners change what agreed	Pearson Correlation													1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	
Partners have to change what agreed	Pearson Correlation														1
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
Partners never do what agreed	Pearson Correlation														
	Sig. (2-tailed)														
N		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
 **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3.4.5. H5: There are significant correlations between *guanxi* elements

There were correlations between *guanxi* elements. Reciprocity in particular was correlated with all of the other *guanxi* elements, credit had correlations with reciprocity and empathy, and face only had correlation with reciprocity (see Appendix 12.), which could be generated as Figure 26.

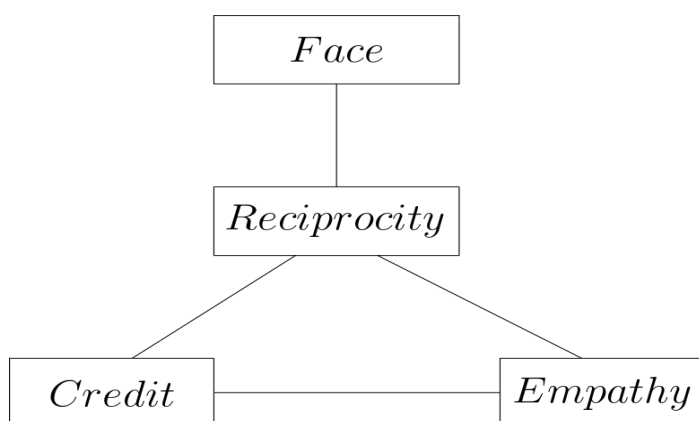


Figure 26 Relationships between *guanxi* elements

The Face item of ‘we both care about face’ had positive correlations with all items of reciprocity. More specifically, ‘we both care about face’ had strong correlations with ‘we do favour exchange based on legality and rules’ (based on legality and rules) ($r=.882$), and ‘we do favour exchange based on morality and social norms’ (based on morality and social norms) ($r=.708$). The P value for both of them was 0.01. This was moderately correlated with ‘we will do the partner a favour if they did one for us before’ (partner did it) ($r=.584$), and with ‘the partner will do us a favour if we did one for them before’ (we did it) ($r=.662$). Therefore, the more both parties’ care about face, the more favour exchanges they will do.

Simultaneously, the item ‘the more respect we receive, the more face we have’ had a strong correlation with being ‘based on morality and social norms’ ($r=.697$), and the P value was at 0.01. This was also moderately correlated with ‘based on

legality and rules' ($r=.638$), 'partner did it' ($r=.564$), and 'we did it' ($r=.576$) (see Table 48.). The item 'we give face to the partner, and they also give us face' was moderately correlated with 'based on legality and rules' ($r=.580$), and with 'based on morality and social norms' ($r=.612$). In sum, the more favour exchanges they do, the more face they have.

The second correlation pair within the *guanxi* elements was the positive correlation between reciprocity and empathy. The item 'greeting cards to us' was moderately correlated with being 'based on legality and rules' ($r=.486$) and being 'based on morality and social norms' ($r=.486$). Similarly, the item of 'greeting cards to partners' had moderate correlation with being 'based on legality and rules' ($r=.515$) and being 'based on morality and social norms' ($r=.506$). Moreover, the item of 'the partner will do us a favour if we did one for them before' (we did it) was moderately correlated ($r=.488$) with 'the partner sometimes presents souvenirs to us' ($M=4.06$, $SD=.539$). Therefore, the more favour exchanges that Chinese institutions do, the more greeting cards and souvenirs they receive.

The third pair of correlations were between the elements of reciprocity and credit, and both were moderately positively correlated. The item 'based on morality and social norms' was positively correlated ($r=.504$) with 'we have to change what agreed' ($M=3.33$, $SD=.594$). The item 'we did it' was positively correlated ($r=.476$) with 'partners do what was agreed' ($M=4.11$, $SD=.583$). Therefore, the more favour exchanges that Chinese institutions do, the more likely their partner institutions will do what was initially agreed.

The last pair of correlations in *guanxi* elements was established between empathy and credit. The empathy item 'souvenirs to partners' ($M=4.11$, $SD=.471$) was

positively correlated with the credit item 'we do what agreed' ($r=.531$). While the item 'souvenirs to partners' was negatively correlated with the item 'we change what agreed' ($r=-.484$) and 'we have to change what was agreed' ($r=-.560$). Therefore, the more that Chinese institutions do what was agreed with partners, the more likely they will send souvenirs to partners, and vice versa.

In sum, apart from the first hypothesis (**H1**) that has been rejected by the correlation tests, the other four hypotheses (**H2 – H4**) have been confirmed, as the corrections show significances between *guanxi*'s elements and outcome variables. Particularly, all *guanxi*'s elements are correlated with the items of partnership setup. It is noticeable that although *guanxi* plays a role in international co-operation, the statistics also confirm that the success rate and difficulty rate of international co-operation are also influenced by other facts, such as the purpose of international co-operation, and partnership setup. However, there is no significance that has been confirmed through regression tests due to the small effects for this sample, which need to be tested again for a larger sample set in further studies.

3.5. Discussion

3.5.1. The nature of the research

The nature of the research meant that the quantitative data was collected from Chinese participants rather than collected from both China and the UK. It is important to note that this research is not a direct a comparison between UK and China: Chinese data collected in this study serves the sole purpose of calibrating and understanding the context of these responses. Recommendations are offered to institutions and Western researchers with regard to what they could observe

from a Chinese perspective to inform a better quality of international co-operation in the future. The quantitative data from the Chinese respondents can provide us with a general logic and rules for how Chinese people conduct international co-operation with their partners, which could provide a possible explanation for the reasons behind the difficulties that UK institutions outlined in the qualitative data analysis chapter (see Chapter 5.). This also contributes to the framework of *guanxi dispositive* (see Chapter 6) formulated by this research. A follow-up study of UK-China co-operation from the perspectives of UK institutions could be applied in future studies to test the framework of this research.

3.5.2. Success

Chinese institutions focus on rankings when they select partnerships with overseas institutions. At the same time, they care about their partners' reputation in the area, which should indicate that top institutions in the ranking tables would have better opportunities (higher success rate) to set up relationships with Chinese institutions. The strong correlations between face and partner expertise shows that the higher-ranking position their partners have, the more face gained by the Chinese institutions. Face is important to Chinese people, which could be one of the reasons that rankings are important for partnership setup.

The participants held positive impressions of the expertise of their partner institutions. In other words, they respect their partners, and they like their partners, but deeper engagements in cooperation have not yet been established with each other. According to their backgrounds, they are staff with experience dealing with international co-operation. Therefore, lack of experience is not the reason why they do not have a high success rate with similarly capable partners. There are

two potential reasons that can be ascertained. Firstly, it might be because of the subjective initiative. Apart from some institutions that are nominated by the Central Government for cultural and political purposes (see details in Chapter 4¹³), other institutions lack any kind of initiatives for deeper engagement with international co-operation. In other words, there is no essential imperative for HEIs to engage in these deeper relationships. The most successful programmes were concerts and cultural exchanges (see the section of descriptive results), which to some extent indicates that these institutions are still at an elementary level (short programmes) of engagement with their partner institutions.

The second reason might be Chinese forms of etiquette influencing how participants chose answers about their partners. In Confucian culture, especially in the theory of Rites and Etiquette (礼 *Li*), that is based on the principle of benevolence, there are set behaviours and rituals that guide interpersonal relations that require people to respect one another as well as the social hierarchy (Lu, 2011). Confucian culture plays a significant role in Chinese society, which could be a reason for the seemingly contradictory findings that although Chinese institutions respect their partners, this did not convert into success with the in-depth programmes. Joint research programmes require a comparatively deeper level of engagement with partner institutions, and higher investments of time, staffing, resource, for instance, and the low success rates of these engagements lowered the overall success rate.

The correlative results indicate that the success rate of international co-operation is positively correlated with the purpose of international co-operation and

13 ZGY is nominated for the purpose of national cultural promotion in Beijing. NY is part of the internationalization of local government.

partnership setup. However, there is no significant correlation between the success of international co-operation and the elements of *guanxi*. Therefore, **elements of *guanxi* evoke different levels of success in international co-operation (H1)** has been rejected.

The overall success rate was strongly correlated with the success rate of the student programmes, and the student programmes were significantly correlated to close relationships that Chinese institutions have with top people or staff at their partner institutions when initially setting up co-operation. Also, the better relationships that Chinese institutions have with top people at partner institutions, the higher likelihood that Chinese institutions would consider these relationships to be in good condition, and the higher likelihood Chinese institutions would do what was agreed. Therefore, having good relationships with top people at partner institutions would stabilise their relationships and promote their existing programmes, which would increase the overall success rate of their international co-operation to a large extent.

3.5.3. Difficulties

The mean of each item at the 'difficulty section' was generally low. In particular, the unanimous disagreements received by 'you received low interest from top managerial staff in your recent co-operations' confirmed the hypothesis drawn about China's social hierarchy system. If the top managerial staff were not interested, the relationship would simply not begin. Therefore, it is evident that the failure of cooperation has little to do with problems within the relationships themselves. By that same token, the most important item that participants agreed on was 'This co-operation has received policy influence'. China is a one-party

state; government policies have the absolute power and final say. Political restrictions are exceedingly difficult to negotiate, which might be the reason why 56% of the Chinese participants claim that they did not have solutions when they encountered difficulties. Moreover, political influence was positively correlated with the low interest of top managers, which indicated that political influences are tied to the willingness of top managers to set up or continue relationships, and that co-operation cannot exist without the interest of the top managers. Political influences proved to be the most significant factor for the rate of success and difficulties facing co-operation from the Chinese perspective. In other words, if politics encourage co-operation, then co-operation will remain active; but if politics restricts, then the co-operation stops.

Low interest from students and staff were negatively correlated with face. Face is the public image of a person or an institution (see Chapter 1, p.28). In Confucian culture, Chinese people will not reject people in front of others in order to avoid embarrassment that will make themselves or their partners feel like they have lost face. Collaboration might get stuck if there is low interest from students and staff. Chinese institutions might not tell their partners out of not wishing to lose face, as directly telling their partners that their students and staff were not interested in existing collaborations would result in embarrassment for both parties. Therefore, this could be one of the reasons why Western researchers (see Chapter 1, p.26-27) and interview participants (see Chapter 4) indicated that communication and programmes suddenly stop without Western participants knowing why. Therefore, the hypothesis that **H2: Elements of *guanxi* evoke different levels of difficulty for international co-operation** has been confirmed.

The overall difficulty rate and communication failures had positive correlation with

partners' changing agreements. The more changes the partners made, the more difficult it was to communicate and have successful collaborations. Additionally, the more difficult to communicate with partners, the higher possibility that partners would change plan. Therefore, with fewer changes of agreements, better communication will occur, which would help lower the difficulty rate and, to some extent, is able to contribute to the success of co-operation.

The open questions clearly indicated that when Chinese institutions encounter problems, they would simply drop the problematic relationship and find replacements or new partnerships. These problems were often the result of political restrictions, or cultural factors like face. In other words, it shows that Chinese institutions might have multiple collaborations with different partner institutions, which were more than what they needed. Therefore, it might not be necessary for them to endure a particularly problematic collaboration and search for solutions. The answers from the second open question indicated a process for relationship setup, which starts with initial communications: *let the staff and students to get to know each other*. Then engagements would occur, based on the understanding that they have about their partners. At the end, the relationships would develop from one successful area to multiple areas, and multiple relationships between staff would be set up accordingly. For these situations, a good relationship with high-ranking figures at Chinese institutions would help reduce the risk of partners being replaced, and improve communications, which is one of the areas where *guanxi* plays its role in the international co-operation.

3.5.4. *Guanxi*

There is no doubt that *guanxi* exists in international co-operation from the Chinese participants' point of view. In terms of **the association between *guanxi* usage and expertise of partnerships (H3)**, *guanxi*'s elements of face and reciprocity have correlations with expertise, which confirms this hypothesis. The *partnership setup* has positive correlations with all elements of *guanxi*, which identified strong relationships between *guanxi* and relationship setup during international co-operation, which confirms **Hypothesis 4 (H4: the *guanxi* usage is associated with expertise of partnerships)**. More specifically, Chinese institutions set up their collaborations with the institutions where they have close relationships with one of the staff or high-ranking figures working there. Also, there was no involvement of relatives who worked at partner institutions and the Education Ministry. Therefore, the *guanxi* type that is involved in the area tends to be kinship or business ties instead of family ties. It is worth noting that the family type of *guanxi* is the most stabilised form of *guanxi*, while the business level of *guanxi* and kinship have medium levels of mobility that can cause potential problems for the relationships (see Chapter 1). Also, business or kinship level relationships would not serve as a binding union between institutions; other relationships might break in as a competitor. In other words, a Chinese institution working with one institution would not stop them having relationships with another institution, especially when they have stronger relationships with the other institutions, which would result in competition if said Chinese institution was operating at capacity in terms of the number of international relationships it could feasibly engage in.

Based on the data, there was no evidence to support correlation between age and *guanxi* usage. In other words, Chinese people use *guanxi* for their

international co-operation no matter how old they are, especially when they select their partnerships. Also, 72% of participants claimed that they used *guanxi* in their international co-operation. Therefore, the notion that the prevalence of *guanxi* has grown weaker in modern China has been rejected.

H5: There are interactions between *guanxi* elements has been confirmed, as face has correlations with reciprocity that are positively triangulated with empathy and credit. Specifically, reciprocity has been confirmed to exist in cooperation to a significant extent, and this has positive correlations with all other *guanxi* elements. In other words, through reciprocity people could improve their credit, strengthen empathy, and give or receive more face through favour exchanges. For example, Chinese institutions present gifts, or sometimes perform gift exchanges with their partners to enhance empathy levels, which, to some extent, will improve the level of reciprocity. Similarly, institutions could do more favour exchanges to increase their credit level.

The credit section demonstrated that participants provided positive opinions about both themselves and their partner institutions. However, they indicated that them and their partner institutions 'sometimes have to change what has been agreed', which indicates there are uncertainties beyond their control. That said, these uncertainties do not seem to influence the overall good impression of credit between partner institutions. The commitment that Chinese institutions had towards the agreements with their partners demonstrates the importance Chinese people and institutions place upon credit. Additionally, credit has positive correlations with reciprocity and empathy. Moreover, credit is a hugely important element of trust, and trust is the fundamental element for a good-condition relationship. Therefore, following through with commitments made with Chinese

partners would help institutions gain more trust. If there is no commitment that has been agreed, institutions could present gifts to their partners or perform favour exchanges, thereby using empathy and reciprocity to increase their credit.

However, face only had correlations with reciprocity, and was not significantly important in co-operation. Therefore, giving face to each other might not be able to help institutions gain trust for their relationships, but with credit and the influence of reciprocity, empathy would help gaining trust from or for the partner institutions. The triangle between reciprocity, credit, and empathy would potentially provide a linkage mechanism within *guanxi* that could contribute to the stabilisation of *guanxi* itself and relationships that are based on it.

3.5.5. Limitation and outlook

This study contains a small sample size, which might affect the results for the development of further analysis, such as regression and factor analysis. This limitation could be improved by changing methods – using snow-balling data collection methods instead of a random sample collection in future studies. Moreover, this is a complex area to study, and it is especially difficult to conduct a comparative study due to the sample bias (some arts-related UK institutions do not have international officers). A quantitative study from the UK perspective of UK-China international co-operation could be done separately in the future (see more details in Chapter 7).

Chapter 4: Qualitative Study (China)

The results of quantitative study clearly demonstrated that Chinese participants understood the term *guanxi*, and positively accepted using *guanxi* in their international co-operation (see details in Chapter 3), which proves that it is worth gathering data from the qualitative interviews to understand the phenomenon in detail from both the UK and China. In this section, three institutions have been selected, and its international officers were interviewed to understand the current status of their international co-operation, and their willingness and usage of *guanxi* in details.

4.1. Aim of the qualitative study

4.1.1 Context and setting

Fieldwork in China covered institutions from Beijing, Xi'an and Nanjing, which were used as representative cities for the North, Central and Eastern regions of China. Beijing (meaning 'Northern Capital') was the capital of five dynasties throughout Chinese history, Liao (辽), Jin (金), Yuan (元), Ming (明), Qing (清), as well as modern China - it is also the cultural and political center of the People's Republic of China. Therefore, higher education institutions in Beijing are more likely to be influenced by historical approaches to Chinese politics and culture. This creates an interesting dichotomy, as Beijing's status as the heart of the PRC means that its HEIs receive a relatively high standard of resources, and more opportunities for contact with the outside world. Xi'an is a historical city, and the capital of Shaanxi province that located in the central part of China. Historically known as Chang'an, it marks the Silk Road¹⁴'s eastern end and was the capital

¹⁴ The Silk Road was a network of trade routes which connected the East and West, and was central to the

of the Zhou (周), Qin (秦: the first Empire in Chinese history), Han (汉), and Tang (唐) dynasties. Therefore, Xi'an is the cradle of Chinese civilization and culture (Wang, 2017), the city itself being a historical product of Confucianism, and the degree of cultural influence this has had can be seen in the responses achieved to the study.

Nanjing (meaning 'Southern Capital') is the capital of Jiangsu province and was the capital of the Ming (明) dynasty and the provisional capital of the Republic of China government during World War II. Nanjing is located within the 'Yangtze River delta', which is one of the economic centers of the PRC, and cities like Shanghai, Hangzhou and Suzhou mean the region is home to more active international trade. Therefore, the purpose of choosing institutions from these particular cities was to gather data that is culturally, politically, and internationally representative.

The institutions chosen are music conservatories, and one arts-focused university. The names of the institutions and the participants involved have been made anonymous, in accordance with the research ethics policy of the University of York. This section establishes the background of these participating institutions, my approach with contacting them (as this highlights how practical aspects of *guanxi* in relationship construction have been approached), and the qualitative data from the interviews conducted in China. The results illustrate the benefits of international co-operation; the issues and restrictions of UK-China international co-operation from a cultural, political and linguistic perspective; and how *guanxi* defines its place in this cooperation. The study goes on to show how *guanxi* plays

economic, cultural, political, and religious interactions between these regions from the 2nd century BCE to the 18th century (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silk_Road).

an important role in international co-operation within Chinese culture, and how participants rely on *guanxi* for setting up relationships and building trust.

4.1.2. Organisational background

ZGY is located in Beijing and was built in 1964. The institution's size is 40180.2 square meters and houses 1329 undergraduates, 524 postgraduates, and 387 staff. According to Prof. J, ZGY has 11 teaching departments and 15 pathways, which have been listed second on the main league table for the arts in China. ZGY is the most active institution when it comes to international co-operation – they founded an international alliance of educational partners in 2017 (this will be referred to as ‘the group’ later in this paper), comprising the members coming from over 30 top world music institutions. ZGY has signed co-operative agreements with other members of the group and has conducted joint student and staff programmes with these members since 2016.

ZYY is the number one music institution in the Chinese league tables, according to Prof. Liu, and it is also located in Beijing. It is the oldest music conservatory in China, established in 1949. As of July 2018, ZYY has 2336 full-time students, which includes 1546 undergraduates, 672 MAs, and 118 Ph.D. students across 15 departments. It covers an area of 54446.54 square meters and is the PRC's centre for national music education, music creation, performance, research, and music promotion. It has over 50 years of history in conducting international relationships. Moreover, ZYY is the only ‘Double-First Class’¹⁵ institution in music. ZYY's high ranking and the strength of its research and teaching has made it the

¹⁵ Chinese authorities released a selected list of universities and colleges, which will participate in the country's construction plan of world-class universities and first-class disciplines. The plan, also known as the ‘Double-First Class’ initiative, aims to ultimately build a number of world class universities and disciplines by the end of 2050, in an effort to make China an international higher education power. (http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xgk/zdgk_sxml/sxml_gdjy/gdjy_syljs/yldxxkjs_zcwj/)

most popular music institution in China for foreign institutions for co-operation.

XAY is located in Xi'an and is one of the original nine music conservatories in China, as well as being the only conservatory in the region since 1949. The size of the institution is 89548.27 square meters, and it has 4636 full-time students and 525 staff on campus within 11 teaching departments. It is the research center for Northwestern national music, and the music and culture of 'The Belt and Road'¹⁶. Xi'an represents the culture of the central plains (Zhongyuan), an important region throughout Chinese history, as it was the capital of 13 dynasties in Chinese history. Music of the region is somewhat different compared to music in the rest of China. The institution bears an interesting potential contradiction between recent influences from the open trade market and its vast cultural and historical background (see details in later sections).

NY is an independent arts university located in Nanjing, founded in 1912. It teaches subjects such as fine arts, design, film and television, media, music and so on, houses 11000 full-time students, 1030 staff on campus, and covers an area of over 700 mu (about 466,669 square meters). NY is number one on league tables for all arts universities in China. Examining how NY performs in terms of international co-operation would help expand the scope of our research from music to the arts overall.

4.2. Method

The interviewees are the directors of the international offices, and they have been contacted via the Chinese messaging app *WeChat*¹⁷. As discussed, China is a

¹⁶ It stands for The Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road. This initiative has been launched by Xi Jinping in 2013 for promoting international co-operation in the development of economics. (<https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/indepth-39923214>)

¹⁷ *WeChat* is a Chinese multi-purpose messaging, social media and mobile payment app developed by Tencent.

guanxi society, and from the literature, we understand that *guanxi* might help in improving efficiency (see Chapter 1, p.30). I used *guanxi* to arrange interviews with participants in order to assess their response, test the strength of relationships and shorten the introduction process if possible. The process I adopted will be referred to as a ‘referee system’ (and is explained below) (see Table 60.). The interviews have been done in a sequential order that started from Beijing, progressed to Xi’an, and was completed in Nanjing.

Table 11 Referee system

Participating Institution	Participant	Position	Contact Methods	Referee
ZGY	JY	Directors of the International Office	<i>WeChat</i>	A friend who works at ZGY
XAY	GHS	Directors of the International Office	<i>WeChat</i>	A friend’s friend who works at XAY
NY	YR	Directors of the International Office	<i>WeChat</i>	A friend who is close friends with YR, and also works at NY
ZYY	LHZ	Directors of the International Office	<i>WeChat</i>	A friend who is a student at ZYY

These individual institutions are different communities with their own exclusive networks. As an outsider, it is fairly difficult to arrange interviews by sending ‘cold’ emails or *WeChat* messages. Using *guanxi* to arrange interviews meant approaching a person from within the network, and asking the person to contact the targeted interviewees, thereby enlisting their help in helping me arrange interviews. It reduces the risks of messages/emails of being ignored or missed,

It was first released in 2011, and became one of the world’s largest standalone mobile apps in 2018, with over 1 billion monthly active users’ (Wikipedia, 2019). It is personal contacts by using *WeChat*, as the same time, Chinese people often use *WeChat* for work purposes.

and significantly increases the success rate of interview acceptance. If the request for interviews has been proposed by someone who is known and already trusted, it is more likely they will accept inquiries from these friends, colleagues as it would be considered a **favour exchange**, if we are to understand this through *guanxi*. In a low-trust country (see Chapter 1) such as China, people would find it easier to accept requests from those they trust, and people would be willing to trust a third person who has been recommended by initial trusted individual. In other words, connections can be built up between two people via a mutual friend who shares trust between both sides, and is willing to use '*renqing* (favour exchanges)' as a guarantor. The fact that the interviews that form this paper's fieldwork were only achieved through *guanxi* makes the importance of *guanxi* in conducting this kind of work fairly self-demonstrable. This can also be seen as a good example of favour exchange based on *guanxi* rules.

In the case of Table 60, I contacted a member of staff that works in the international office at ZGY, and although ranked lower than the director, they were nonetheless from the same department (the International Office). At XAY, I contacted the Head of the Composition Department, who is a friend of one of my close contacts in the higher education sector, who helped me gain an interview with the director of the International Office. Although they were not from the same department, they held similar positions in the institution's hierarchy at NY, so I contacted one of my friends who works in the music department and is a close friend of the director that I wanted to interview. I did not meet any resistance in arranging interviews from these three institutions. The acceptance of interviews was confirmed just a few hours after contacting my contacts. I also did not face any issues when I contacted directors directly for detailed interview arrangements

later on. In these three cases, the trust was shared with me via a **referee** from these different networks, and my contacts acted as a guarantor to express that the interview is worthwhile.

I did not, however, receive such a speedy response at ZYY. I contacted one of my friends, who is a Ph.D. student at ZYY, and she is neither a friend of the potential interviewee nor does she work with him. When she approached the director of the international office, the director accepted the interview. When I contacted the director myself for details, I would only receive one or two messages/calls every other day, and I was subject to silence and had to constantly wait for responses for the interview dates. This comparative lack of commitment demonstrated that the relationship between my referee and the interviewee was not strong enough at the first place, as the director did not know the student very well – he had not even taught her. Ultimately, there is no trust to share when they might not trust the initial parties, and the student is simply too far below the director in rank for there to be any type of *renqing* guarantee of the interview's quality.

I was able to complete three interviews with ZGY, XAY, and NY. The methods used to set up these interviews demonstrates that the right *guanxi* network was used at the first three institutions – approaching the right people who could establish immediate trust between themselves and the interviewees, meaning trust could be shared with me. Whereas at the last institution, my contact was not established enough within the director's circle to break into the network, and her lack of a direct relationship with the interviewee meant that the arrangement of the interview failed. Of course, the process of setting up these interviews has not been tested without *guanxi*, which demonstrates that while *guanxi* can

significantly improve the efficiency of interview setup, there is no evidence to suggest that interviews must be set up with *guanxi*, although the failure of one of our interviews due to insufficient *guanxi* demonstrates the hugely important role *guanxi* plays. However, when I contacted UK participants, I used both methods, and found that even within a UK context, *guanxi* greatly improves the efficiency of interview arrangements (see Chapter 5).

Through these arrangements and the referee system, I was able to break into the working networks in these institutions, allowing me to form '*business guanxi ties*' (see Chapter 1, p.21) with these institutions, by using my '*friendship guanxi ties*' (see Chapter 1, p.21). In these institutions, people do favours for their colleagues for '*renqing*' and/or '*ganqing*' purposes, in order to have the favour returned at some point in the future when needed or to enhance the relationships that they already have with each other. Alternatively, Chinese morality systems and culture mean that people are less likely to say 'no' to this type of request, as it will make the subjects feel as though they have **lost face**, especially when they are both within exclusive networks, such as working in the same institutions, therefore requiring regular contact. This personal experience demonstrates how powerful *guanxi* can be in determining the success or failure of relationships: the study seeks to determine the part it plays in a similar way in organizational behaviours.

4.3. Results

4.3.1. The current state of international co-operation

As ZGY is the most active institution for international co-operation, their co-operation exists on many different levels. For example, ZGY has collaborations between students and staff, with short-term and long-term exchange programmes;

student joint programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels; hosting or participating in international concerts and conferences and more. Their partners come from across the world, such as the USA, the UK, Europe, Australia, and there is an area on their campus that displays flags representing their partner institutions, and an international center which contains multi-media equipment, open access computers and desks, and even an eduroam Wi-Fi system. This center is open for everyone, from partner institutions to general use for working, lecturing, for examples, which has made it an open-minded and friendly environment for international co-operation¹⁸. Prof J says:

If you are a partner with us, you will have an office on our campus that is free to use at any time, even if your work is nothing to do with us, you can just use it as your general-purpose China office.

XA founded its international office two years ago, making it fairly recent compared to other institutions. Its international co-operation is focused on short programmes, such as students and staff short-term exchanges. There are less total partner members than the other two institutions. Although many overseas institutions have visited XA for recruitment purposes, XA are very cautious about selecting partners. They do not like the idea of being “targeted” for student recruitment alone. They would like to be chosen because of their music and their unique characteristics as an institution. Dr. G states that relationships should be equal, and respectful. According to observations on campus, it is established as a traditional Chinese institution with no significant ambitions towards internationalisation.

NY is a university on a scale larger than the music conservatories surveyed here.

¹⁸ Eduroam is the Wi-Fi network that is accessible in all UK HE institutions. My eduroam account was automatically connected when I visited ZGY. This is the only Chinese music institution where eduroam is usable. The usage of eduroam identifies that ZGY is connected with HEIs in the world, and willing to share.

It has a ten-year history of international co-operation with Western institutions. Their co-operation includes events and activities, such as international conferences, exhibitions and performances; short visiting programmes for students and staff; and a 3+1 joint undergraduate student programme with a UK university. Our observations concluded they are looking for more possibilities for international co-operation in the arts. However, building contacts with the institutions that they would like to be partners with is now a critical issue. Dr. Y stressed that his resources are too limited to build connections with the right people in potential partner institutions.

4.3.2. Advantages of conducting international co-operation

According to the interviews, all of the participants believe that active co-operation with overseas institutions would have iterative benefits for their own staff, students, institutions, and the nation:

Firstly, Dr. G from XA suggests that having international co-operation is good for the students:

It provides opportunities for students to experience short-term or long-term studies with professors worldwide, they will receive meaningful opinions and ideas from different cultural perspectives and societies, which would potentially have long-term impacts on students' lives.

Secondly, international co-operation would benefit the institutions, Dr. G claims that:

It would help my institution build an international platform that contains opportunities and resources for our students, which is necessary for our institutional long-term strategy and development. Also, when students have an international vision towards their study, it will help them earn a more competitive advantage outside of the conservatory, which is good for the reputation of our own institution.

Finally, Dr. G claims that the staff also benefit from it:

They would be able to learn and exchange ideas from the platform, refine their skills, and make their methods more precise when conducting teaching and research. However, if staff cannot adapt to the changes from internationalisation, they might fall behind and have to be replaced by the people who will be able to communicate with the world. Therefore, international co-operation, to some extent, creates an evolutionary system for staff, which upgrades the software (human resources) of the institution.

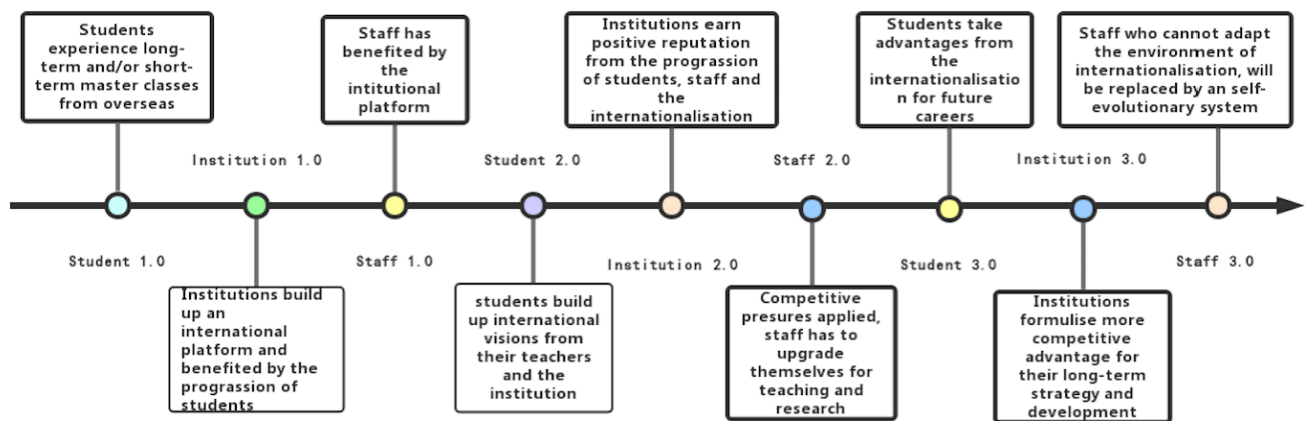


Figure 27 Beneficial process from the interview of Dr. G

According to Dr. G, a process of iteratively upgrading the relationship between clear stages can be identified. In stage 1, international activities provide opportunities for students to experience master classes and lectures from overseas professors, creating an initial exposure to internationalism. At the same time, by conducting international co-operation, the institution has formulated an international platform that itself benefits the academic progression and development of students. This 'upgrade' means that the staff could have more exchange opportunities and will be benefited by the activities that organised from the platform.

During the first stage of the model, an onwards cycle of upgrades and

development to relationships is set in motion, with benefits for staff and students alike. Positive reputational benefits from internationalisation encourage institutions and staff to progress themselves to version 2.0 of the model. At stage 2, both institutions and staff would help students develop a competitive advantage for their future career with their mixed Western-Eastern work experience. At this point, the institution could formulate a more competitive advantage for their long-term strategy and development in both human resources and facilities, becoming version 3.0 of the institution. Staff would complete a self-evolutionary system and therefore upgrade to 3.0, as the staff who cannot adopt international activities within the platform would be replaced by others who can.

Dr. G's statements demonstrate that international co-operation creates the mechanism and power for students, staff, and institutions to grow iteratively. This iterative growth requires **equitable relationships** that include interactions such as visits; joint concerts and conferences; resource sharing, the gathering of teaching and research outcomes from different cultural backgrounds, and most importantly, building communications. Recruitment-dominated partnerships or co-operation would not satisfy the requirements for receiving the benefits of iterative growth, as this is a one-way co-operation that is not equal enough to demonstrate a mutual respect. Although XAY is in an elementary stage of international co-operation, this iterative growth forms the **logic of cooperation** as exemplified by Dr.G.

XAY is located in central China, which is relatively less influenced by politics and economic development than areas such as Beijing and Shanghai. However, Prof. J from ZGY has indicated the advantages of international co-operation from the institutional level to the government level in Beijing, stressing that international

co-operation has certainly benefited his institution and the country significantly:

First of all, it helps my institution receive governmental support. My institution has founded an international group that contains members from top music institutions all over the world. It has been noticed and well regarded from a national level, and now the annual events of the group have been included as one of the important projects for the national cultural exchange, external contact, and publicity of Beijing. Therefore, this series of events has meant our institutions received great support from the Beijing government, whether in terms of finance, foreign affairs, or human resources. This support from the government is the absolute driving force for the development of our institution.

Internally, well-developed international co-operation, such as joint student programmes and staff exchanges, help our students and staff receive a better quality of teaching and learning environment. Therefore, our institution receives a comprehensive upgrade on both the 'software' (human resource) and 'hardware' (facilities) (see Figure 28.).

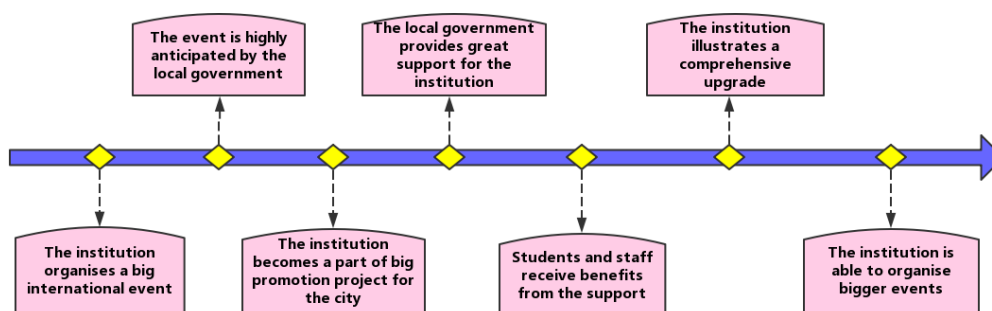


Figure 28 Beneficial progression from the interview of Prof J.

The example of Prof. J demonstrates that international co-operation started from one big event, which was highly anticipated by the local government. The institution soon became part of a cultural promotion project for the city, which helped the institution receive large amounts of support from the local government. The students and staff received significant benefits from this support, and then the institution was able to receive a comprehensive upgrade of its international capability across all dimensions, and therefore consequently able to organise bigger events that cause an even greater impact at both a local and national level.

As previously mentioned, Beijing is the cultural and political center of China, with

institutions firmly under the influence of the central policies, meaning they are more sensitive about the policies that would be possibly related to their own benefits. In this case, the international events that ZGY organised might be designed for political and cultural promotion purposes in the first place. It also is hugely important that arts institutions located in places like Beijing should take responsibility for interpersonal diplomacy, and cultural promotion, which, to some extent, represents the public image of the city and the country, because a city like Beijing is the public image of China. This supplementary relationship between governments and institutions might occur in every city, but it is more significantly correlated in Beijing.

Although Dr. Y from NY did not claim additional benefits of conducting international co-operation, it is undeniable that international co-operation has positive impacts on these Chinese institutions from a micro level (students and staff) to the macro level (institutions, nations and foreign affairs). From this study, it is likely that location has a strong influence on the strategy used for international cooperation. Moreover, increased international activity would, to a large extent, have a positive correlation with the benefits that institutions receive. In Beijing, arts institutions could be recognised as a significant form of *soft power* (Glaser and Murphy, 2009) for promoting Chinese culture. The international co-operation that they do can be accounted for a part of citizen diplomacy that, to a large extent, facilitates national foreign affairs.

4.3.3. Issues during co-operation

The literature study indicates that problems can arise during co-operation with Chinese institutions (see Chapter 1, p.22-23). This section illustrates cooperation from the Chinese participants' perspective, and these have been grouped into

three categories: political restrictions, institutional barriers, and individual problems. Within these three categories, cultural differences, and monolingual communication styles are often the main causes of misunderstandings and communication bias. Participants suggested solutions accordingly, but these solutions are often limited at a political level.

4.3.3.1. Political Restrictions on the scale of co-operation

There are varying degrees to which institutions are influenced by the central government, resulting in the following situations being observed:

Situation 1: Time limits

Participants stress the contradiction between China's management of official overseas trips and their work on a day-to-day basis. According to the China Consular Service Network (2019), people in division level and above positions of state-owned enterprises, leaders of state-owned enterprises, and leaders of some institutions, are only allowed to go on international trips once a year for official business with official passports. Once on a trip, the maximum stay within a country is 5 days, which covers the whole period starting from the departure from China to the return to China. Given that the transit alone of a return journey to a country like the UK can often take over 24 hours, this poses a significant limitation. Moreover, according to the Department of Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2012), the process of applying for an official international trip is fairly convoluted (see Appendix 13.).

Prof J. said 'nowadays, China has a policy of restriction, people from the division level and above are only allowed to leave the country once a year for official visits, plus we are not allowed to leave China for private visits. I went to America last year for work purposes, and I planned to go to Russia this year. All these plans must be sent to the Beijing Foreign Affairs Office a year in

advance for approval. Despite having more and more links with British institutions, I was unable to go! Despite being the director of international office, I am hugely limited in my ability to actually travel abroad. The time limit also makes it nigh impossible to complete our tasks within just one country... but that is the national policy, and I cannot find any solution for it. I'm sure it makes sense in some situations, but it is just not suitable for my department, unfortunately'.

Dr. G. faced similar difficulties, explaining:

My department was established in 2017, yet I have not been to many places to build up international relationships due to these restrictive policies. I went to Denmark in 2017, and then France, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary all in one go in 2018. I might lose the opportunity to go abroad this year, as we are busy with the 70th anniversary of our institution. Our country encourages people organise events and activities for international exchange, cultural exchange and so on, but it has a very straight forward policy for the people actually doing the work, especially the ones who are on the division level or above. This is where the policy is contrary to the actual situation.

This is the most major issue that participants mentioned during the interview, which blocks sustained face-to-face communications often necessary in relationship initiation. Although the Internet and social media are well developed for long-distance communication, according to the literature (see Chapter 1, p.19), people still face the problem that communication ceases when visits finish. Face-to-face communication and meetings are indispensable for international co-operation. Restrictive government policies have become an inconvenient condition, which could potentially cause more problems during co-operation. Additional details relating to this problem will be discussed in the institutional problems section.

Situation 2: Approval processes

As previously mentioned, the Chinese government has a complicated approval process for international co-operation. Dr. G indicates:

When both of us have the intention to set up co-operation, and we are all willing to set up a partnership to do projects together, we need to go through a rigorous and complicated process for approval in accordance with certain political

provisions and norms.

Also, Dr. Y mentions:

Our government enforces very strict controls over joint degree programmes and requires higher and higher standards. Institutions are getting less and less approval for those programmes, which creates a demand for even higher quality of our work in this area, and greater communication with partner institutions.

This situation puts pressure on the people who deal with international business.

The convoluted approval process involves a massive number of communications with overseas partners, and a huge amount of paperwork. For joint student programmes or joint campus programmes, the government requires comparatively high engagement from their overseas partners. For example, Dr. Y explains:

When we set up a joint student programme with a UK university, this allows our students to study at our university for the first three years of undergraduate study and go to the partner university for the final year. Students will obtain degrees from both our university and the UK host institution. It is a really valuable project for our students. However, according to government policy, we need to introduce core courses from our partner institution into the curriculum for the first three years. Our joint programme needs to contain at least one-third of their core courses about the subject subjects at our university; one-third of the total teaching hours delivered by the UK institution; and so on. It is a very challenging task to complete for both of us, because they need to cover the costs of sending their staff to teach in our university, and they need to take care of their own teaching tasks at their university... and, of course, we have lots of paperwork to do to set up the curriculum. At the early stage of collaboration, policy requirements have been a big problem for us.

In order to solve this problem, Dr. Y believes honest communication is key. As a Chinese institution, they cannot change their own policies, and have to rely on their partners' being sufficiently motivated for co-operation. In this situation, Chinese institutions often lose control of **the willingness for co-operation**, but projects could continue if overseas partners were sufficiently interested and highly motivated. In order to increase the motivation of partner institutions, both

institutions need practical communication skills, sustainable relationships, and trust. In Chinese society, this is the space for *guanxi* to operate, which will be fully discussed in the *guanxi* section.

Situation 3: Policy relating to Chinese recruitment of foreigners

Another conflict between policies and daily work in the arts is the talent introduction project for recruiting foreign nationals to work in China. According to the Categories for Foreigners Working in China (for Trial Implementation) (2017), there are three categories – A, B, and C. Category A recruits high-level experts who are renowned in their field for their great contributions to the world. Category B recruits normal experts with the potential to make contributions to the development of China. Category C recruits people who satisfy the demand from the Chinese labour market. All categories follow a comprehensive scoring system. For example, experts need to get over 85 from the scoring system to be able to apply for a working visa through Category A; and must reach a score of at least 60 to qualify for Category B.

ZGY primarily wants to employ orchestra musicians, specifically music specialists who satisfy a Category B ranking. J states that:

Most of those musicians that we are looking for are passionate, with good technical performance skills, and have just graduated from university studies. Working abroad would be a good experience for them. However, category B, requires them to have at least two years of working experience, which most of them would not have. Therefore, they cannot apply for category B to come to China, but they are a far cry from the labourers that Category C is composed of. It is understandable that people need to have work experience to be able to be considered experts, but in music, musicians could very well be in their golden age for performances when they have just graduated from universities. Also, two years of working experience would mean it is highly likely that they have already established themselves and settled wherever they are currently working and would not consider moving to China. It is a very awkward situation for us. We tried appealing to the State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs

for special mitigating circumstances, but they would not make special cases for us, unfortunately.

These different conflicts between policies and the intent of organisations to broaden collaboration indicate the existence of restrictions from the national level in the higher education sector. This becomes especially noticeable with the arts, since arts institutions in general lack the size and political clout to influence these policies to become more suitable for their own circumstances. Therefore, policy issues, to a large extent, will bring unavoidable environmental uncertainty for international co-operation. Policy restrictions mean that communications with partner institutions should clearly explain these circumstances so that mutual understanding can be generated, which in turn will reduce the risk of failure. In contrast to the political barriers to collaboration discussed above, when asked about problems from the institutional level to the individual level, all participants were able to propose solutions.

4.3.3.2. Institutional problems

4.3.3.2.1. Institutional Barriers

A consistent problem for participants in the study is the generic impression they have about international co-operation – that is, that it is always easy to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with international partner institutions, but after that point difficult to progress the development of the projects. Prof. J believes the most fundamental reason is the differences in *national* institutional barriers or limits on collaboration from within the education system in each country. Signing MoUs signals that institutions have *intentions* towards co-operation with partner institutions, but they do not signify any concrete plan or feasible proposals for individual projects. The deeper that two institutions want to engage with each

other, such as through joint degrees or joint campus programmes, the more resistance they will find in their own institutional structures and approvals processes.

For example, the semester length in China is different compared to term length in most UK institutions, and navigating degree length through these discrepancies inevitably results in significant admin work. In the UK, there are three terms composed of 10 weeks per term within one academic year in most cases; whereas in China, there are only two semesters with 15 weeks per semester within one academic year. In the UK, undergraduate degrees usually take place over three years, and taught master's degrees only require one year of study; in China, undergraduate courses are a four or five-year programme, while MAs take three years to complete. These differences involve a significant amount of paperwork for credit exchange, course connections, and resource allocation. Prof. J said:

It would be a disaster if partner institutions wanted to perfectly blend things together or establish a co-operation on a completely one-sided basis... As you cannot change the national education system, the co-operation would not happen.

However, there are solutions to solve this problem: seeking common ground while retaining autonomy where it is necessary and fragmenting projects (unilateral recognition of academic qualifications). Prof. J suggests that:

We have different institutional regulations, and it is impossible for us to find a perfect path to operate our joint projects that satisfies the requirements of both regulations. However, we could seek common ground that exists within our respective regulations. From those common grounds, we can conduct co-operation accordingly. This is a practical way of ensuring the co-operation amounts to more than just an MoU.

Also, there is another solution to break the chain of these institutional barriers. We can fragment projects, instead of coordinating large-scale and macro-level

projects. For example, if we would like to strengthen music production, we can send our students to an overseas university to study, like the UK. The student would get obtain an undergraduate degree after three years of study in the UK. At the same time, they would come back here for their fourth year, and receive another undergraduate degree from us. It is not necessary for the UK institution to recognise the student's degree from us, but we would recognise the degree from the UK institution. The student would therefore receive a double bachelor's degree, but not necessarily through participating in a so-called 'joint degree programme' per se.

This demonstrates a practical way of breaking down the barriers of the institutional regulations. In this process, partner institutions need to understand the regulations from both parties, and then define the common ground or the gaps in co-operation. Most importantly, it depends on the internal institutional strategies for establishing international co-operation within their own institutions.

4.3.3.2.2. Conflicts of interest

Two of the institutions interviewed have faced this problem, though the details differ. Dr. G establishes that:

Many overseas institutions came to us for the purposes of recruitment. In other words, they want students, therefore they want to establish links with us. We do not like to set up relationships for this purpose. We want to build up relationships with the institutions that think we are good institutions as well and that we could learn from each other and then have co-operation from the institutional level, not just for the students.

Some UK participants also mentioned this problem. They indicate that many UK institutions believe they are more advanced and have a better quality of teaching and facilities than Chinese music institutions, they would like establish relationships with Chinese institutions in order to recruit more international students to achieve a greater degree of financial independency (see the UK section). The UK participants feel that that is a bad motivation for UK-China co-operation, and that relationships should be more equitable. Although these

comments from UK participants set a positive precedent for UK-China co-operation, they cannot represent the opinions of all UK arts-related institutions

However, Prof. J does not have any problems with the issues of student recruitment discussed earlier. He demonstrates that partner institutions have different expectations of their position in their education league. He explains:

I would like to invite the conservatories from the UK to join our League and take part in our activities. These conservatories are willing to join in our activities, but they do not wish to become ordinary members of our league tables. Their conditions for joining the league are that they automatically become council members, which we cannot consent to, as we have a rigorous selection process for selecting council members, and it is unfair on the other members who joined the league earlier than them. Therefore, we have not made any deals yet, and as a result there is no co-operation at present.

In terms of solutions, Dr. G suggested that overseas institutions need to think more comprehensively **about different forms of collaboration**. Chinese music institutions are not only a place for student recruitment, but also valuable places for spreading Chinese music and culture, which are worth studying. Compared to XAY, which would like to have co-operation with the partners who have the 'right attitudes', Prof. J believes that the willingness and motivations from the leaders are the key for co-operation. He says:

Political restrictions aside, there is no real problem if leaders from both sides would like to co-operate with each other.

These institutions view international co-operation from different perspectives: XAY focuses on the equality of the relationships, recognising that Chinese music and culture are as important as that of the West, and wishes to be recognised globally as a high-quality institution with their Chinese identity playing an important role. Meanwhile, ZGY, takes an approach beyond seeking approval for national identities, and instead focusing on integration, interaction, and

engagements across different areas of music from all corners of the world, which could result in a 'chemical reaction' in the platform (the group) that they have created. Therefore, regional identities would become potential points of departure for Western institutions to study their potential partners before they begin establishing relationships with them.

4.3.3.3. Human and social interaction problems

Cultural and language differences are the main concerns of the participants. Dr. G claims that

Nowadays, English is the only language being used for international relationships and co-operation between Chinese and overseas institutions. Overseas institutions expect us to speak English, and will very rarely have their own interpreter with them. It is, to some extent, unfair on us. Using a second language to express ideas and thoughts is not as accurate as using one's mother language, especially not with a language as different as Chinese. Meanings often cannot be expressed or understood very clearly, which brings issues towards the progress of building up relationships.

Here Dr. G describes a level of cultural chauvinism from Western institutions. Language is representative of a culture. In the situation that partner institutions do not speak Chinese, and do not have Chinese interpreters, it means everything has to be conducted in English, within the cultural circumstances and modes of Western, Anglophone culture. Dr. G voices a discomfort with this state of affairs. During the interview, Dr. G states a strong attachment to Chinese culture and sought fairness in terms of cultural respect and balance, which is perhaps influenced by Xi'an being the cradle of Chinese civilization, meaning that people from that region would have stronger sense of cultural consciousness. Empathy '*ganqing*', is one of the most important elements for sustainable relationships. Understanding languages and culture create a kind of 'common sense' between partner institutions, which enables empathy to be formulated within relationships.

Common sense, as one of the important parts of this research, is discussed in the corresponding section of the theoretical analysis (see Chapter 6).

From the cultural aspect, Dr. J indicates that:

In China, we have a complicated approval process internally and externally. The entire society has a hierarchy system where a lower position person obeys their seniors. To some extent, it is difficult for juniors to chase or push their projects forward in order to gain approval. For partners who are unfamiliar with Chinese culture and Chinese national conditions, it is difficult to move forward with co-operation.

The social hierarchy system is the main system in Chinese society that can be traced back to the Spring-Autumn period (*Chunqiu* period) in 722 BC, and it is one of the main characteristics of Chinese culture. This system has been studied in the literature review (see Chapter 1, p.26), with factors like its strict hierarchy and etiquette different to most western cultures. These aspects might bring resistance to the process of co-operation if partner institutions are not initially aware of them. For example, if they approach the wrong person for relationship setup, this might result in failure of relationship setup. In this situation, both participants believe that extensive communication is needed to be able to solve these problems, as trying to accurately express a cultural identity in a foreign language can cause misunderstandings within co-operation.

Based on the literature (see Chapter 1, p.26-27), researchers indicate that Chinese people use the anticipatory-communicative style in communications. This means that Chinese people are thought to only say a small proportion of what they really mean (Wang, 2007). Doing so can prevent rejection in front of people and can avoid personal embarrassment. This communication style stems from Confucian notions of etiquette ((Lu, 2011), which requires people to avoid direct conversation that would potentially make others feel uncomfortable and embarrassed. Moreover, it is where people use empathy (*ganqing*) to infer the

meanings from the conversation. In other words, there are things inevitably left unsaid, but a *tacit understanding* has been generated. This demonstrates solid friendship. However, in the West, this style is not so widely culturally adopted. This difference in approach can be confusing when starting negotiations.

The importance of clear communications has been stressed several times in this section, both in the benefits of co-operations and the issues of it. With regard to this, Dr. Y suggests that Chinese staff need to change their communicating style to become more straightforward and direct, and to ensure the partner institutions understand the cultural differences and the Chinese communication style. Dr. G brought in the idea of 'middle person'. He explains:

The fundamental condition of co-operation is to have a 'middle person' who came from XAY and has studied at an overseas university. Alternatively, the 'middle person' could have studied at an overseas university but works at XAY. That 'middle person' would know both institutions well and would serve as a bridge for setting up relationships and co-operation.

This idea of having a '**middle person**' is to have a person who speaks the languages of both countries, knows the cultures from both nations, understands these cultural differences, and is able to interpret these differences for both institutions. This method is related to the demand for trust, as the 'middle person' is required to use his or her own '*xinyong*' – credits to demonstrate the trust of Chinese institutions - in order to build trust for the overseas institution. In other words, it will be safer for Chinese institutions to have relationships and co-operation with the universities where have common 'friends'. This idea of 'middle person' forms an integral part of my analysis of *guanxi*, examined in the next section.

4.3.3.3.1. Mobility of contacts

Another problem they faced is the mobility of main contacts from partner institutions, i.e., an important figure in conducting international co-operation leaving the institution. Dr. Y illustrates that this is the issue that causes the most problems within his organisation. It represents the *opportunity cost* for rebuilding new relationships. More significantly, frequently changing the main contacts will increase the risks of invalidating the trust which has been earned. Therefore, Dr. Y believes that in order to develop sustainable relationships and co-operation, the key players cannot be changed frequently. Moreover, it links to the **mobility of *guanxi***, which will be further explained in the later *guanxi* section.

These institutional and individual problems indicate that international co-operation is a complex subject to conduct, especially between the East and the West, where there are conflicts in cultures, languages, and social manners. However, unlike the political issues, these differences are not unsolvable. Moreover, these problems and solutions also *illustrate that guanxi elements exist in these relationships from the perspectives of Chinese interviewees*, even though *guanxi* has not been mentioned in these sections during interviews yet.

4.4. *Guanxi*

From the definition of *guanxi* to the participants' acceptance of *guanxi*'s existence, this section details their usage of *guanxi* in these relationships, and the willingness of participants to use it. In general, participants from Beijing and Nanjing were more willing to discuss *guanxi*, and they believe that using *guanxi* is a smart way of dealing with international co-operation (according to Prof. J and Dr. Y), whereas in Xi'an, the participant expressed that *guanxi* is too broad to be of modern

relevance and is not important anymore in Chinese society.

4.4.1. Definition of *guanxi*

There were two significant notions that were stressed by the participants: that *guanxi* is based on personal relationships, and that *guanxi* is considered to increase efficiency and reduce costs. Considering the definition of *guanxi* from the literature review (see Chapter 1, p.24), *guanxi* means relations and relationships between human beings (being 'inside a door'); *guanxi* refers to the 'concept of drawing on connections in order to secure favours in personal relations,' which contains 'implicit mutual obligation, assurance and understanding and governs Chinese attitudes toward long-term social and business relationships' (Luo, 1997, p.44). In this case, the answers from the participants confirmed that ***guanxi* is an exclusive relationship network that benefits the people within the network.**

Dr. Y indicates that *guanxi* is multiple relationships, which could represent the relationships between human beings, institutions, and nations. Dr. Y believes the relationships between human beings are the fundamental basis for institutional relationships. National relationships are based on all kinds of institutional relationships that involve the exchange of art, culture, and science, for examples.

Dr. Y explains:

For example, me and the project manager of our joint programme from P University are good friends. Although we are not constantly going out to eat or drink together, our communications are very smooth and efficient when dealing with problems. Therefore, all the things we've talked about are rooted on a foundation of personal relationships that contain mutual trust, understanding, and support. Because of the good relationships between the manager and me, our two institutions have built up close relationships, which have facilitated a benign developmental environment for joint degree programmes. Furthermore, to a large extent, our international co-operation has a greatly contributed

towards 'The Jiangsu-UK 20+20 World-Class University Consortium & International University-Industry-Research Co-operation Forum', and the establishment of the Jiangsu-UK 20+20 World Class University Consortium¹⁹.

In this case, personal relationships (friendship *guanxi* ties) contribute towards the relationships at an institutional level and a national level (the business *guanxi* ties). Moreover, personal *guanxi* can be transferred to institutional *guanxi*, which could potentially reduce the costs caused by staff mobility. In the case of BHY, they managed to transfer their institutional *guanxi* to individual links in order to achieve better interactions between themselves and their partner organisation (see Chapter 5). Therefore, *guanxi* can be transferred in both directions, meaning that *guanxi* itself could potentially reduce the costs of communications and enhance relationships in co-operation.

Prof. J concludes that '*guanxi* is the only way when you want to spend the minimum time, cost, and effort to maximize the successfulness of projects'. Prof. J also recognises *guanxi* as 'connections', which means knowing someone in exclusive networks, making connections with them, and using those connections to get business done, in order to save resources, time, and other costs. Prof. J explains:

There is no disadvantage if *guanxi* is recognised as 'connections' rather than 'relationships'. Relationships involve other additional benefit exchanges, and relationships are between humans and their emotions, which are too complicated and not necessary for international business. The meaning of 'connections' denotes channels... when two people have good working relationships, that means good connections, as we both want to get things done, we have the same working goals etc. If one day, I left this position (international officer), but I still asked you to consider my students, and you did it, that would represent the personal relationship built between us through the work connection we had. Therefore, work connections can transfer to personal relationships. We could chat, eat and drink together, but it is not necessary to

¹⁹ The details of the Jiangsu-UK 20+20 World Class University Consortium are available at: http://www.zgjssw.gov.cn/yaowen/201904/t20190410_6155855.shtml

mix these things up with work.

Prof. J however believes that perhaps too much importance is placed on personal relationships for international business, and *guanxi* only needs to be deep enough to create channels to facilitate communications for both sides. The previous opinion from Dr. Y about *guanxi* looks at its flexibility of transformation. This view from Prof. J measures the **depth of *guanxi*** in co-operation.

Dr. G claims that *guanxi* and its elements do exist, but the existence of *guanxi* is not important when it comes to international co-operation. He further explains that *guanxi* is solely the 'middle person system' (previously described). However, Dr. G believes it is not necessary to have this 'middle person system' of *guanxi* to setup relationships both domestically and internationally.

Furthermore, he indicates a weakened use and understanding of *guanxi* in general. According to the literature (see Chapter 1, p.35), *guanxi* is far weaker nowadays with younger generations, as they are more international or Westernised than previously. Dr. G confirms this, as he believes that China is open enough to have direct communications; things can be done without *guanxi* elements. Also, he stresses the equality of relationships, but as long as *guanxi* remains exclusive, it is also unequal for outsiders.

Participants view *guanxi* from different perspectives. These include: the flexibility of transformation, the surface involvement of *guanxi* in international co-operation, and the fact that *guanxi* might die out within younger generations.

4.4.2. Acceptance of *guanxi*'s existence and its utilisation

When Prof. J was asked about the existence of *guanxi*, he claims that he used *guanxi* for all his projects:

Of course, *guanxi* undoubtedly exists in my international projects. All my successful projects have been done through these connections, with no exception. For example, I have a connection at G University, who is the personal assistant of the principal, and who was also a junior fellow apprentice of mine when we were both undergraduates at the SY Conservatory of Music. Therefore, we have multiple collaborations with the institution. Moreover, we employed a violin teacher who is studying a Ph.D. at Y Music School. The teacher is working for us; therefore, he is the connection between our two institutions. The staff you just saw came to my office graduated from one of our partner institutions in the UK, and I have more than eight years of friendship with the vice-president of that Conservatoire. In other words, all the students that we have sent for joint programmes were via my connections.

Dr. Y similarly believes that *guanxi* completely exists within international co-operation. He explains:

The reason why two institutions could have co-operation is that there is always a person from each institution who maintains good relationships with each other. They agree on an idea for collaboration, introduce it to their managers and then organise a visit. Joint programmes might be able to be produced during this process. Otherwise, if you knew no one at a university, and wrote letters to the international office, no one will answer. I have tried so many times and received no response. The same applies the other way, if I received a letter from an overseas institution where I did not know anyone, we will encounter all these trust issues. We do not know each other, I do not know what they want, and they do not know what we do in China. It is a long process before we can get to know each other. I will not be bothered when I have other programmes to do. For example, if today you had not asked my friend to ask me for the interview, I would not accept it.

In Dr. Y's view, personal relationships build trust towards business projects, and trust is the fundamental factor needed for projects to progress. The disadvantage is the **mobility of *guanxi***. He believes that international co-operation in the higher education sector depends on **personal *guanxi***.

If someone moves from one institution to another, on the one hand, any relationships we had with that institution through that individual would have to be rebuilt with whoever replaces them, which is a time-consuming process, and existing projects, to a large extent, will be stuck. On the other hand, the person will bring all their *guanxi* along with them, which provides possibilities for new co-operation.

Dr. G also agrees that *guanxi* exists in general, however, he does not think it is

necessary to use *guanxi* for international co-operation, as in his view *guanxi* is not the determining factor for international business.

These three opinions towards the existence of *guanxi* differ significantly, ZGY is the most active institution for international co-operation. Therefore, Prof. J requires efficiency and a high success rate for his international co-operation alongside with cost reduction. *Guanxi* meets all his requirements, and he uses *guanxi* in all collaborations without hesitation. There is no need for him to try alternatives, as it functions reasonably well. NY needs to expand their international co-operation, and Dr. Y believes *guanxi* could help him shorten the process and increase the success rate, as he has failed to do so without *guanxi*. Therefore, he is looking for *guanxi* relationships to setup new international co-operation. Whereas in XAY, a key institutional value is fairness, although they have not yet fully developed their international co-operation. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that they do not want to conduct co-operations in an overly 'Chinese' way in order to show fairness and respect to their partners.

4.4.3. Willingness to use *guanxi*

All participants have their own interpretation of *guanxi* and are aware of the existence of it. Prof. J and Dr. Y hold positive opinions about *guanxi* and are willing to find and use *guanxi* for international co-operation, whereas Dr. G believes that international co-operation does not need to be that complicated and that there should not be any additional importance assigned to *guanxi* in general. However, he does not deny that 'knowing someone' is useful for setting up relationships.

Prof. J wishes to continuously use existing *guanxi* for international projects, and he explains:

Something may come about by chance rather than searching for it in terms of finding the 'right person' to create the connections. I seek the 'right person' without hesitation, as connections improve efficiency, such as reducing the time of responses, and the time of communications. Favourable personal relationships are the 'bonus' that could be built based on well-developed business projects.

In terms of improving efficiency, there is no shame in using *guanxi* in terms of the differences in social division of labor. Prof. J provides the examples of hospitals and restaurants:

If we went to a hospital now, at this time of the day (10 a.m. Beijing time), the No. 13 Beijing Hospital already has a queue from the main reception to the street outside of the hospital, you might need to queue for at least half a day to see a doctor. If I contacted my doctor friend; I could be seen by a doctor in seconds. Why do I do that? I am not using *guanxi* just because I want to use *guanxi*. It is because *guanxi* can help me save time, the costs of materials, and financial resources. By using *guanxi*, the time that I saved could potentially help me make another agreement for businesses, which drives more benefits towards my institution. Why do we not use *guanxi* when we go to McDonald's? There is no difference in the cost of time, materials and financial resources for eating at McDonald's. I do not think there is any need to avoid *guanxi*; it feels perfectly normal and correct to locate and use *guanxi* when it is necessary.

Based on Prof. J's logic, people themselves are the key to finding *guanxi* relations.

Guanxi exists because it is needed for the cost reduction, and *guanxi* required at the business level, are the so-called 'connections'. Personal relationships could be built through business connections, but it is not the most important factor for international co-operation. He also gave the example of favour exchange during *guanxi* process, which indicates that he knows that *guanxi* involves the factor of favour return/exchange, however, he did not include this factor into a definition of *guanxi*. In other words, favour exchange is located at a personal level rather than the business level, which is more relevant to relationships, not 'connections'. This, to some extent, explains his preference for using the word 'connections' rather than 'relationships'.

4.4.3.1. The difference between 'knowing someone' and personal *guanxi*

Dr. Y confirms that 'knowing people' is the main factor in setting up communications with overseas institutions. He is also willing to use *guanxi* for international co-operation. The difference is that he has not yet set up multiple links with many overseas institutions. During this study, he is in the stage of finding the 'right person' for these new relationships and is trying to use *guanxi* for setting up new relationships.

It will definitely benefit my work if I had many *guanxi* relationships. For example, if I have a lot of *guanxi* with UK institutions, we could establish an alliance for interactions; share resources; develop joint projects and so on. International co-operation would be more active. To give you an example, if I wanted to have communication with the film department at NJZ University, but I did not know anyone there, I would then need to ask my colleague and friends to see if I can find some links for approaching them.

In Dr. Y's view, 'knowing someone' is the ice-breaking method for approaching overseas institutions, which is where *guanxi* is involved. He did not mention *guanxi* in the further part of the process for international co-operation. Instead, once a relationship has been formulated, he believes that an honest communication style is the key for project completion.

Dr. G has negative opinions towards utilising *guanxi*, and he says he will not be willing to use *guanxi* within international co-operation. He is in a position of selecting partners from the offering overseas institutions and has not yet established any collaborative projects with any overseas institution. Therefore, he has not had to directly approach overseas institutions himself, and he can choose from the list of institutions on offer, which might be the reason why he believes *guanxi* is not required for the purpose of international co-operation, in order to demonstrate his ideology towards relationships. However, Dr. G is very conscious about needing trust between partner institutions, and trust is his measurement for

selecting partnerships. He also agrees that knowing someone at overseas institutions is the foundation of gaining trust, and that trust is the formula for establishing relationships between people and institutions.

In conclusion, all participants had a good understanding of *guanxi*, and consciously or not use *guanxi* for relationship formulation and partnership analysis. Prof J at ZGY has identified multiple *guanxi* connections in his international co-operation, while Dr. Y is actively trying to create more *guanxi* links in the future for international activities. In contrast, Dr. G has no conscious intentions when it comes to using *guanxi*. *Guanxi* has existed at the elementary level of these relationships with their international partners, which confirms the literature that *guanxi* is positively correlated with new relationship creation and could loosely exist at a professional level without becoming tangled up at the emotional level of interpersonal relationships.

Chapter 5: Qualitative Study (UK)

5.1. Aim of this qualitative study

Although quantitative data only collected from the Chinese participants, it is still worthy collecting qualitative data from the UK participants. This qualitative study helps this research understand the opinions from the UK when they experience *guanxi* relationships in their co-operation, and what they think about the *guanxi* existence and usage, as well as their willingness of using *guanxi* in the future. These opinions might have important influence on *guanxi*'s existence and usage for the future.

5.1.1. Context and setting

Fieldwork in the UK for this paper covered a small sample of higher education institutions in both England and Scotland. In terms of higher education strategy, Scotland and England have similar approaches to the international market: a ruling in 1979 by the UK's Conservative government meant that overseas students were no longer granted a fee subsidy (Brown, 2013). Following a Coalition government announcement in November 2010 and the subsequent White Paper (DBIS 2011a), UK higher education received limited direct state support to a small number of priority areas, and undergraduate fees became required to cover the costs of teaching (Brown, 2013). These policies have created a situation where higher education institutions encounter high levels of financial pressure and represent a move towards increasing marketisation. Therefore, the no-subsidies policies for overseas students' tuition fees (Brown, 2013) has created pressure for higher education institutions to invest in the international market and attract a wider international student body.

The UK's marketisation of Higher Education is more pronounced in England than

in Scotland. Scottish policy is still guided, at least rhetorically (Scottish Government 2010), by a vision of HE as a public good. For example, an annual tuition fee of £1000 was introduced throughout the UK in 1998. In England, it was increased to a maximum of £3000 in 2006, and later to £9000 in 2012, where it has remained until today (December 2020). In Scotland, this was replaced by a smaller, deferred 'graduate endowment' in 2000, which was abolished in 2007. A comparison of England and Scotland therefore provides at least a weak test (case studies) of the impact of marketisation (Raffe, and Croxford, 2015, p. 5-6). Therefore, we can infer the distinct possibility of differing motivations when it comes to launching international co-operation in England and Scotland.

International cooperation impacts both marketisation and student recruitment. This data analysis compares case studies from England and Scotland, as the data shows different types of motivation for establishing relationships. Differing guidance from England's and Scotland's government policies and the different levels of financial pressure on HE organisations might indicate differences in terms of the motivations behind and depth of international co-operation, especially with China. Market demand means that higher education institutions in England have more initiatives, motivation and demand to seek international cooperation with China than Scottish institutions. Three institutions have been included in the fieldwork: BHY, SHY, and DMDY, respectively. BHY and SHY are two music conservatoires in England and Scotland respectively, and DMDY is a university with a music department in England. The names of the institutions and participants have also been anonymised.

5.1.2. Institutional background

5.1.2.1. Institution BHY

BHY has a long history dating back to the 1800s. It began as a music school and attained its conservatoire status in 1970s. BHY started to offer bachelor's degrees in 1983, MA programmes were introduced in 1994, and a specialist performance certificate has been offered since 2008. BHY has around 50 full-time members of staff, nearly 200 visiting specialist tutors, and around 500 students. In terms of internationalisation, BHY has no independent international office, but it has an associate principal who is specifically in charge of international co-operation, and an international coordinator for day-to-day administrative work with international partners. Therefore, the interview was conducted with the associate principal.

5.1.2.2. Institution SHY

Established in 1847, SHY also has a long history as a performing arts institution and is consistently ranked within the world's top 10 performing arts institutions from QS World Rankings. It launched its degree courses in the 1980s, added undergraduate and postgraduate programs in the 1990s and began recruiting research students from the 2000s. SHY has no independent international office either, but it has a director for external relations, who is associated with the principal's office, and the principal has specific responsibilities for international co-operation. Therefore, I interviewed the principal at SHY.

5.1.2.3. Institution DMDY

DMDY is a university in England. It was founded in 1992 with the Further and Higher Education Act as a degree awarding body. Currently, it has 27,000 full and

part-time students and 3,240 staff members across four faculties. The music department examined in this research is part of the faculty of Art, Design, and Humanities (ADH). Unlike many normal universities' music departments, DMDY does not include classical music teaching and performance; according to the department's publicity materials²⁰, instead focusing on music technology and innovation. Although the university has an international office, it is mainly responsible for the admission of international students and administrative work for international relations, which is not ideal for conducting an interview specifically concerning international co-operation in music. Therefore, the director of the department, who has been involved in co-operations with China for over 20 years, was selected for this research.

5.2. Method

I imagined it would be likely I could obtain interviews by sending emails to targeted participants. I had different expectations for UK participants, as they do not live in a *guanxi* society. It was interesting to discover that the whole process of organising the interviews ended up being more difficult than organising the interviews with Chinese participants. Firstly, emails were sent to the directors of external relations in several selected institutions in both England and Scotland, which received either no response or rejections, which could be the result of commercial sensitivity. More emails were sent to a wider range of institutions two weeks after the first batch, and still received no response. Therefore, we understood that a random-email approach did not work for arranging interviews

²⁰ <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/research/centres-institutes/mti2/index.aspx>

in this research. Finally, a ‘*guanxi*’ type of approach was used, resulting in responses from three institutions, and with the participants below accepting the interviews (Table 61.).

Table 12 *Guanxi* approach method

Participating Institution	Participant	Position	Contact Methods	Referee
BHY	LM	Associate Principle (international) of the conservatoire	Email	A friend who is an alumnus and used to work for the principal's office
SHY	JF	Principle of the conservatoire	Email	A professor who is the research chair at the conservatoire
DMDY	LE	Director of the music department	Email	One of my supervisors who used to work with LE

The referee system has been explained in chapter 4 (see details in p.126). With UK participants, I did not expect to use this system to approach participants until I almost ran out of time for my fieldwork²¹. If I were not able to collect data from the UK, I would have met the risk of failing to complete this topic. BHY is a representative institution in terms of internationalisation and is fairly established when it comes to international cooperation, making it a valuable research object. After requesting to explain the research I would be conducting at BHY, my interview request did not go any further with the officer of international relations. At this point I changed tack, and started using the *guanxi* method to approach the institution again. I asked one of my ‘business type’ friends²², who graduated from BHY and used to work for the principal's office, to help me set up this arrangement. Immediately, I received a reply from the associate principal and arranged an

²¹ The overall time for my data collection is six month for both China and the UK parts. In the UK part, I have spent entire three months for contacting the interviewees, which should be the overall time for the UK data collection.

²² In the *guanxi* system, there are three types of relationships: family ties, kinship ties, and business ties.

interview date with him within the same day. This was the most extreme case of using the referee system to finalise interview arrangements in my UK-based fieldwork.

The referee system was used loosely with SHY; there were no direct friendship ties, but I did receive an internal recommendation. At SHY, there is no international relations or external officer identified on their website. I sent an email to the research chair at the institution, as this is a PhD research investigation, and the chair subsequently helped me by sending internal emails to the principal's office introducing my research project, and an interview was arranged within the same day. The enthusiasm that SHY has for research was likely the main reason this approach worked at SHY. It is relatively uncommon to offer research degrees at conservatoires, but SHY has offered them since the early 2000s. Their website states that their research strategy focuses on open-minded cross-cultural creativities, and interdisciplinary studies, which provided an opportunity to receive help from the research team at SHY. Furthermore, from a *guanxi* perspective, the research chair sent an email to the principal's office, which can be recognised as a reference or recommendation from their own internal network. In other words, the email was sent by someone they knew and could trust, which significantly increased the trust level between the interviewer and interviewee, consequently increasing the likelihood of the interview being accepted.

At DMDY, even though my supervisor did not introduce me to the director or make any recommendations or interventions, I managed to establish a link with DMDY, as my supervisor was known to staff at the organisation. Therefore, in terms of the 'referee' system, the friendship that my co-supervisor has with the director proved to be the key that enabled me to set up a link with the director, allowing

for an interview to be arranged easily and efficiently. Although we cannot strictly call those cases '*guanxi*' networks, it is undeniable that knowing someone within a network would potentially provide a shortcut for breaking into said network and increase the efficiency of administrative communications. In other words, it is demonstrable that knowledge of contacts has value in the West. There might not necessarily be such a standardised system of favour exchanges between my referees and the participants; but it still indicates that trust is significantly important for building up relationships.

Therefore, although people in the West may not refer to it as *guanxi*, this style of relationship undoubtedly exists in various settings, just to a less formalised extent than *guanxi*, and people will accept recommendations or references from someone who they know in order to connect with a new person. In this case, I did not receive a response when I sent out random emails, as I had not establish any prior links or relationships with the potential interviewees. In other words, I was completely unknown to them. These institutions are all different networks, and the referee system, which took the form of internal recommendations from their colleagues or ex-colleagues, helped me gain trust with my target participants, and further increased the likelihood of interviews being accepted. We cannot definitively prove that people have to use relationships like this in business, but this data certainly indicates how these relationships contribute to the efficiency of business setup, or in the case of this study, interview setup.

5.3. Results

5.3.1. State of current co-operation

In the UK, BHY, as a music institution, has the highest number of active

international co-operations. It has partnerships with more than 60 countries, and multiple relationships with top music institutions in China. For them, the purposes of conducting internationalization are to promote the conservatoire around the world for reputational benefit, access to new markets, and making alliances in the student recruiting market. BHY has been developing its Chinese partnerships since the 2010s, and their strategy is to build equitable partnerships with Chinese institutions, as the senior management team believes that with time, Chinese HEIs will become competition for them - this competition being over the students themselves. To use an example, the Chinese government provides multiple scholarships for international students studying in China²³. International students would have lower entry requirements to attend top Chinese universities than local Chinese students, such as Peking University and Tsinghua University, which are both listed in the top 30 in *The Times*²⁴. Therefore, it is better to make alliances with them instead of competing with them. Based on this strategy, BHY has developed a model that consists of four phases for formulating relationships in China, according to LM.

The first phase is visits, which includes student and staff visits, as well as bilateral high-level visits from the principals and senior management teams. The second phase is student exchanges for a term, a semester or a year. BHY not only hosts Chinese students for these exchange programmes, but also manages to regularly send their students to China. The third phase involves organising joint artistic projects, such as joint concerts and joint festivals in both countries. At the time of

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<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E4%B8%AD%E5%9B%BD%E6%94%BF%E5%BA%9C%E5%A5%96%E5%AD%A6%E9%87%91>

²⁴ [https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2020/world-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/sort by/rank/sort order/asc/cols/stats](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2020/world-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/sort%20by/rank/sort%20order/asc/cols/stats)

the interview, they had just completed a joint electronic music festival in Shanghai. The final phase is to develop joint research projects when the two institutions have established strong trust and good partnerships. BHY has managed to complete these four phases with different partners in China. Although none of these phases mention student recruitment, BHY believes that students will naturally come when you have good relationships with their home institutions, which has been confirmed by the statistics report for student recruitment at BHY.

This strategy elevated co-operation from a surface level to a deeper engagement between BHY and their partner institutions. It is also an example of the process of building trust in their relationships. For example, for the first visiting phase, two institutions could visit each other based on their reputation, or a recommendation from a 'middle person'. It neither involves a high level of trust nor a high level of risk to their own institution, and ultimately provides opportunities for potential co-operation. Due to the relatively low stakes of these visits, relationships could end shortly after without causing much upset on either side. However, in the fourth phase, in order to operate research projects together, institutions would need to establish a mutual initiative towards research areas, goals, and results for instance, which requires a high level of familiarity with their partner institutions in order to locate research areas, and a high level of trust in their ability to complete projects. This simply could not happen without a long-lasting relationship being first established. LM indicates that although they are in different phases with different Chinese institutions, they have managed to reach the fourth phase with two of their Chinese partners.

Moreover, BHY positioned themselves in an equal position as their partner institutions. For example, they receive Chinese students for student exchange

programmes and they also send students to China, and they have been invited for conferences and concerts in China and in turn, they invite Chinese scholars to visit for similar purposes. These interactive activities show the respect that Chinese institutions would like to receive (see Chapter 4), as BHY respects its partner institutions, and treats them as equal with BHY itself without thinking of themselves as a more advanced institution. This also helps to build trust and develop relationships. Equality is a hugely important element for co-operation with Chinese institutions, as Chinese interviewees have mentioned that when approached by Western universities, they feel as though their ulterior motive is just to recruit Chinese students. Consequently, they felt disrespected, and rejected collaborations accordingly²⁵. In contrast, a good relationship helps to increase international student recruitment at BHY, even though BHY did not plan this as the main purpose of international co-operation. In this four-phase model, BHY managed to build multiple relationships with top Chinese music institutions and received a good quality and quantity of students. In turn, their Chinese partner institutions received respect and experienced cross-cultural exchanges.

The institutional strategy is different at SHY in Scotland compared to BHY. SHY is a government-supported institution, which experiences less financial pressure to recruit international students compared to the English institutions. It focuses on the development of service-dominated arts for both society and the local community. JF, the Principle of the conservatoire, stated that:

We really think about where art is going next. How can we collaborate in between arts forms; how can arts forms be relevant to our communities; and how can they influence social changes; and help solve world challenges; and how can the arts actually be engaged in climate change? All these things I think

²⁵ the interviewee from XAY mentioned that they have not yet setup relationships with most of the western institutions that have visited them before, as he thinks they were all just want students from XAY, which is not the way how he would like to establish relationships.

we think about that more deeply, and we are more able to.

Without financial pressures, their strategy of internationalisation enables them to have a cultural mix: a good balance of the nationality of students without an over reliance on China. Therefore, they are comparatively less motivated to invest resources in the Chinese market. They take a quality over quantity approach to relationships with Chinese institutions. Currently, they have MoUs signed with three Chinese institutions in music, theatre and drama to explore the possibilities of student exchange and potential joint degree programmes, such as 3+1 and 4+1 undergraduate joint degree programmes.

Unlike the music conservatories, the music department at DMDY is scarcely equipped with few resources, and only comprises a small proportion of the students and staff population. Therefore, music is not a priority in terms of the development of internationalisation and international student recruitment at the university. The music department at DMDY has positioned itself in a special exclusive triangle between music technology and innovation, which does not include traditional music programmes, such as performance studies, composition, or musicology that are offered by other music departments or conservatoires.

In order to boost revenue, the international strategy of the university is rooted in expanding international student recruitment. However, for the music department itself, the purpose of conducting international co-operation with Chinese institutions is to help Chinese institutions and students develop a greater sense of creativity and innovation in music. Therefore, there is a conflict between the university's ruling body and the department. Although the director of music has been visiting China since 1993, international co-operation with Chinese institutions has not gone very far in any particular area, due to the institution's low

ranking in the league table, Professor LE explained.

5.3.2. Advantages of conducting international co-operation

Participating institutions have different levels of concentration when it comes to their relationships with their Chinese partners. JF from SHY believes that initiating co-operation with China would be inspirational for their own staff and students:

In general, there is so much energy in the arts in China. For our staff and students to experience and investigate the arts, regardless of whether it's important for the wider population, I think is really thrilling to see. Because that's the way Europe was 200 years ago, that's the way America was 70 years ago. And sometimes, we take the arts for granted in the West. In Asia they say no, arts are a central part of life. That's really exciting.

BHY has a longer history of co-operation with China and uses a more strategic approach, by making use of the planned development stages as discussed above with its partner institutions. LM from BHY describes the benefits in great depth, which are divided into four different levels. Firstly, the co-operation provides a mutual understanding of cultural differences and trust, which creates opportunities for international careers for their students:

The first benefit is the mutual understanding of the cultural differences, building understanding, and building trust for me is essential, and institutions like us naturally project towards the international dimension, because we know our students will have international careers. It's very difficult for musicians to have careers in just one country. If you want to have a really good career, you will be traveling, and you will be invited to travel. And then they study here with students from all over the world and make friends. Those students go back and work in one country and invite their friends and colleagues. It's always been like this. So having a good relationship with institutions in China for us... for me the biggest benefit is the mutual trust and understanding that affords our students a much wider range of opportunities for their future careers. So that's really the essential aspect of it.

The second level of benefits brings greater diversity to existing practices, and introduces different forms of performing arts with their own cultural backgrounds:

Another benefit is you learn about different cultures, and you project your own

country there. For example, being in the UK, seeing UK and European music in China is always exciting, and also receiving music from China, from Chinese composers and playwrights, theaters whatever... any other performing arts are all very exciting for us. So this is great. I remember last year, it was so nice to see the president from WH conservatory, he is a lovely guy, and also a fantastic Erhu player. He gave a little a concert for us. We organized it for him, like a lecture-concert for him, he gave a presentation, and then... it was lovely. So that's again the dimension that is great benefit from his kind of work.

The third level of benefits accesses a big network of international integration for various possibilities. China has invested heavily in music²⁶. Accessing education in China enables further access to music and the Arts globally through attachments to international projects which have been enabled by a policy of supporting the arts nationally at all levels:

China is a part of this big network, and then there will be connections with other schools in other countries, and then together with Shanghai, together with Wuhan, we can work with schools in Singapore, or in France. There are lots of projects, which we know that we are involved in with other partners from other countries, and then the Chinese partners... we all get together. So that's another interesting dimension.

The final benefit is the expansion of opportunities in China's national cultural development:

Another benefit is that China has invested a huge amount of money in music. Not only in music of course, but in culture. To be a part of this, that's great. You want to be involved in this kind of expansion. And music is a big part of the Belt-and-Road Initiative, you know, Xi's kind of world domination plan. It's great to be somehow involved in this movement.

From SHY, JF obtains benefits from developing *music itself* through co-operation, relationships etc. Students and staff experiencing different forms of music in cultures are a way of developing and expanding music itself. Whereas in BHY,

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<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=0ohVDwAAQBAJ&pg=PT61&lpq=PT61&dq=%E6%94%BF%E5%BA%9C%E6%94%BF%E7%AD%96+%E9%9F%B3%E4%B9%90%E9%A2%86%E5%9F%9F&source=bl&ots=5Pk9rqqQ0a&sig=ACfU3U1krKM6vYC8lrPQ44Q7CVFYVTepKQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewjn9s3E4vzmAhVGfMAKHe2DAfwQ6AEwAXoECACQAQ#v=onepage&q=%E6%94%BF%E5%BA%9C%E6%94%BF%E7%AD%96%20%E9%9F%B3%E4%B9%90%E9%A2%86%E5%9F%9F&f=false>

LM explains the benefits from the student level to music itself, and further summarises this into the institutional level, and finally, the exclusive access of collaborative networks from the national level which satisfies the conditions for the creation of a strategic eco-system (see Figure 29.).

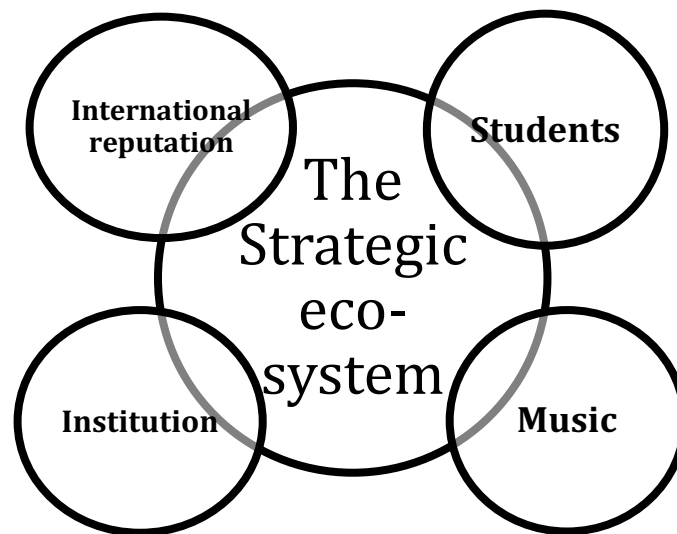


Figure 29 A strategic eco-system from LM

According to Figure 29, in the area of *Students*, co-operation provides mutual understanding of cultural differences and trust, which creates opportunities for international careers for their students; in *Music*, it expands diversities and different forms of performing arts from its own cultural background; it enables the *Institution* to access a large network of international integration for various possibilities for the development of their own institution; with expansions and opportunities for the development of Chinese national culture, especially in music, and it also helps UK institutions spread their *Institutional reputation* from a national and official level.

Although LE from DMDY has plenty of experience cooperating with China, he

recognises that all his previous co-operations have failed. Therefore, there has been no significant benefit toward DMDY as of yet (December, 2020). The problems that DMDY and other two institutions are facing will be analysed in the next section.

5.3.3. Issues during co-operation

5.3.3.1. Political elements

Political restrictions from the Chinese government have a significant effect on UK-China co-operation. The participants indicated that Chinese institutions have to do things 'in a certain way' that matches with their political needs. In other words, co-operation is defined by political alignment. Also, there are two leaders at every institution, one is the party leader, and another one is the music leader. It creates a bias in communication, and that slows things down for international co-operation.

LM from BHY explains that:

I always remember that one thing is the people that we're working with, one thing is the government. That's sort of the same thing, but it's still all dependent on the government, they have to work and do things in a certain way. We cannot ask them to change those ways, because we know that they have to exist in a framework. That's the context in which they have to work, and I accept that.

JF from SHY states:

Other things in China I found is that sometimes there could be two leaders. There's one that's the music leader, and the one that's the party leader. And it's hard to know which one you're talking to and who makes the decisions... I found things harder to get moving in Beijing. Because it's too close to the centre of authority. I found the further I get from Beijing, the more creative I can be with ideas.

The two-leader system might cause difficulties with internal politics in Chinese institutions and influence the success and speed of collaborations. LE from DMDY believes there are internal political problems at his Chinese partner institutions

that meant their collaborations had failed:

My PhD student was working in SY, so I went up there. Then we started to talk about stuff, but there is the typical thing, there is a bad relationship within SY Conservatory. We can drink a lot of Pijiu (beer), but nothing happens at all, because of the internal politics that I'm not part of. They say OK to the future, and ask me to come back and all that, and I was there four times, but it was the dean who came to my university, he later told me about all the problems that meant that nothing happened.

LM provides an example of a failed co-operation because of the internal politics:

I was a bit disappointed. It was... We worked two years with the music school that's attached to a university, it's a music department at one university in Xiamen. This is an institution for returning Chinese people from abroad, so as a Chinese university, its mission was to offer opportunities to the students from abroad, now it has also grown into something else. And they had a big project to build a new conservatoire as a part of the university. We got involved fairly early on, and we had a good relationship with the institution, we were going to be part of the big plaque that was going to be put on the building thing, they were the perfect audition center in Southern China for us. Then we're really trying to help them, supporting them in how to build a new conservatoire, the chemical unique one, and how can we help invite the director and the principal here. But then, nothing happened. They built the conservatoire, but they never found a way actually... they promised we would do a big festival, and invite us and we organized the whole... it was... We organized a lot of things, but then at the last minute, the whole thing was called off, because there was no money, we can't do it, we'll do it next year, but then nothing happened. They just disappeared, and the school's never flourish, they never... as far as I know it's not doing well. It's a pity, because it's a good opportunity and we had good relationships with some close connections over there, but for whatever reason, the senior management of the school did not really understand how precious the relationship was, and how good it could be for them. They didn't know how to play politically, maybe inside the university. So the whole thing then crumbled, as always, because of the lack of money... and... so it left me with a bitter taste. Because that's something we had invested a lot of time and effort in, and nothing came about. That's the only thing that I was slightly disappointed with.

Here we can see a conflict between the senior management team and the staff who were working on the project. However, in general, power is centralised at every institutional unit in China, and everything has to follow the direction of the senior management team, which led to the termination of this project. Although people need to follow the guidance from their senior management team that is linked to government policies in the West as well, the willingness to follow

subjective initiatives and creativity are things that Chinese people generally lack. Furthermore, it establishes an indication that no matter how good relationships are, they are ultimately subservient to instructions from policies internally and externally.

Moreover, LE believes that Chinese policies make contemporary electronic art music harder to develop in China, which directly affects his collaborations and partnerships. LE has started relationships with Chinese institutions since the 1990s, when China was still focusing on economic development, and music was not as strongly promoted back then as it is today. Electronic music is a Western style of music (Demers, 2010), which saw slow development in China during the 20th Century. However, in recent years electronic music has been developing rapidly at both an academic level (see research and music from Dajun Yao²⁷), and an empirical level (there is a great number of electronic music festivals in China²⁸). Therefore, the perception that LE had was slightly out of date, as like other forms of music, electronic music is developing in China. LE would have opportunities to establish collaborations on electronic music if he returned to China under the current circumstances.

Here is another example from LE in DMDY that shows how close relationships and the willingness to collaborate cannot go against the political restrictions:

[There's] XF, who is one of the most important figures in Chinese contemporary music in my opinion. Certainly, he's taught a whole generation of electric acoustic music at ZYY, everybody studies with him. So we are becoming close friends, and had dreams of doing things together, it was very exciting. But even he, because of the politics in this place, found it very difficult to develop this to a more profound relationship. It's still my hope that one day we can have a relationship with a conservatory in China. that maybe it won't start with undergraduates because of the language problem, but we can start with a

²⁷ <http://www.soundpocket.org.hk/v2/category/research/people-working-with-sound/dajun-yao/>

²⁸ <https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E8%8D%89%E8%8E%93%E9%9F%B3%E4%B9%90%E8%8A%82>

postgraduate level, and involve the exchange of concerts, and maybe research projects.

Furthermore, JF and LM pointed out difficulties for the Chinese delegation to obtain visas in order to visit the UK. The convoluted visa process has been explained in the China section (see chapter 4). It not only takes a long time to get permission from the government, but also runs the risk of failure. In JF's case, one of the partner institutions tried to send 20 teachers to come to SHY for three weeks, but because they did not manage to obtain staff visas, the plans had to be cancelled. There have been many similar cases in BHY, and this is a problem that institutions from neither country can solve, which, to some extent, may indicate a risk of failure of co-operation, as institutional visits are the first step of building up relationships.

5.3.3.2. Environmental uncertainty

Environmental uncertainty (political stability, economic – exchange rates, access markets) is another risk that cannot be solved on an institutional level. In the UK, there are problems stemming from Brexit: two general elections have taken place since Brexit began in 2016 and the deadline of the trade agreement has been extended twice. This has a huge potential effect on policies, and the level of co-operation with other countries. Higher education is one of the pillar industries in the UK, and it has been affected by Brexit, one example being reduced funding from European funding bodies. This might also have an influence on EU students who need to make a decision about studying in the UK after the trade agreement has been established, as travel to the UK will not be as convenient as before. The consequences of Brexit will undoubtedly have a direct influence on UK HEI strategies for finance and internationalisation.

According to *EU Exit Long-term economic analysis* (2018), Brexit could potentially reduce GDP by around 1.8 percent and 0.6 percent GDP per capita in the long run compared to current arrangements. Garcia-Herrero and Xu (2016) believe that it would be beneficial to have a UK-China free trade agreement. So far, BBC News²⁹ (2020) indicates that the UK government has managed to sign a new trade agreement with Japan and is engaged in trade talks with other non-EU countries, such as the US, Australia and New Zealand. Therefore, although Brexit has brought uncertainty in terms of economic growth, it also offers opportunities for new relationships.

China also faces issues of environmental uncertainty as well, such as the Hong Kong problem. LM from BHY stresses that:

There is one thing that worries me about China is what's going to happen if there is stronger intervention in Hong Kong, or maybe in Xinjiang, or if there is something that happens in the community, and the global community starts to react badly, or China starts to close in, or isolates itself. These [factors] will have a lot of influence on many things: our connection with Chinese institutions, our in-coming students, and our current projects. So there is a lot at stake here.

These environmental uncertainties pose various potential risks towards UK-China co-operation. There are several questions that must be discussed at the senior management level: how to set up an early warning system, how to retain existing relationships, and how to survive the environmental uncertainties. A system of key performance indicators (KPI) might need to be setup for risk management at this uncertain period of time in history. The framework that this research provides may offer an insight into how to deal with these potential issues (see Chapter 6).

²⁹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-47213842>

5.3.3.3. Cultural differences

Cultural differences (Harris, Moran, and Andrews, 1991) are another significant issue within China-UK co-operation. However, cultural differences are not a completely unsolvable issue within UK-China co-operation. UK participants mentioned that they understood the cultural differences and respected them with patience.

In terms of avoiding anything that would be considered directly offensive in Chinese culture (see Chapter 4), LM says that:

The other thing sometimes is the fact that in China people never say no to anything. They always say yes, but then they won't do it if they don't agree. But you'll learn with time, you'll understand it's just a cultural thing.

Simultaneously, JF from SHY stresses that it is hard to get clear answers from Chinese partners:

I think some of the challenges can be cultural differences, and not always getting clear answers. Sometimes Chinese conservatories are waiting to hear from their governments, and don't want to say there is a problem. So I just try to be patient and have that kind of understanding that you won't always get a quick and clear answer. But we're in this for the long game, so for instance, I'm not overly worried if XH can't get their visas in time, that doesn't mean I'm upset with the conservatory, and that doesn't mean our relationship is not so good. We just have to wait until they get them or seek other ways to keep the relationship going.

From the teaching and learning aspect, LE illustrates that there is a cultural conflict:

...He wanted to do a PhD with me, but he never made a proposal that was good enough. So this is there the cultural conflict. He wants me to tell him what to do, because that's the Chinese style. But he is a technical guy, I'm an artist. So I can't give him a technical project, because I'm not the leader of technical project.

Also, the working style is very different in both countries. LM indicates that:

One thing about working with China is that they are very last minute. So things

happen very quickly. This is not the way we work. So sometimes, we felt [we were pressured] into doing something when we're not ready, or there was just no time. This is something that has created problems; I guess it's common in other universities as well. You know, maybe a delegation will call you and they say: oh, we're coming next week, and we would like to visit the conservatoire, and there's just ten people, can you organise something for us? Or we'd love to give a concert of Chinese music.

These reflections regarding cultural differences create not only *communication bias*, but also risk operational failure. A mutual understanding of cultural differences, and a common sense regarding both cultures needs to be established for both parties to have certain basic initial perceptions of their partners, which would potentially reduce the problems stemming from cultural differences (see more details in Chapter 6).

5.3.3.4. Institutional barriers

In terms of the joint student programmes, it is hard to ignore the institutional barriers, which have been discussed in the China section. In terms of the participating institutions, only SHY faces this problem, as BHY does not have a joint degree programme with any partner institution in China and DMDY does not have this programme in any capacity. However, DMDY might face the same problem if they decide to have joint-degree programmes in the future. JF indicates that:

It's harder to have two degrees to award. It's much easier to have a XH degree then spend a year here for a semester exchange or vice versa.

This is the same problem that Chinese institutions are facing, which is not an unsolvable problem, but one that needs to involve more communications and trust within the relationships (see China section in Chapter 4). Moreover, this problem also reflects cultural differences. In China, gaining degrees and certificates is the only way to prove one's ability for finding jobs in a competitive market. This is one

of the reasons why Chinese institutions are enthusiastic to have joint honours or two-degree awards for their students, as it is a way to maximise the benefits for the students. Whereas in Western culture, although degrees are also important, life experience, visits and internships are also highly valuable for one's career. Therefore, Chinese institutions and students would expect more than just visits or exchange experiences, especially when they need to spend a whole year abroad.

5.3.3.5. The tendency of initiatives

It was interesting to discover that two participants believe that in 2020, there is a decreasing tendency for Chinese students to study abroad compared to 20 years ago. JF states that:

Another thing that Western institutions need to realise is that China has gone through several generations of sending people to Julliard, Menhaden, RCM. It doesn't have to do that anymore. It can grow its own musicians, its own masters on its own. It has its own eco-system. I think that's good, it makes it a much more level-playing field. And then the conversation should be.... well, why *these* institution partnerships, what would this small number of students gain from going back and forth, rather than everyone going to the West and then coming back. That's the change.

Similarly, LM mentioned there has been a huge change over the last ten years:

From what I've seen over the last 10 years, there's been a huge change in how music and music education is seen in China. When I started 10 years ago, it was all about: let's get out of here, we have to go to Europe to study because that's the only place that we can get good degrees and, you know, we can come back and be teachers, be performers and whatever. And this is still the case, but at the same time, Chinese institutions are really up there with the best ones in the rest of the world. So you can now get a very good education in China, a very good music education in the conservatoires, and many of... because of the investments, that have been made by the government in China in the past ten years in music, music auditoriums, theatre, operas... every city has an opera theatre. They are like mushrooms; they're coming up everywhere. Because all of that, plus the quality of teaching, a lot of our students will end up, and already are working and performing in China, and even studying in China. So, I mean we have three students that are going next week with one of our teachers to ZGY to spend a month and half there, and get lessons there, and doing concerts and coming back in December. But other school do things for longer, a number of our students got jobs in varies orchestras in China... it's

would be unthinkable ten years ago, completely unthinkable. No one would've said why should I go to China, I mean I am a musician, and I have a career here, but China now really is a strong player, not only in terms of offering opportunities for performers, also expanding to audiences. What is fantastic is that audiences are very enthusiastic in China, and you get a lot of opportunities for performers. So this is one of the great changes that I have seen over these ten years in my travels to China.

These opinions about how China has changed suggest three things. Firstly, Chinese institutions are growing iteratively with support from the education ministry, local government, and CCP policies (see Chapter 4). In terms of selecting partners all over the world, Chinese institutions will become more and more selective, as they continue to develop themselves in both facilities and human resources with existing international partners (see Chapter 4). At the same time, UK institutions will have a more competitive environment with other UK or top institutions in the world. Secondly, the decreasing demand for studying abroad would, to a large extent, reduce the number of international students for most UK HE institutions, which may cause comparatively huge pressure on the replacement of financial resources. Finally, it might directly affect the resource reorganisation in the whole higher education industry in the UK. This indicates an opportunity for UK institutions to re-position themselves in their working relationships with Chinese institutions, which require more systematic, theoretical, and strategic institutional propositions.

5.4. *Guanxi*

In comparison with the Chinese case studies, UK participants understandably knew less about *guanxi* in general. However, they do have different levels of understanding *guanxi*. LM from BHY has a relatively good understanding of *guanxi*. BHY recruited a China manager in 2014, and the manager is a Chinese native who is based in Beijing. The manager role is responsible for liaising existing

relationships, developing potential new partnerships, and assisting the senior management team when they visit China. The manager also provides consultancy on culture and social manners on a daily basis. At the same time, LM himself and the principal have learnt the way of establishing relationships in China from a cultural perspective through their rich experiences.

JF at SHY is less aware of *guanxi* compared to BHY but is willing to learn more in order to develop sustainable relationships with their Chinese partners. LE from DMDY has the best theoretical knowledge regarding *guanxi* compared to other two participants. He has managed to use *guanxi* for business and institutional relationships in China. The failure of co-operation in DMDY in *guanxi* terms, might be because of the limitation that *guanxi* has not been fully understood. The following section discusses *guanxi* in the relationships from the Western perspectives in detail.

5.4.1. Definition of *guanxi*

There are two characteristics of *guanxi*³⁰ that the UK interviews highlighted. First of all, it is seen as a personal relationship, which could provide access for networks. Secondly, it is viewed as helping to make connections and agreements for business purposes. LM from BHY states that:

I guess it's just knowing the right people. I mean, it's all getting the right people to like you, and respect you, and then being a part of the network where we all understand each other, more or less. And we're happy to work together, because we feel the others in the same network also proved this, and we're all kind of supporting each other. That's the way I read it. Yes... I've seen many examples of this absolutely.

Having relationships with the 'right people' is the starting point of how LM looks at

³⁰ *Guanxi* has been explained both in the literature review, and the data collection section (China part), which will not be given unnecessary details in this section.

guanxi. These relationships are the keys in his networks and are the basis for co-operation. The 'right people' presumably refers to the top people in Chinese institutions based on the Chinese social hierarchy and the data from Chapter 3.

LE from DMDY has similar views, stating his belief that *guanxi* is about:

Making connections and agreements, through networking and relationships, asking for and doing favours, ideally not involving money. Introducing someone into the network. Exchange support, business, and friendship interests. Personal relationships. For me it's easy. *Guanxi* does not mean anything, unless something really happens.

It is interesting to note that LE noted *guanxi*'s value as conditional. He believes existence of *guanxi* might does not necessarily mean anything unless business or some other purpose has been conducted or arranged. This is a new dimension for examining *guanxi*. In other words, how *guanxi* is used is more important than its existence. From LE's understanding, he also recognises *guanxi* not only as personal relationships, but also as a tool for networking and business purposes. *Guanxi* must also be responsible for results in business, or else he will see the *guanxi* as invalid. As we discussed in the previous sections, international co-operation faces multiple intersecting problems, such as political restrictions, environmental uncertainty, and cannot simply rely on good relationships. In this case, the way that LE analyses *guanxi* indicates that, to some extent, LE might have been overly dependent on the influence of *guanxi* in his co-operation, leading him to ignore other elements, such as ranking, and institutional reputation.

JF from SHY did not know the word '*guanxi*'. In this section of the interview, a briefing was given, and questions were asked using terms that he is familiar with, such as 'personal relationship' and 'trust'. He believes personal relationships definitely exist in the collaborations, not only with China, but also with European and American institutions as well. He also mentioned that people invest more time

and resources when the relationship is in a good condition. In previous sections, we have discussed that personal relationships exist in business everywhere, but Chinese *guanxi* formulates a specific standardised system for practical usage; JF confirmed this notion.

5.4.2. Acceptance of *guanxi*'s existence and its utilisation

Although most interviewees were uncertain about the specific meanings of *guanxi*, they all confirmed they had used it in some extent in their relationships in China. LM provided an example to explain that he was invited into an exclusive network that should be recognised as *guanxi*:

Well, because I think that there is a real desire from the people in China to actually, when I visit, to host me... in a nice way...making sure that the things we want to achieve are possible... creating a lot of opportunities to develop new things. I mean I remember this summer I went to visit both the SHMY, and the SHXY, because we were discussing the new project. And I didn't know what was going to happen, I didn't know if it was a schedule. But when we arrived, I've been treated really well, that was a real sense of... let's have some meetings, let's visit these facilities, we organised this nice performance for you, and then we can have dinner with performers... you know... it's also the sense of being taken, and being part of the family in a way, being looked after very well, being shown the things that normally people don't like to show. You know... come to see our new opera house, it's still under construction, you have to put a hard hat on, you cannot take pictures because no one knows about this, but I want to show it to you. It's nice, it feels quite exclusive. I'm sure there is a lot of *guanxi* goes on behind the things I don't know anything about.

However, when I asked him if he used *guanxi*, he was uncertain about the answer:

I don't know. You tell me. I don't know how you go about using *guanxi*, I think I should probably speak Chinese to do proper *guanxi*. But yes... I don't know. If *guanxi* is talking about a friend to know another friend, then yes. But you know, I'm Italian, so I think... the business in Italy is much more personal than here in the UK. So again [there are things like] dinners, having a friendship-relationship, not just a business-relationship. Here in the UK, you can do business with people you don't know anything about, you just know about their work, and it's all fine. And everyone is happy. But in Italy and in China, it's much more than that, it's much more personal.

This is an important perspective about *guanxi* usage. The word *guanxi* may not

exist in Italy, but there are similar social behaviors of conducting relationships and co-operation according to LM. The understanding of *guanxi* in the West cannot be generalised as one perspective, different cultural backgrounds might react differently in *guanxi* relationships. JF from BHY explains that he used his personal relationships that he had setup while working in an American institution to develop links for his current institution:

Well. I would say in China, definitely. In other words, I've tried, but failed. For instance, at WHY, which was another place I visited, I was made a distinguished visiting professor there when I was at PB, my former institution. So I tried to use that (the connection) when I got here. I was trying to say: remember me? I gave you a keynotes speech, and I was a distinguished professor, and I didn't hear anything back. So it doesn't always work.

When I asked him about the details, he confirmed that he wrote a letter to a new president that they had never met before. Therefore, although he is a visiting professor at WHY, he has no relationship with the new president. This is a case of *guanxi* mobility resulting in failure due to a lack of institutional *guanxi* transformation. Interests from the top people in Chinese institutions are also essential for establishing relationships. Also, institutional rankings and reputation could be the important criteria for Chinese institutions or leaders to choose their overseas partners. In this case, he has moved from a better ranking institution to a relatively lower ranking institution, which might be another reason for the failure of institutional *guanxi* transformation.

LE stresses that *guanxi* has to be used in China, and he has used it for all of his businesses:

Yes, existence. It is the main way of developing relationship. Although I saw a video on the BBC about how in online sales *guanxi* is not needed. I am not sure about this. In higher educational institutions, reputation of the university is the number one part, or reputation of a person, their fame, their personality, all of that is part of *guanxi*. In the beginning, you learn slowly... there is no other way,

you have to go through *guanxi*. It has worked out in TJ. We have to know each other better. The more communication through *guanxi*, the more efficiency will be for co-operation. But young [people] generally [are] different. Young Chinese are more aware of their equal opportunities. In the West, it is the same.

Although he believes that *guanxi* is a necessary and sufficient condition for co-operation in China, he suggests a tendency towards *guanxi* gradually growing weaker among the younger generation. This opinion confirmed an assumption from the literature that *guanxi* has weakened in China. However, the data from the quantitative analysis has rejected this assumption, as *guanxi* usage has no correlation with the age of the international officers that participated in this study (see Chapter 3).

5.4.3. Benefits of *guanxi*

Participants confirm that *guanxi* mainly has benefits towards international co-operations. LE from DMDY believes that:

In theory, there is no disadvantage. Practically, *guanxi* got me to agreements, but not to co-operation. I'm interested to see how *guanxi* develops in time. One thing I've noticed is that I have received more special gifts when they ask for more important favours. If you can communicate, you know it.

This explains that *guanxi* has its own limitations. Good *guanxi* could help set up relationships and facilitate the willingness of co-operation for both institutions; but it might not be as deeply involved as co-operation develops and grows deeper. Therefore, *guanxi* cannot be over-relied upon during co-operation. Also, LE indicated a favour exchange element of *guanxi* in his relationships, which confirmed the result from Chapter 3 that Chinese participants send gifts to their partners when partners do what was agreed (see Chapter 3).

LM from BHY indicates that *guanxi* increases the efficiency of co-operation, but the exclusive network that *guanxi* creates is not equal for others:

Of course it has benefits. But we know the disadvantage of *guanxi* is that only certain people are benefited, because they are in the circle, they are... and other people are equally valued, but they're just not considered, because they are not friends, so that's a bad thing. The good thing is that you can get things done really quickly, which is... you know... that is something that I really appreciate. Sometimes it cuts through the bureaucracy, it cuts through everything. You get really big decisions made quite quickly.

From a Western point of view, an exclusive network can be considered unfair for other people who are not in *guanxi* networks. For Chinese delegations, *guanxi* provides security for trust that is the key to conducting relationships or co-operation. Chinese participants indicated a 'middle person' system (see Chapter 4) that is a method of *guanxi* usage in practice, and a very Chinese way of building up business, which might sound unfair for others, but ultimately serves as a guarantor for the success of relationships, business, and co-operation.

5.4.4. Willingness to use *guanxi*

The willingness to use *guanxi* is positively correlated with their views. They all agree that they will use *guanxi* in their Chinese co-operations.

LM from BHY says that:

Yes, I guess so. Yes. Well, because music is quite a small world anyway. Most people with an important position in China will know each other. So I guess if you have an opportunity to be a part of the network, you'll use it. If I need to meet someone else, and I know they knew someone that I know, of course I will make the connection and tell them. So yes. We are doing a big phase for the next two or three years, so we will do a lot with China, so I'm pretty sure that would happen a lot.

The opinion that LM indicated is the way he uses *guanxi* to setup networks in China, as he mentioned early that *guanxi* creates efficiency. However, he did not mention that *guanxi* would potentially link with anything after the relationship has been setup. Therefore, it could be understood that *guanxi* is only involved significantly in the surface level of his co-operation with Chinese institutions.

LE from DMDY suggests that:

I will use *guanxi*, as it is quite normal to have business relationships that are also friendships, even in the West. Not as formally or culturally, but through personal interactions in the West. Also *guanxi* is unique for real co-operation. I think it's the word 'synergy'. This is what collaboration is. *Guanxi* was originally created for business, and it's about money. Success for the arts is art and knowledge and also about money. But I am not interested in money. Duvet PhD, money go to two parties, students get the meal.

JF from BHY explains that:

Oh, sure. I mean... there've been a number of things that I've been engaging in that don't come through from normal missions. But I still enjoy the process. So I know the Dean of the SZDX music department, who is now running the Nanjing Performing Arts Center. He wanted a big relationship, he invited me, we started something. But he got too busy with making Nanjing the performing arts center. And that doesn't mean my visit was wasted. I really enjoyed seeing the city of Suzhou, seeing the amazing Nanjing buildings, but it just reached a bit of a dead end. Some of the conversations we've had with Beijing, ZYXY wanted a big relationship with us. They want us to create a Master's degree for them in Musical Theater. Similar to what the GH School did for them in the drama course. But we just didn't have the resources to buy a building and make it happen. So we just have to say 'sorry, we can't do that, we're willing to start smaller'. So we always look for possible ideas but it has to be cognisant of what we can feasibly do as a small institution.

From this conversation, JF suggested a positive opinion towards usage of *guanxi*.

However, the reason why SHY has not yet developed a big network in China is due to a conflict of interests. Chinese institutions ask for big creative projects, such as redesigned MA courses, while at SHY, JF would prefer to build smaller projects due to the lack of resources for larger scale undertakings. The lack of knowledge about *guanxi* does not stop SHY having relationships in China, but the various conflicts of interests do not give SHY much space to grow their co-operations with Chinese institutions.

In conclusion, UK participants hold positive opinions towards *guanxi*. Although they did not completely understand the definition or deeper connotations, it does not stop them being able to identify *guanxi* and discuss their experiences of it

during pervious collaborations with Chinese institutions, and it does not stop them actively using *guanxi* as a tool that contributes to their international strategy for China. On the one hand, *guanxi* works particularly well in relationship setup. On the other hand, *guanxi* has its limitations. Relationships and co-operation still face problems stemming from politics, cultural bias, and environmental uncertainties. Most importantly, based on the data of this research, *guanxi* could end up dominating future UK-China co-operation, as Chinese people traditionally use it and UK participants are also willing to use it. These findings provide the foundation for the next chapter: how *guanxi* and *dispositif* formulates a theoretical framework for UK-China co-operation.

Chapter 6: Theoretical analysis

6.1. *Dispositif* and discourse

The distinction between discourse and *dispositif* was introduced in the literature review (see Chapter 1, p.36-37). In summary, Foucault (1997) indicates that discourse is located within epistemology, which generates rules and histories via spoken and written text through different languages and knowledge. Understanding the nature of both discourse and *dispositif* is necessary, and here I will propose methods for understanding the formation of international relationships through applications of Foucault's concept of *dispositif*.

Firstly, it is necessary to highlight the differences between *discourse and dispositif*.

Garcia Landa (2014) explains:

Foucault wants to treat discourses as discontinuous phenomena; his thought is opposed to the notion of a unity in works... As can be seen in Foucault's History of Sexuality, discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces power structures, but also undermines and exposes them, makes them fragile and opens up the possibility of frustrating the designs of power.

Garcia Landa (2014, p.11)

According to Foucault (1997) discourse is used to interpret the world through knowledge, and this is developed through specific understanding of the meaning of words. At the same time, discourse formulates power through the discontinuity of histories. The study of discourse has been used in international relations (Milliken, 1999), politics (Renwick, and Cao, 1999), and many other Foucauldians' research (Sawicki, 1991).

Dispositif is a mechanism that contains words, text (discourse), and non-discursive practice (natural activities and the activities that people conduct accordingly) (Deleuze, 1992), Foucault, in *Discipline and Punish*, and *The History*

of Sexuality defined *dispositif* as ‘historically specific totalities of discourse and practices’ (Peltonen, 2004, p.206), a phenomenon that encompasses far more than just discourse. *Dispositif* is sometimes translated into English, most commonly as ‘apparatus’, but many researchers feel that there are no English words sufficient enough to accurately represent the full connotations of *dispositif* (Paech, 2015). Therefore, it is possible that undue focus has been placed on discourse, rather than *dispositif*, in philosophical research due to the absence of a sufficiently correlating anglophone concept of ‘*dispositif*’, as illustrated by (Arribas-Ayllon, and Walkerdine, 2008; Sharp, and Richardson, 2001; and Waitt, 2010).

The concept of *dispositif* concerns the integration of societies with cultures, politics and human behaviour. In this study, the nature of international co-operation not only involves discourses and related knowledge, but also requires considerations of practice. For instance, joint academic programmes, conferences, and concerts conducted by co-operative institutions are not just written words or oral agreements; they are art forms themselves representing the connections established by these institutions. Therefore, I assert that *dispositif* is closer to the reality for UK-China co-operation from a pragmatic perspective that ‘focuses on the role knowledge plays as a conceptual tool in professional inquiry processes’ (Worrenm, Moore and Elliott, 2002, p.1229). *Dispositif* concerns the structural relationships between items of knowledge, and reflections of knowledge in the practice, rather than the dialogue that exists around them. As such, it is an ideal tool to aid the understanding of international relationship formation, as I will demonstrate.

Academic literature has widely established that Chinese society is rooted in

guanxi, with clear systems of social hierarchy and moral reactions rooted in Confucian culture that are vastly different to UK society (which we shall refer to as a Western-culture dominated society) (see Chapter 1, p. 26). The literature (see Chapter 1) also indicates that *guanxi* has weakened in China. However, both the qualitative and quantitative data established that *guanxi* still plays an important role in China, especially in the area of international co-operation (see Chapter 3, 4, and 5). Miscommunication, lack of communication, and the sudden abandonment of unfinished projects are all common issues that arise during international co-operation, but this can often be chalked up to a lack of understanding about cultural differences and the role of *guanxi* within a Chinese cultural context.

Let us take a moment to review the nature of *guanxi* from the empirical data. The results in Chapter 3 indicate that *guanxi* influences relationships between UK and Chinese partnerships, and further influences the success rate of their individual collaborations. *Guanxi* elements – credit, reciprocity, and empathy – were positively correlated, which helps establish the fundamental element of co-operation – trust. The results from Chapter 4 show that Chinese interviewees believe there are significant advantages to using *guanxi* during co-operation³¹. The UK interviews (Chapter 5) demonstrated that they all used networking systems for their business³², which in *guanxi* terms means they gained access to an exclusive network of top-level music institutions in China and gained trust in methods that align with the *guanxi* system. Although they do not go as far as to explain *guanxi* completely, it is clear that some form of *guanxi* does not only exist

³¹ Two of them believe that *guanxi* is the only way to establish relationships and international co-operation.

³² One of the participants used *guanxi* successfully creating an opening opportunity to approach the top-level music institutions; the other two participants illustrate the importance of personal relationships and trust in the co-operation.

in the international co-operation - it plays quite a large role (see more details in the Culture section). Therefore, *guanxi* within UK-China co-operation can be thought of as a structural element within the concept of *dispositif*. Thinking about the totality (*dispositif*) of different (and often contradictory) social circumstances within international co-operation, it is imperative to discuss the combination of the cultural concept of *guanxi* and the totality of societies (*dispositif*) to accurately explain these collaboration techniques, and how they can help or strengthen relations in international co-operation (see more details in the *guanxi dispositif* section).

Moreover, based on my research questions (see chapter 2), we not only observed how practitioners conduct their co-operation and relationships, but also how *guanxi* exists in their co-operation and relationships, whether naturally or artificially, in order to improve the success rate of UK-China co-operation. This requires an in-depth analysis of *guanxi*, *dispositif* and discourse. Furthermore, the activities that participants have engaged in or naturally formulated can be detected from those discourses. The contradictions and similarities between their epistemological understanding – what they think, and what we can determine to be reality – will allow us to assess how things have been done and consequently potentially provide a clue for where we can take UK-China co-operation in the arts, or at least within these higher education institutions. *Guanxi*, as a Chinese cultural concept, is a strong indicator of cultural understanding and moral reactions within a society (see more details in later sections). These consist of the *dispositif* of the co-operation between these two countries.

According to Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 'historical descriptions are necessarily ordered by the present state of knowledge, they increase with every

transformation and never cease' (Foucault, 1997, p.5). Alongside the continuity of history, Foucault and other researchers indicate that there is a concept of discontinuity which raises questions of procedure and theoretical problems in all-historical analysis. These theoretical problems are located in different fields of ideas, knowledge and so on.

The use of concepts of discontinuity, rupture, threshold, limit, series and transformation present all historical analysis not only with questions of procedure, but with theoretical problems... these theoretical problems too will be examined only in a particular field: in those disciplines – so unsure of their frontiers, and so vague in content – that we call the history of ideas, or of thought, or of science, or of knowledge.

(Foucault, 1997, p.21).

Therefore, we look for 'wrongs' from the discontinuity, ruptures of history in every discipline. We study the 'wrongs', modify the discourse in those disciplines, and become infinitely closer to their history of ideas, thoughts, science, and knowledge. Similarly, in the disciplines of higher education, international relations and the arts, the literature and empirical data all demonstrate there are problems (wrongs) in the actual international co-operation.

These problems ('wrongs') stem from the discontinuity in the history of UK-China international co-operation, which have been discussed empirically in the previous chapters (see Chapter 3, 4, and 5). Although international cooperation is dominated by business, the approach to constructing relationships in higher education is highly personal. Institutions lack a framework to follow, from governments or national bodies under which collaboration can be constructed. International co-operators might not know what processes to follow to establish or strengthen their relationships, and what taboos to avoid so as not to damage UK-China co-operation in the arts – a framework, such as the one proposed in this thesis, is clearly necessary. Misunderstandings, attitudes and behaviours

towards the differences between cultures, policies, and human behaviours in these two countries can also influence starting conditions for international cooperation. As the prospects of cultural and political obligations are difficult to accurately measure (see more details in the section of discourse/culture), Foucault's philosophy provides a space of discontinuity which can potentially allow us an opportunity to question the procedures of collaboration and find solutions to theoretical problems of *guanxi* through the use of *dispositif* as an analytical concept.

6.2. *Guanxi Dispositif*

So, what is *guanxi*? *Guanxi* is a social concept unique to Chinese culture (Gold, Guthrie, and Wank, 2002). According to Foucauldian's study, it is a system that forms objective activities and subjective real behaviours in society (Barnett 1999). This leads to some additional questions: does culture represent the totality of a society to guide policymaking as well as private and interpersonal reactions? Or is it a political product that works as a force for governmentality? In order to answer these questions, we must first explain how culture(s) are located in a nation, a society, and the influence of culture both within a society and cross-societies.

Sterne (2002) indicates that since the 1980s, Foucault's writing on governmentality to rethink the relationship between intellectuals in the humanities and liberal (or neoliberal) states has been used in cultural policy studies. According to Barnett (1999) culture is conceptualized in terms of historically specific practices for the transformation of the behaviour and conduct of individuals and collective populations (p.370)' in the cultural-policy studies' paradigm in Australia during the late 1980s and 1990s. Barnett also stresses that

culture being closely tied to a particular understanding of policy is a broadly Foucauldian perspective. In explaining this, Bennett (1989) indicates that culture can be understood as ‘the institutions, symbol systems, and forms of regulation and training responsible for forming, maintaining, and/or changing the mental and behavioural attributes of populations (p.10)’. In the relation to a particular understanding of policy, policy should be recognised as ‘the organizational principles and objective governing of the activities of those agencies – governmental and private – active in the sphere of culture’ (p.10). Which means culture is the system of societies, which provides forms of governmental policymaking and its related activities. The subjective understandings of cultures from a human behavioural standpoint formulate reactions and responses to policy. However, some research is required to clarify ‘the theoretical understanding of culture as a product of governmental practices and technologies, which aim to endow citizens with specific ‘nationalised attributes’ (Barnett, 1999). This statement might not be pragmatic for Asian countries that share the same cultural roots. Historically, Confucianism has been widely shared across East Asia, in countries such as China, South Korea and Japan (Kim and Park, 2003; Kim, 2009). Also, culture has “disjuncture”, with Foucault observing from the 1980s that multiple cultures exist within one nation even when citizens share one standard culture (Barnett, 1999). Therefore, culture is not a product of governmental practices; it is a system to guide governmental practice and social behaviours.

Guanxi is the cultural code in China, which guides human behaviour towards culture and policies in Chinese society. The main factor of international co-operation is people, and how they organise and respond. Furthermore, the arts are a very unique and personalised discipline, which require the creativity and

innovation of both individuals and various initiatives. This characteristic makes the arts vivid, but also difficult to standardize. Human behaviour becomes increasingly significant when discussing international co-operation in the arts. Moreover, the purposes of conducting international co-operation from China are more culturally dominated, which provides a unique place for *guanxi* to fit in. *Guanxi* can be recognised as the knowledge of common sense from a cultural society to guide non-discursive formation of ideas and relationships. Therefore, taking *guanxi* into consideration for the study of *dispositif* in international co-operation is a scholarly imperative.

In this study, *guanxi* links communications and co-operation (through non-discursive practice, such as meetings, travel, and the resource development of joint programmes). This can be analysed through the concept of *guanxi dispositif*, which I am introducing to help decode the relationship between these component parts.

Guanxi dispositif is a discursive power apparatus that transforms symbolic differences constructed by rankings and has an international impact on material capital and cultural cognition. It is an iterative system that transforms the symbolic power of rankings into international impacts on resources for the UK institutions, and into cultural recognition for the Chinese institutions.

6.2.1. Theoretical model of *guanxi dispositif*

Guanxi dispositif (GD) can be thought of as including four stages of benefits and two dimensions of development. These benefits range from the surface level to those which are apparent only after continued development: stabilisation, ranks, magnification, and concentration, respectively (see below for details). The two

dimensions represent the quality and quantity of co-operation (see details in section 2.3). These benefits and dimensions formulate the frame of the model, and dimensions of *guanxi* identified important roles to help institutions complete their goals and receive strategic benefits.

6.2.2. Conceptualised benefits of *guanxi dispositif*

Drawn from evidence collected in the case studies, I propose that there are four stages of benefits created by *guanxi dispositif*.

Stabilisation, is the first stage of every relationship, which provides a good communication channel for collaborations. Without a stable communication channel, relationships would cease due to potential risks, as all participants stressed that communication is one of the key elements for co-operation. With good conditions of communications, such as frequent annual visits, and infrequent staff changes in key positions, collaborations could start to be conducted. **Ranks** are the symbolic power representing the quality of institutions. Simultaneously, good standards of stable relationships and co-operation might increase the position in ranking systems like league tables, as internationalisation is one of the criteria in these ranking systems (see chapter 1, p.12-13). These rankings further influence the **magnification** of institutions in two ways: establishing more practical and good-quality co-operations, and the possibility to upgrade institutional resources, both physical infrastructure and staff, such as recruiting more staff with overseas backgrounds (software) and purchasing better quality digital media system in classrooms. It is where symbolic power starts to transform into material capital, as institutions with high-ranking positions could potentially locate more funding for research and teaching purposes in the UK, and

famous institutions with internationalisation in China will receive more support from central or local governments. *Concentration* is the final stage of the loop, in which institutions could actualise their propositions for international co-operation.

According to the correlations tested (See Chapter 3), it was detected that elements of *guanxi* strengthen partnerships between UK and Chinese HEIs. Therefore, it not only requires people to have a working knowledge of *guanxi*, but also to understand the actions that triggered accordingly would benefit relationships, in order to stabilise the co-operation.

For example, the more that is known about one of the *guanxi* elements, reciprocity, is that the more favour exchanges you do, the more credit you earn for your institutions, which could help in building trust for partnerships (see Chapter 3). The more knowledge that Western institutions have about reciprocity, the more understanding they could have about how the system works in terms of relationship setup with Chinese partners, but this is difficult to measure in empirical terms. Institutions need to begin implementing actions based on *guanxi* roles to solidify relationships. For example, sending greeting cards, gift exchanges, and, particularly in these difficult times, sending pandemic essentials, for examples. these actions help actualise reciprocity and further stabilizes partnerships, and having firm (personal or institutional) relationships are essential for further business negotiations. Therefore, we can infer that *guanxi dispositif* helps to increase the success rate of international co-operation and increases the efficiency of individual collaborations. However, this is just a theoretical understanding of how the system works, and this model needs to be tested in future studies.

Ranks – Institutional rankings are heavily influenced by internationalization

processes. After stabilisation, as a tool, achieves sustainable high-quality relationships, *guanxi dispositif* will further increase the reputation of institutions bilaterally, even though it presents in different system, it still increases the abilities to generate and increase the ranking potentially. According to China and Government (2018)³³, internationalisation is not part of the formal criteria for evaluating institutional performance. However, one of the participating institutions has increased in ranking from second place to first following a sustained period of developing international co-operation. Simultaneously, internationalisation is a ranking criterion in the West (See Chapter 1, p.12-13), which further suggests the viability of internationalisation as an appropriate measure of institutional success. The relationship between ranking, internationalization, and *guanxi dispositif* is as follows: *guanxi dispositif* strengthens international relationships, which in turn strengthens internationalisation figures for any given institution, thereby increasing the position of that institution in the ranking tables.

Moreover, Rankings represent the symbolic power of an organization. For example, Western interview participants confirmed that they now only work with C9 (the nine Conservatories in China), as these nine music conservatories represent the top-level musical institutions in China³⁴. Simultaneously, Chinese institutions will be more inclined to accept or make co-operation proposals with high-ranking institutions, taking into account league tables from QS and *The Times*. The data provides evidence for the symbolic power of ranking in the initial steps when it comes to establishing international cooperation. However, it is worth noting that *guanxi* influences might be prioritised over ranking when setting up

³³ Economic Daily, (2018). Subject evaluation requires Chinese standards, *The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China*. [Online] Accessed on 12 September 202. http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2018-01/02/content_5252345.htm

³⁴ Until September 2020, there are 11 conservatories in China, and the 12th conservatory (Shenzhen Conservatory of Music) is on the way.

relationships, as the data shows that trust is the most fundamental element for establishing these relationships, and participants confirmed that they relied on trust more than rankings for new relationships.

Magnification – Rankings contribute to iterative growth processes and formulate the magnification of the university itself in an iterative growing process. For instance, institutions with active international co-operations can attract students with higher entry qualifications. Additionally, this can establish a wider platform for staff to illustrate their performance and research in a global context. Three Chinese participants all confirmed the benefits of international co-operation in terms of institutional and national impact. To benefit from this magnification, a deep level of engagement with relationship formation is required to build a channel for students and staff to communicate with their overseas partners. In other words, it takes more than just stabilised relationships to satisfy this requirement; official collaborations and programmes will be needed to identify the depth of engagement, which requires, in *guanxi* terms, good personal relationships with high-ranking members of partner institutions, more favour exchanges to build credits, and empathy, which will facilitate and lay the groundwork for any future actions. Therefore, if we take trust as the fundamental element for relationship setup, the triangulation between reciprocity, credit, and empathy would potentially provide a linkage mechanism for a further engaged co-operative relationship, which is essential for magnification.

Concentration – this is the final stage of benefits from *guanxi dispositif*. Concentration permits organisations to formulate an eco-system which benefits not only themselves (as magnification does), but also benefits their partners, students, staff or even entire nations that are included in the eco-system. For

example, Western institutions would be able to get more funding support from REF, state or other funding bodies according to their assessments on evaluation systems after they upgrade themselves from the magnification stage. Also, the impact of internationalization might allow partner institutions to conduct research together; one of the UK participants is involved in joint research with Shanghai Drama and Theater, and the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, and they applied for funding from the Chinese government (research funding body). The results of international joint programmes and research would indicate wider international impact across a variety of different perspectives, the end result being a better department or institution internationally, similar to the eco-system that one of the UK institutions tried to build (see Chapter 5). Similarly, the international impact of increased Chinese cultural cognition would result in Chinese institutions receiving large amounts of support from local or national governments, with institutions being effectively remodeled by maintaining multiple international relationships. In terms of the role of *guanxi dispositif*, the trust in relationship stabilisation and the triangle mechanism (see Chapter 3) that functions in magnification both provide a direct link between these benefits and *guanxi*. The benefits of stabilisation, ranking and magnification are the conditions to build a quantifiable measure of benefit in the model of *guanxi dispositif*. In other words, *guanxi* exists indirectly within it – it does not rely on *guanxi* to achieve this stage of benefit, and it depends on the success of the other three stages of benefits.

6.2.3. Dimensions of *guanxi dispositif*

There are two dimensions within *guanxi dispositif*, which are the quantity and quality of international relationships. Quantity denotes the numbers of relationships that one institution has; whereas quality means the depth of

relationships that one institution can maintain with their partner institutions. Combining these dimensions with the important *guanxi* elements from the questionnaire (credit, reciprocity, and empathy), this study generates a model of *guanxi dispositif*, which I have named the GD model (See Figure 30.).

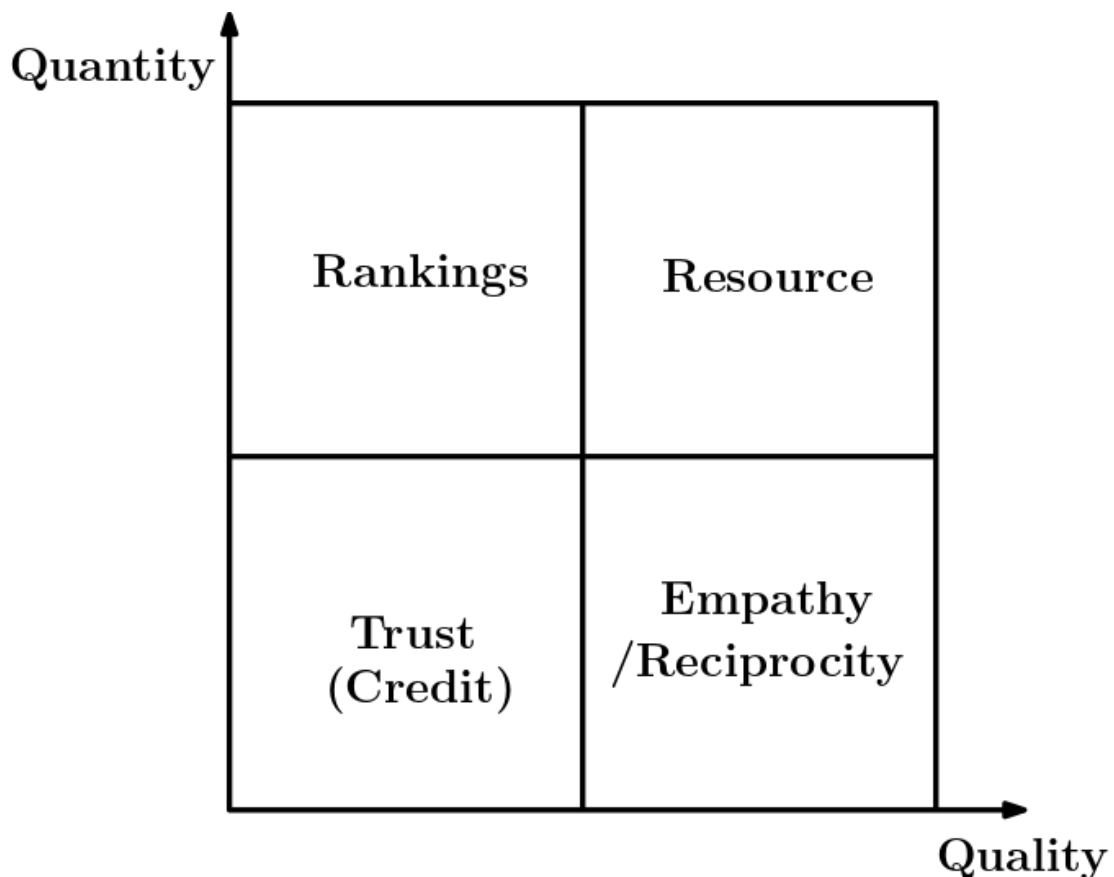


Figure 30 Theoretical framework of *Guanxi Dispositif*

Credit (*xinyong* ‘信用’) is one of the fundamental elements of *guanxi*, and institutions could begin their relationships by referring to this model. Higher rankings mean the quantity of institutional relationships will be naturally boosted, and further receive the benefits of stabilisation in this direction. Therefore, by prioritising quantity, institutions can obtain multiple stabilized relationships bolstered by *guanxi*-related trust and rankings (symbolic power), but nevertheless lack deep engagement. By focusing on (*xinyong*) as well as the other two elements of *guanxi* – empathy (*ganqing* ‘感情’) and reciprocity (*renqing* ‘人情’) -

relationships will potentially be able to provide deeper engagements between partner institutions. With this increased depth of relationships, institutions would reach the benefit of magnification. For example, the iterative upgrading system that one of the Chinese institutions tries to build might result positively in the phase of magnification (See Chapter 4).

With this combination of quantity and quality, institutions would reach the fourth stage of benefit – concentration, which requires a higher level of investment into both depth and quantity of relationships, which can be difficult for one institution to manage, especially in terms of time and human resources. From the GD model, we can tell that the elements of *guanxi* play their catalytic action in both directions accordingly, but do not play a significant role in this combination phase. Therefore, *guanxi* provides solid conditions and foundations for the combination phase but does not influence it directly. In order to reach this phase, the investment of time, resource, for instance, must be measured carefully, and this is undeniably a long-term process. However, Institutions do not necessarily have a wide range of relationships with multiple institutions, as well as deep collaborations in every individual relationship. For example, JF from SHY confirms that they would rather have small number of partners but have good-conditional relationships in depth, as they are a small institution that has limited capacity to build more international relationships (See Chapter 5).

This model does not denote any specific timespan, as the two dimensions represent the quantity and the depth of relationships. On the other hand, this model helps institutions save time in relationship setup and maintenance. Also, when one institution plans to achieve the combination phase in this model, it is undeniably more time consuming than the others. However, there is no way to

assess a specific time for how long an institution needs to spend in phase four, which could form the potential basis of a future study.

In summation, this is the model of *guanxi dispositf*, which could help institutions evaluate their current position in China-UK co-operation through an understanding of which stage in the process they have reached. This model can also help plan their international co-operation strategically according to their own propositions. However, how can we understand and utilise these elements to complete a concrete plan, and how can we further prove the satisfaction of their hypothesis for co-operation if those elements work in the relationships? That is what needs to be analysed in the following section – discourses. We know what our model is - now we have to find out how to use it and put it into practice.

6.3. Discourse

Foucault (1997) suggests that we must 'rid ourselves of a whole mass of notions, (p.21)', which, in its own way, diversifies the theme of continuity at a distance and through time – 'as if through the mediation of a medium of propagation – such defined unities as individuals, oeuvres, notions, or theories' (p.27) is based on a complex field of discourse. Moreover, 'once these immediate forms of continuity as suspended, an entire field is set free. A vast field, but one that can be defined nonetheless: this field is made up of the totality of all effective statements (whether spoken or written), in their dispersion as events and in the occurrence that is proper to them' (Foucault, 1997, p.26-27). Essentially, according to Foucault, the problems and theories that we need to explain in this study must go through a variety of discourses, in terms of both spoken or written statements. As the literature review presents, discourse is the knowledge base that helps understanding of international co-operation in the UK and China, and ways of

improving it from the perspective of human behaviours.

Following further with Foucault's idea of notions, unities, and the terminology of statement, he (1984) defines discourse as '... any group of statements which belongs to a single system of formation; thus, there could be a clinic discourse, an economic discourse, a discourse of the natural history, a psychiatric discourse...' (p.141) at the same time '... it is made up a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined' (p.153). In this sense, some criticism might be classified, as the scope of thematic discourses is complex though groups of statements: how does research define statements and limit its conditions in a single discourse; and how does research identify a discourse from related groups of statements? These are the problems that exist in the discontinuity of history. Therefore, the discursive formation (group of statements) is the key to explaining the discontinuity of histories. In this study, it extracts some key statements, which are governmentality and culture (cultural differences), power and knowledge. These are the areas which shall be discussed further below.

Foucault (1997) believes that the relationship between statements in the different kinds of technical, economic, social and political circumstances gives us freedom to underpin the interplay of the relations within and outside it.

'Relations between statements (even if the author is unaware of them; even if the statements do not have the same author; even if the authors were unaware of each other's existence); relations between groups of statements thus established (even if these groups do not possess the same formal level; even if they are not the locus of assignable exchange); relations between statements and groups of statements and events of a quite different kind (technical, economic, social, political). To reveal in all its purity the space in which discursive events are deployed is not to undertake to re-establish it in an isolation that nothing could overcome; it is not to close it upon itself; it is to leave oneself free to describe the interplay of relations within it and outside it'

(Foucault, 1997, p.29).

Data analysis (see Chapter 3, 4, and 5) shows inner connections and correlations between discourse and its statements of cultural differences, policy and regulation, communications and languages. This section explains the meanings and functions of these statements and their inner relationships in the research area. Therefore, we can analyse discourse from two sets of statements: governmentality/culture, and power/knowledge.

6.4. Governmentality and culture

6.4.1. Governmentality

Foucault wrote the book 'the History of Systems of Thought' in November 1969 at the College De France. Governmentality was presented as a part of the course of 'Security, Territory, Population' on 1 February 1978 (Foucault, 2007).

Governmentality concerns three ideas. Firstly, the ensemble of governmentality formed by:

Institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit very complex, power that has the population as its target, political economy as its major form of knowledge, and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instrument.

(Foucault, 2007, p.108)

Secondly, Foucault understands:

The tendency, the line of force, that for a long time, and throughout the West, has constantly led towards the pre-eminence over all other types of power – sovereignty, discipline, and so on – of the type of power that we can call 'government' and which has led to the development of a series of specific governmental apparatuses on the one hand, [and, on the other] to the development of a series of knowledges.

(Foucault, 2007, p.108)

Finally, Foucault thinks that this is how we should understand the process:

Or rather, the result of the process by which the state of justice of the Middle

Ages became the administrative state in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and was gradually 'governmentalized'.

(Foucault, 2007, p.108-109)

Professor Iver Neumann (2014)³⁵ explains that

governmentality is not the power to having people under your thumb, but having people as acting individuals, trying to orchestrate the way they think by suggesting things to them, socialising them into thinking this is the actual thing to do. It is that form of power – conduct the conducts, the orchestration of actions, the indirect way of making people do what they would not otherwise have done... The free will is a socially determined thing, and the governmentality is able to demonstrate this specific parts of, and techniques of that free will.

For the UK and China, things are necessarily different in terms of governmentality – China is a one-party state, whereas the UK has one governing party, and other incumbent parties. The power of governmentality in a one-party state tends to be different compared to multiple-party states. The governmentality in China is ultimately rooted in Confucianism, and Chinese people are more likely to abide by governmentality. Therefore, governmental influence and political changes are the priority and the absolute power for UK and China co-operation.

Barnett (1999) explains that government here is understood broadly as 'techniques and procedures for directing human behaviour' (Foucault, 1997, p.81, cited as Barnett, 1999). Barnett (1999) further explains that the administration of culture can be understood through various agencies and routinized practices of daily lives. In Barnett's view, government is the overall leading force in a broad sense, whereas culture is more individualised via different agencies, or as they are more commonly referred to, communities. This study demonstrates that there is a significant difference between the two countries in terms of the approaches taken by their respective governments when it comes to the arts, but also in terms

³⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UBpl7PwjzU>

of the ignorance and absence of protections for international co-operation regarding art in the higher education sector, especially in the West, which creates discontinuity for the history of international relations in the arts.

According to Foucault (1997),

‘governmentality’ implies the relationship of the self to itself, and I intend this concept of ‘governmentality’ to cover the whole range of practice that constitute, define, organize, and instrumentalise the strategies that individuals in their freedom can use in dealing with each other.

(Foucault, 1997, p.300)

Power is predicated on freedom: ‘power relations are only possible in so far as the subject is free’ (p.292 cited as Barnett, 1999, p.383). Therefore, governmentality formulates strategies that individuals can employ in dealing with each other within the scope of their freedom. At present, the arts are an established discipline in most higher education sectors. The previous chapter established that the arts are highly promoted in China within their governmental policies. For example, since 2016, the Chinese Scholarship Council (CSC) has offered a special initiative for artistic talent. The CSC supplies full scholarships for candidates in the arts for Masters’, PhDs studies, and visiting projects. Candidates (current students and staff) can choose overseas universities and countries by themselves and apply for the scholarship via their universities³⁶. Students are well supported³⁷, and there are hundreds of thousands of arts students funded by CSC every year.

In China, policies transmit quickly through the institutional framework. In other

³⁶ The official website of Chinese Scholarship Council:
<https://www.csc.edu.cn/search?k=%D2%D5%CA%F5%C0%E0%C8%CB%B2%C5%C5%E0%D1%F8%CC%D8%B1%F0%CF%EE%C4%BF>

³⁷ there was one student who has received 3820,000 RMB (equals 429,213 GBP) for his masters and PhD study in 2017³⁷

words, the Chinese government provides a broad goal (in this case promoting the arts) and the funding bodies and institutions respond to the policies accordingly. There is room for a degree of individual development, but all towards the same goal. For example, the Global Music Education League (GMEL) was founded in Beijing in 2017 and received financial support from the local government. Vice President Liu Yandong participated in all the meetings, meeting with Heads of Music from all over the world, and personally stressed the importance of music in China, as well as an appreciation for the development of music education³⁸. Those promotions in the arts were the result of autonomous actions from educational institutions stemming from government policies, and in turn the government supported the project by participating in meetings, which indicates that political power is linked to arts-related policies in China and is a demonstration of a good example of policy interpretation from educational perspectives for the rest of China.

In the UK, governmentality has resulted in a marginalisation of the arts in HE sectors. *BBC News* indicated that the number of A-level entries in arts subjects has reduced by 13,000, a reduction of 17% since 2014³⁹, which might be caused by the reduction of arts subjects in GCSEs. Jon Andrews, deputy head of research at the Education Policy Institute, stated that ‘recent changes in school performance measures in England have pushed students away from arts subjects, in favour of ones the government wants prioritised’. These prioritised subjects include Progress 8 and the linked English Baccalaureate (EBass) established by the Department of Education in 2010⁴⁰. Harvey (2016) indicates that there was a

³⁸ Chinese official online news – *Renmin News*: <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n1/2017/0912/c64094-29528945.html>

³⁹ BBC News (2019): <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-45171371>

⁴⁰ Policy papers from the Department of Education 2010: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-importance-of-teaching-the-schools-white-paper-2010>

significant funding reduction for arts and culture since 2008, and that every year has seen a decrease in funding for the arts. 'According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, there was a 20 per cent reduction in spending by local authorities in England between 2009/10 and 2014/15' (p.7). These changes to exams and funding bodies have direct consequences in the education and development of the arts in the UK, which has been guided by the government policies.

According to the research from Tencent Research Institute⁴¹, digital media and the arts are parts of Chinese culture that have been promoted globally. Since the last decade, China has stressed methods of increasing soft power promotion (which will have more details in the Culture section). Nanse (2015) explains that this soft power⁴² consists of three sets of power, which are political power, cultural and educational power, and diplomatic power. With the guidance of political power, the arts in the HE sector represent cultural and educational power, a type of soft power directed at enhancing international prestige of Chinese national identity. For example, Global Music Education League (GMEL) represents the Chinese government under the 'One Belt, One Road' scheme to discuss co-operation with institutions from more than 30 countries including South Korea, Russia, Italy, for examples⁴³. The promotion of the arts in China provides a free-will space for arts institutions to grow, and the status held by the arts also bestows value on the contributions the arts make towards China's main political strategies. This interpretation, in terms of power relationships, seeks to promote the arts as a

⁴¹ Tencent Research Institute (2019), the report of 2019 Chinese Digital Culture Overseas Annual Observation. <https://tisi.org/10906>

⁴² Nanse (2015) shows that Professor Joseph Nye from the Harvard University summarised soft power as 'a country's ability to attract others through ideas, and values and ideologies. This kind of power resembles to formless power, such as culture, ideology and the social system' (p.32).

⁴³ Renmin News: http://paper.people.com.cn/rmrb/html/2019-05/10/nw.D110000renmrb_20190510_6-14.htm

method of public diplomacy (see Chapter 4) to enhance and strengthen relations with other countries. Therefore, international co-operation in the HE arts sector also illustrates political, cultural, educational, and diplomatic power, cementing the arts as an excellent channel for spreading and promoting China's soft power.

However, Alves (2015) suggests that HEIs, 'as a set of epistemic communities with a broad range of interests and disciplines...should focus on a single path (usually, based on economic parameters for the measurement of well-being and wealth) endangers this pluralism' (p. 75), the outcomes of academic research usually expressed as patents and involvement in commercial ventures. With a marketing-oriented approach, some disciplines, such as philosophy, art, literature, and language studies are less able to be quantitatively marked in terms of knowledge production. Especially with the COVID-19 pandemic, the UK government and private funding bodies have invested huge amounts of money into the areas of life science and nature science, and Prime Minister Boris Johnson stated that the UK is facing potentially the worst recession in 300 years⁴⁴.

Therefore, from an economic perspective the arts in institutions do not provide enough incentive for UK HEIs and the government to use the arts as a strategic tool for internationalization. Traditional art forms, such as voice and instrument tuition, require small-group teaching, or one-to-one teaching methods, as the arts are individualised and involve personalised creations. By virtue of this specific need, teaching in the arts cannot have what are traditionally seen as 'cost-effective' lectures, with hundreds of students in one go, in the same vein as subjects like management or economics - it is difficult to achieve the same level of teaching efficiency. Moreover, there is little possibility for research results in the

⁴⁴ BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53207700>

arts to transfer into material capital in the short term, unlike how STEM subjects can transform patents into immediately viable commercial products (Alves 2015). Therefore, for these financial reasons, the arts are not promoted as strongly as they are in China. This is a huge difference in attitudes and policymaking towards the arts from a government level. Art does not seem to factor into government policymaking in the UK, and the government therefore does not have an idea of what art in the UK should be. This is the current situation of governmentality towards the arts in these two countries.

6.4.2. Culture

The relationship between culture, morality and governmentality can be generated, which spans these domains. Culture is the system that forms through various of agencies, politics are real objective activities and morality is formed through subjective natural behaviours towards rules (culture and policies). How *Guanxi* exists in different agencies might influence policymaking and real human behaviours in various activities. Therefore, it is important to develop the theoretical principle of *guanxi* within the given circumstances of Chinese society and intercultural communications.

There is a distinction between the perception and understanding of cultures. The Cambridge Dictionary⁴⁵ defines perception as a belief or opinion, often held by many people and based on how things seem. Without in-depth knowledge of Chinese culture and language and social moral behaviours, perception is usually the starting point for international co-operation, such as when a Western delegation goes to China or hosts Chinese guests in the UK for collaborative

⁴⁵ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/perception>

purposes. It is the necessary knowledge that someone has to acquire, and also a part of discourse that someone can learn and experience from historical analysis. UK delegations might have different perceptions towards their Chinese partners depending on what they do, such as politically-focused partner institutions in Beijing or business-dominated partner institutions in the Yangtze River Delta Economic Zone (see Chapter 4 and 5).

Varela, Thompson, and Rosch (2016) indicate that perception and cognition has a significant influence on human behaviours and experiences. The differences between perception and cognition are key to understanding cross-cultural behaviours. With regards to the data of this study, UK participants stated that Chinese partners will 'disappear' or go silent for long periods during collaboration without informing them what has happened (See Chapter 5). Therefore, their perception of Chinese people is that they might disappear at any given time during collaboration, but this does not denote the end of the relationship. Patience was the only method that UK participants used to deal with these disappearances. Therefore, in this form, the UK participants generally wait to reflect to these disappearances and silences.

From the Chinese point of view, it is generally considered inappropriate to directly reject people in Confucian culture, and silence rather than direct negation is generally seen as more polite. If UK participants understood this cultural context, they might realise that when Chinese partners go silent, this could denote that the collaboration proposal itself likely does not align with the interests of their Chinese partner or might be against Chinese regulations or policies. They could then interpret information from this silence and suggest more valid communications to maintain this co-operation more effectively.

Kastanakis and Voyer (2014) explain that demonstrating differences in perception can drive differences in cognition, both of which shape behaviour, and the role of culture can shape individual perception, which in turn affects the processing of information from the surrounding environment. Continuing the example from last paragraph, in terms of the perception of Chinese partners, UK participants chose to be patient, and waited for or relied on their Chinese partners to progress their collaborations. If they had a greater understanding of Chinese culture, UK participants would be more likely to take the initiative of exploring the problems in collaborations and processing their co-operation effectively.

Shavitt et al. (2008) assert that culture includes 'shared elements that provide standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, communicating, and acting among those who share a language, a historical period, and a geographical location' (p.1103). Markus and Kitayama (2010) further contend that

The word culture is a stand-in for a similarly untidy and expansive set of material and symbolic concepts ... that give form and direction to behavior [and that] culture is located in the world, in patterns of ideas, practices, institutions, products, and artifacts (p.422).

However, the reality is the culture itself that functions in these particular societies. Colonialism during the 19th and 20th centuries has led to Western culture dominating the world, resulting in Western culture being well recognised in China (Liu and Wu, 2017), which has also come to represent Western political identity. Storry (2016) indicates that it is difficult to define a single British cultural identity, although there exists a certain level of familiarity in China. For example, Chinese people are generally familiar with Shakespeare, Downton Abbey, Harry Potter, and can even recognise British regional accents. However, despite the presence of Confucius Institutes across the world, Western perceptions of Confucian culture are still largely rooted in Orientalist perceptions of East Asian culture borne of the

Western Gaze. It has not yet transparently formulated into a discourse (Ryan and Louie, 2007). This is why it is essential for people in the West to be given opportunities to have experiences allowing them to explore the reality of Confucian culture in modern Chinese society and to interpret the meanings of behaviours in certain social contexts, which is where discourse written in English would be limited.

On the other hand, UK participants (see Chapter 5) indicated that Chinese partners want things to happen 'overnight', in a way that is not possible for UK institutions. This might be because Chinese people have the perception that because the UK is a democracy, people therefore have the freedom to do whatever they want. Also, from a cultural perspective, Chinese people might interpret delays and slow progress as a sign that UK partners are not interested in co-operation. These misunderstandings are based on perceptions of cultures. It is not only the British who have a skewed view of Chinese culture; despite Britain's international soft power, China's surface-level recognition of British cultural signifiers cannot be considered a true understanding of British culture. Therefore, cognition of both cultures is necessary in facilitating UK-China co-operation, as these initial perceptions might cause misunderstanding and communication bias, thus misleading human behaviours.

Dirks, Eley, and Ortner (1994) state that,

culture [may be seen] as multiple discourse, occasionally coming together in large systemic configurations, but more often coexisting within dynamic field of interaction and conflict... This contested nature of "culture" often gets lost in homogenizing views of "culture as nationality" where dominant cultural voices are often the only ones heard, where the "preferred" reading of "culture" is the only reading (pp. 4-75)

In my study, Chinese culture does not just represent the Chinese nationality – Confucian culture includes not only the identification of a social hierarchy; but is

also dominated with different configurations of local and Confucian culture. One example would be the cultural regions discussed early in Chapter 4 and 5. There are different sets of cultural configurations, which require different methods and approaches in terms of intercultural communications. For example, since the 1990s Westerners have understood the necessity of using *guanxi* in China to conduct business, with Hall and Xu (1990), and Leung and Yeung (1995) establishing that *guanxi* is endemic to Chinese business. However, according to the data, *guanxi* has been perceived as being abandoned in modern Chinese society, with Professor G in Xi'an from XAY declining any *guanxi* usage in his international co-operation; and Professor J from ZGY, Beijing claiming that *guanxi* merely denotes connections and an efficient-communications channel for co-operation, rather than any additional complications (see Chapter 4).

Real life experience is needed to distinguish the level of *guanxi* usage and existence in different regions. Also, from the model formulated by this research, *guanxi* could contribute towards the setup of relationships in both dimensions of quantity and quality, but functions less well in the concentration stage, when Western institutions achieve high quality and quantity of relationships with Chinese institutions. Therefore, an understanding of different cultural configurations is required in UK-China co-operation.

Shuter (1990) explains that 'without a sense of how communication is patterned within groups, we can have little understanding of how that communication differs from or resembles communication between groups' (p.76). In the 1990s, Shuter further indicated that there are more scholarly works that take communication within cultural groups as a primary focus, which allows us to 'gain insight into intercultural communication' (77). In Chinese culture, people use honorific

language to express high status, politeness and respect to their seniority or in formal business settings, whilst people use non-honorific Chinese with friends and juniors. As Chinese people exist within a hierarchical society, this hierarchical language context is rarely translated into other languages, such as in English. Therefore, patterns of communications within specific cultural form are hugely important and are bonded with its related language.

Language plays an important role in how culture affects self-versus-other perceptions. Whorf (2012) argues that the way people perceive themselves and make sense of the world is highly dependent on the language spoken. Briley, Morris, and Simonson (2005) and Ross et al. (2002) similarly find that language can trigger culture-bound self-perceptions, with English-speaking bi-cultural people reporting a perception of the self as independent of others and Chinese-speaking bi-cultural people⁴⁶ reporting a more interdependent perception of the self. Kastanakis and Voyer (2014) further explains that

Bi-cultural Chinese-born people describe themselves in terms of their own internal traits and attributes when using English but describe themselves in relation to others when using Chinese. These results suggest that East Asian and Western identities are stored in separate knowledge structures in bi-cultural people, with each structure activated by associated language and language triggers a culture-bound representation of the self (p.427).

The language that UK-China co-operation uses is English. English-speaking bi-cultural circumstances represent a Western cultural bound, which results in the potential issue that Chinese delegations are never able to fully express what they really want to emphasize. The *guanxi* concept in the Asian cultural self-construal (Yamada and Singelis, 1999) is more interdependently dominated (Aaker and Lee,

⁴⁶ Most generally, biculturalism represents comfort and proficiency with both one's heritage culture and the culture of the country or region in which one has settled. It is applicable not only to immigrants who have come from other countries, but also to children of immigrants who – although they are born and raised in the receiving society – are likely deeply embedded in the heritage culture at home with their families (Schwartz, and Unger, 2010).

2001; Brewer and Gardner, 1996; Singelis, 1994), which makes a significant difference compared to the independent self-construal dominant in the West (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Using this Western independent self-construal domination represents the interdependent cultural cognition that results in communication being sometimes stifled or misconstrued, which will likely lead to misunderstandings or communication bias. In other words, using independent language styles to represent the meaning of collectivised (in *guanxi* terms, "within the *guanxi* tie, you are one of us"), and interdependent cultural context is particularly difficult. Additionally, the intricate levels of politeness, deference, respect and status denoted by honorifics in Chinese are difficult to represent in English. Therefore, UK-China co-operation requires bilingual people who are able to speak both English and Chinese and express the independence and interdependency with its attached cultural context.

In summary, the understanding of cultural perception and cognition is important in understanding human behaviours. Perception and cognition both have the power to guide human reflections and how they process information from their surrounding environment. Cultural configuration is a further step to choosing the right communication methods in cross-cultural relations. Practitioners need to select appropriate regional-cultural content to locate appropriate communication patterns in their business. The language (the discourse statement) that has been chosen for cross-cultural communication is the trigger for the fluency and success of co-operation. In this current case, English-dominated communication creates biases of understanding in terms of cultural cognitions. Therefore, bilingual communication is required for UK-China co-operation, so as when Western delegations express their ideas in a Chinese-speaking cultural domination, their

ideas will be much better accepted or understood culturally by their Chinese partners. The prerequisite for successful negotiation is an understanding of both cultures.

6.4.3. Morality

Regarding the relationships between governmentality, culture and morality, morality represents the subjective real behaviours within a cultural system and its related political activities. Foucault also (1981) states that:

The true discourse likewise the manner in which economic practices, codified as precepts or recipes and ultimately as morality, have sought since the sixteenth century to ground themselves, rationalise themselves, and justify themselves in a theory of wealth and production.
(Foucault, 1981, p.55)

In other words, discourse is not only about knowledge, but also exists within practices that are based on wealth and production. The concept of morality provides an important link between culture and governmentality in determining how effective actions concerning the foundation of international relationships can be.

Rivera Vicencio (2012) stresses that in Foucault's words, 'morality is the link between discursive and non-discursive formation' (p.746). He further explains that morality means:

... a set of values and rules of action that are recommended to individuals through the intermediary of various prescriptive agencies, such as the family (in one of its roles), educational institution, churches, and so forth.
(Foucault, 2005b, p.26, cited as Rivera Vicencio 2012, p.746).

Morality differs from culture in that it is not guidance or a concept that needs to be interpreted or understood by human beings – it concerns actions and things based on common values and rules. These values and rules could equally come from governmental policies or cultures. In other words, morality is the evidence for or

manifestation of the identity of a culture or nation, which forms the details of how cultures or policies exist and function in reality. For example, even when Professor G insisted that there is no *guanxi* involved in his work, he still indicated in the interview that he set up international relationships through a 'middleperson' (See Chapter 4). The concept of 'a middleperson' exists in Chinese culture as well as Western culture (we use the term '中间人' in Chinese) and it is a well-established *guanxi* method for helping friends or business partners to setup new *guanxi* ties, or introduce someone into an exclusive *guanxi* tie. Therefore, despite his best attempts to blur his cultural identity and be more international in his cognition, his true behaviours and preferences towards his work were revealed by the extent to which traditional actions based on the rules of *guanxi* influenced him, consciously or not.

However, there would be a culturally different understanding of this word, as the word 'middleman' in English usually has negative connotations. Some critics say that the middleman should be cut out to avoid any increased costs or commissions⁴⁷. In other words, the middleman in English implies expensive costs, whereas in Chinese, it means trust in businesses.

Foucault further explains that:

morality also refers to the real behaviour of individuals in relation to the rules and values that are recommended to them; the word thus designates the manner in which they comply more or less fully with a standard of conduct, the manner in which they obey or resist an interdiction or a prescription; the manner in which they respect or disregard a set of values. In studying this aspect of morality, one must determine how and with what margins of variation or transgression individuals or groups conduct themselves in reference to a prescriptive system that is explicitly or implicitly operative in their culture, and of which they are more or less aware. We can call this level of phenomena 'the morality of behaviors'.

(Foucault, 2005b, p.26-27, cited as Rivera Vicencio 2012, p.747).

⁴⁷<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/middleman.asp#:~:text=The%20term%20%22middleman%22%20is%20an,a%20middleman%20layer%20of%20business.>

Therefore, morality is the prime part of human lives in its circumstantial integration, which occupies in a pattern of conduct. There is a significant difference between the perception of morality in the West and in China. In the West, morality tends to focus on ethics (Mattingly and Throop, 2018; Schloss, 2004; and Dorff and Newman, 1995), whereas in China, morality is more focused on manners in accordance with Confucius culture (Liu and Xu, 2001; An, 1995; and Jia, 2001). In this circumstance, the actions and human behaviour that people will take in UK-China co-operation are from comparatively different focuses, which might cause cognitive bias.

When conducting work like this it is essential to find a 'middle ground' of morality, and for both parties to consider its related actions and patterns of manners to be acceptable, which could, to a large extent, facilitate bias-free communication in real actions. In other words, we could start to create a basic 'common sense' within the specific field of international co-operation. This type of common sense is linked to the *guanxi* element of empathy, which is to say, 'we understand your preference, your culture and working style without saying anything out loud'. With this sense of empathy, relationships would be able to grow in depth according to the ***GD model***.

Moore (1925) indicates that common sense is a belief commonly entertained by human beings, and that it is a matter of faith, rather than knowledge. Geertz (1975) provides an analysis of common sense,

as opposed to the exercise of it, must then begin by redrawing this erased distinction between the mere matter-of-fact apprehension of reality-or whatever it is you want to call what we apprehend merely and matter-of-factly- and down-to-earth, colloquial wisdom, judgments or assessments of it. When we say someone shows common sense we mean to suggest more than that he is just using his eyes and ears, but is, as we say, keeping them open, using them judiciously, intelligently, perceptively, reflectively, or trying to, and that he is capable of coping with everyday problems in an everyday way with some effectiveness.

(Geertz, 1975, p.8)

In other words, common sense is based on using the experience of daily lives and wisdom to effectively solve problems. Common sense is an epistemological cultural system, which is important in modern philosophy.

If common sense is as much an interpretation of the immediacies of experience, a gloss on them, as are myth, painting, epistemology, or whatever, then it is, like them, historically constructed and, like them, subjected to historically defined standards of judgment. It can be questioned, disputed, affirmed, developed, formalized, contemplated, even taught, and it can vary dramatically from one people to the next. It is, in short, a cultural system, though not usually a very tightly integrated one, and it rests on the same basis that any other such system rests; the conviction by those whose possession it is of its value and validity. Here, as elsewhere, things are what you make of them. The importance of all this for philosophy is, of course, that common sense, or some kindred conception, has become a central category, almost the central category, in a wide range of modern philosophical systems.

(Geertz, 1975, p.8)

There are common senses of dealing with international co-operation that have formulated in both cultures, which are often at odds with each other. It is dangerous to assume that common sense is universal within cross-cultural business. The new common sense for UK-China co-operation must take both cultures and working experiences into consideration. Most importantly, the creation of common sense is an effective way of enhancing empathy within relationships. The idea of empathy is to understand what the other party means even without them having to say anything. Common sense would allow people to follow the rules or system in accordance with the situation at hand, and facilitate project completion in a more appropriate way, that would be accepted by both parties without anyone needing to mention the rules. It will further enhance the depth of relationships, as empathy is in the second stage of the quality dimension in ***the GD model***.

6.5. Power and knowledge

Foucault (1971) indicates that production of discourse is selected, controlled, organised and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures in every society; a man's speech should form at least part of the common discourse (common sense), and in the past few centuries, words from a madman were either totally ignored or taken as truth in Europe, which indicates that discourse is linked to the exercise of power. Also, Foucault (1979) expresses that the will to knowledge (from his *The History of Sexuality: 1*) is the generalisation of truth (will to truth) that is fitted from the histories. Foucault (1971) believes that will to truth has been a part of discourse throughout many centuries of our history – the general division [unsure what this means] that governs our will to knowledge, then formulates a system for development.

This research constructing the new statements on international relations that combines knowledge from different disciplines that are defined by 'groups of objects. Methods, their corpus of propositions considered to be true, the interplay of rules and definitions, of techniques and tools' (Foucault, 1971, p.15). We discuss UK-China co-operation within the history of international relations, and try to formulise a system for its future development. A generalised understanding of power and knowledge is undoubtedly necessary to conclude this chapter.

6.5.1. Power

Professor Iver Neumann (2014) indicates that there are three types of power based on the philosophy of Foucault, which are game power, disciplinary power, and governmentality. There is a difference between disciplinary power (the power of force) and governmentality (the power of guidance) in the West, but there is

not much difference between these two powers in China. Governmentality in China is traditionally more forceful, and this is combined with the disciplinary power of peoples' reactions. Therefore, before discussing Foucault's famous notion of power/knowledge in general terms, this section needs to illustrate disciplinary power, which would provide an explanation of the working style in Chinese society.

According to Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, disciplinary power has three elements: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment, and examination, which show how individuals can be supervised and controlled efficiently. There are two critical points to be made about the standard account of disciplinary power. First, outside of locales of sequestration, the activities of individuals are less prone to detailed regulation and monitoring. 'Total institutions' like prisons and asylums epitomize disciplinary power for Foucault. However, schools, factories or offices hardly operate exactly like prisons and asylums. Disciplinary power is likely to be less all-embracing in sites like this. This opens up the possibility of considering disciplinary power in other locales as less secure and effective, and of considering the possibility of contradictions between the forms of power exercised in different locales (Barnett, 1999, p.379). This is generally true when it comes to Western society. Disciplinary power, however, functions more significantly in different cultural perspectives, such as nations governed by Confucian culture where the social hierarchy is the moral law that governs subjects. This power, to a large extent, is rooted in an innate sense of self-discipline and hierarchical obligation.

Secondly, there is the question of how different disciplinary spaces and locales are connected to each other, and how individuals move through them. A prison is

undoubtedly different to a school, and a school to a university, and they are all governed by differing forms of disciplinary power, but how are these different institutions, regimes and their effects articulated together? Barnett argues that:

One need not presume some single underlying logic linking all possible sites of subject-formation to raise as a legitimate question the issues of just how the effectiveness of particular disciplinary regimes in specific institutions is supported, subverted or transformed by the movement of 'subject' into other locales and other institutions subject to other modes of discipline.

(Barnett, 1999, p. 380).

Essentially, disciplinary power takes different forms and effects dependent on its locale, and is inevitably less secure outside of restricted places, such as prisons and asylums. The specificity of particular practices with their own specific regulatory regimes and specific distributions of effect mean that singular disciplinary power cannot be generated for subject-formation to arise as a legitimate question of effectiveness in other locales, institutions, and modes. Therefore, disciplinary power is loosely correlated with higher education sectors from a Western point of view. However, the Chinese social hierarchy might provide space for it to grow within a framework that is still ultimately deferential, which means that disciplinary power might be applied within Chinese higher education institutions. That would provide guidance for this approach of relationship setup and formation.

For example, if one Western institution has direct relationships with the presidents of their Chinese partner institutions, these types of relationships would be more efficient (from a disciplinary standpoint) as Chinese people will always defer to orders from their presidents. Alternatively, if a Western institution has relationships with one of the staff or head of departments, this type of relationship would be more governmental in nature, as the staff or the head of departments need to

follow guidance from the presidents before being able to improvise and enact their own ideas.

Therefore, a regulatory, rather than disciplinary, understanding of the practice and methods of power is also important, and might be more appropriate in locales outside of prison, not least because it opens up a reconsideration of issues of agency that is largely absent from the cultural-policy studies literature as Barnett (1999) suggested earlier. Therefore, disciplinary power and regulatory practice and methods of power are both important different cultural circumstances for international co-operation in China, especially considering that there are different cultural regions in China (see details in the previous Culture section).

When it comes to subjective power, Foucault describes pastoral power (1994d), a type of power opposed to political and legal power and defined as the power of individualization. This type of power is salvation orientated, 'it is coextensive and continuous with life and it is linked with the production of truth, the truth of the individual himself' (Rivera Vicencio, 2012). In other words, pastoral power would be represented by power relations at the level of subjectivity. In this sense, self-interpretation of policies and regulations would be represented as pastoral power in this research, which on the one hand observes hierarchy and disciplinary power, but on the other hand sometimes contradicts the authorised power. In this sense, it is reasonable to understand that conflicts of self-interest are a subjective restriction for international co-operation, or from an opposing view; it would expend the significance of authorized (disciplinary, political, and legal) power. Balancing these two powers is critical.

6.5.2. Knowledge

According to Foucault (1997), 'positivities do not characterise forms of knowledge – whether they are a priori, necessary conditions or forms of rationality that have, in turn, been put into operation by history' (p.181). Foucault (1997) defines knowledge as that of which one can speak in a discursive practice, but also as the space in which a subject may take up a position and speak of the objects with which he deals in his discourse. For the knowledge that in specific disciplines, Foucault (1971) then explains that:

The principles of discourse involved in the formation of disciplines are equally opposed to that of commentary. In a discipline, unlike in commentary, what is supposed at the point of departure is not some meaning which must be rediscovered, nor an identity to be reiterated; it is that which is required for the construction of new statements. For a discipline to exist, there must be the possibility of formulating - and of doing so ad infinitum - fresh propositions.

(Foucault, 1971, p.15).

He continues to define knowledge as the field of coordination and subordination of statements in which concepts appear, and are defined, applied and transformed. He differentiates knowledge and discourse by positing that knowledge is defined by the possibilities of use and appropriation offered by discourse, concluding that there is no knowledge without a particular discursive practice, and that any discursive practice may be defined by the knowledge that it forms.

It is clear that we understand what knowledge is, its importance, and how we can acquire the knowledge necessary to discuss, respond to and ultimately solve these problems. We require knowledge about Chinese culture, and its related perception and cognition, as well as the discourses on policies, morality, and common sense, which are ultimately the key to understanding the phenomenon

discussed in this study. The knowledge of power and its related governmentality would help us understand the political position and objective force that creates the certainty or uncertainty of the environment of international co-operation. The understanding of cultures and their differences indicates the formation and systematic forms of Western (UK) and Eastern (China) societies. Furthermore, knowledge of morality represents the true behavior of subjects, which from Foucault's epistemology would be the key to accessing 'true' discourse.

These sets of knowledges are general key points of discourses to understand how the whole system works within UK-China co-operation, which is the key to understand the mechanism of the ***Guanxi Dispositif (GD) model***, and the importance of the model in these relationships. 'The day when all the lecture courses which Foucault gave at the College de France are published, the dimensions and importance of his work will receive their due recognition. His 'will to knowledge' has not produced a system – a feature which will be a source of reproach to some and will be seen as a sign of merit by others' (Pasquino, 2013, pp.66-67). Similarly, **the GD model** combines the Western philosophical mechanism with Asian cultural concepts, which could be seen as a step forward in the development Sino-British (and East-West) relationships, but one that nevertheless still needs to be tested in day-to-day practice.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This chapter reviews the significance of this research based on the research gap and research questions, its limitations and future work for testing the **GD model**, and establishes its implications for cross-cultural societies, policymaking, and culture-based human behaviours in the area of UK-China co-operation. The research undertook both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis and provides a discussion of results that integrates the philosophical concept of Foucault – *dispositif*, and the Chinese cultural concept of *guanxi*. It formulates a facilitating theoretical model for understanding how *guanxi* can be used in international cooperation – ***guanxi dispositif (GD model)***.

7.1. Values of this research

7.1.1. Quantitative findings

Based on the quantitative data analysis (see Chapter 3), this research discovered that there was no significant correlation between personal background or associated with gender and the success or failure of international co-operation. The descriptive data shows that currently co-operation is largely focused on short programmes, such as cultural exchanges, and there was no deeper engagement in joint programmes. They also indicated that government policy was the most influential element in affecting international co-operation, and there were few alternative choices once cooperation was faced with restrictive government policy, which was also confirmed in the qualitative interviews (see Chapter 4 and 5).

The data showed that *guanxi* has been actively used in international co-operation: the participants had personal relationships with leading figures or high-ranking

staff members at partner institutions when setting up relationships, which indicates a 'middle person' system (see Chapter 4) is already working in empirical practices. *Guanxi's* element of *face* has positive correlations with the difficulty items of 'low interest from staff', and 'low interest from students'. This correlation confirms that *guanxi* informs cultural tendencies and behaviours in Chinese society, which means that collaborations receiving low interest from either staff or students will result in difficulties promoting the collaboration further and they will feel as though they have 'lost face' in front of their partner institutions. This results in a chain reaction of Chinese people not telling their partners if this is the reason, as this would be a face-losing action in and of itself. Western partners will not understand why collaboration has stopped and cannot provide alternative solutions. This ends up causing serious difficulties in the co-operation. This is a key finding of this data analysis, as participants denied the impact of face in other questions, but their other answers indicated a correlation between difficulties faced during cooperation and face.

Moreover, there are interrelationships between *guanxi's* elements of *reciprocity*, *credit* and *empathy*. All three are significantly correlated. For example, the more credit (reputation and trust) an institution has, the more reciprocity they can engage in, and the stronger empathy they can set up with their partner institutions, and vice versa. This is the fundamental knowledge of how we can improve relationships and receive different stages of benefits from the **GD model** (see Chapter 6, p. 200). The individual actions in these three elements, for example, 'we do favour exchanges based on morality and social norms', 'we send partners greeting cards' are the indicators that help people understand how to transfer the theoretical model to actual actions. Overall, five hypotheses (**H1** to **H5**) confirmed

that *guanxi* is involved in China-related international co-operation in the higher education sector, especially in the process of relationship setup, partner selection, as well as influencing the overall success and difficulties of co-operation. Moreover, the descriptive results also show that *guanxi* has not have a weakened tendency in modern China, as all participants confirmed they use *guanxi* in their international co-operation no matter what age they are (see Chapter 3).

7.1.2. Qualitative findings

The results from UK participants confirm the problems illustrated in the literature (see Chapter 1, pp.22-23). Apart from BHY, all other institutions remain in an elementary level of collaborations, and all UK participants confirm that they encountered cultural and linguistic difficulties when conducting international co-operation with Chinese partners. From the Chinese perspective, two of them confirmed that they used *guanxi* frequently, and that this was the only method used when setting up relationships with overseas partners. However, one participant from XAY holds different opinions toward *guanxi*, indicating an ideal method (the *middle person system*) for international relationship setup, which is based in *guanxi* roles. This is another indicator demonstrating that knowledge might contradict human behaviours in real life, and further indicates the importance of the theoretical model of ***Guanxi Dispositif***.

Given that other than ZGY, other institutions' international cooperation remains at an elementary level, this indicates there are many developments that can potentially be explored in future empirical work. Also, the data from Chinese participants confirmed the hypothesis posited by the quantitative data; political factors had the most influence over international relations. Most importantly, Chinese participants expect equitable relationships, which encompasses a

greater level of cultural understanding and bilingual communications, as opposed to the current status quo that privileges Anglophonic, Western modes of interaction. This expectation links to the suggestions that the **GD model** has established – a *common sense* that is based on both cultures should be established between all parties in order to reduce misunderstandings and cultural bias. In a cross-cultural context, successful relationships cannot be possibly built up in just one language or culture, they must be based on a common understanding of cultures, languages, and social behaviours from all parties. This necessity for a 'common sense' demonstrates the practical value of the **GD model** in the context of international relationships.

7.2. Contributions

7.2.1. Contribution to knowledge

This thesis has investigated the research questions and determined that *guanxi* does exist within UK-China international co-operation in the arts. It is important to note that although modern *guanxi* appears in a *simplified* form, using only certain aspects of the elements highlighted in Chapter 3, and 4, its presence in modern China has not *weakened*, and participants were all willing to use it in China, and which contradicts the prediction from the literature. Moreover, Chinese institutions still heavily rely on *guanxi* to build up basic trust for their relationship setup. Although there is no direct evidence to demonstrate *guanxi* is involved in deeper categories in UK-China international co-operation in the arts, as the co-operation in most of the participating institutions are still at an elementary stage, there are logical predictions that demonstrate *guanxi*'s involvement, which have been generated by the theoretical model created in this research.

This theoretical model is this thesis' most noteworthy original contribution to *guanxi* studies, which was established through a combination of the concepts of *dispositif* and *guanxi*, as well as the quantitative and qualitative data collected during fieldwork, called the ***Guanxi Dispositif (GD) model*** (see Chapter 6, p. 200). This model indicates that there are two dimensions for conducting international relationships, which are *quality* and *quantity* of relationships. The model also establishes four stages of benefits in relationships, from a surface level to a comprehensive level within these two dimensions, which are *stabilization*, *ranks*, *magnification*, and *concentration* respectively. Most importantly, based on results from the empirical data, this model illustrates methods for how to reach the benefits within two dimensions in *guanxi* terms. By using the combination of *Trust* (which could be generated from the *guanxi* element *Credit*) and *Ranks*, the quantity of relationships could be developed. In other words, if one institution has a trustworthy reputation and a reasonably good position in the league tables, said institution could potentially build up many partnerships. Another dimension, which combines *Trust* and *guanxi*'s elements of *Empathy* and *Reciprocity*, would help institutions to develop the depth of relationships.

The model also indicates the limitations of *guanxi* in the *concentration* benefit, where *guanxi* plays an indirect role, rather contributing more towards the other three benefits. In other words, if one institution plans to reap the benefits of *concentration*, they cannot completely rely on *guanxi*, as *guanxi* will not dictate the result of this benefit. They need to ensure that they have developed the other three benefits with *guanxi*, in order to satisfy the conditions need for *concentration* to occur. For example, having stabilised relationships that mean in-depth co-

operation with partner institutions is possible, could potentially help institutions increase their position in league tables, and gain the benefit of *magnification*. The **GD model** has no time frame or limitation and institutions do not need to use or complete their targets within this framework in any specific time. The usage of the **GD model** completely relies on institutional strategy towards relationships and co-operation with China. Nevertheless, the **GD model** is an original product of this research, which I believe could be useful for the future of UK-China co-operation in the arts.

7.2.2. Contribution to discipline

According to the literature (see Chapter 1), *guanxi* has been studied in social scientific and management researches. This research extends *guanxi* study into the discipline of the Arts and Humanities, as well as providing a philosophical explanation of *guanxi* in the discipline, rather than analysing it from a purely practical point of view, as is often seen in business and management studies. Moreover, it is the first time (to the best of my knowledge) that research has built a theoretical model based on a combination of Western (*Dispositif*) and Eastern (Confucianism) philosophies, which can be recognised as a new development in philosophical studies.

Moreover, this research applied discourse analysis to underpin how to use the *GD model* in the context of governmentality, culture, and morality; and how to construct common sense accordingly after the model has been established with *dispositif*. This is a new experimental development that uses one of Foucault's philosophies (*dispositif*) to create the model and uses one of his other philosophies (discourse) to explain it.

7.3. Limitations and future research

7.3.1. Limitations

The biggest limitation of this research is that it is not easy to measure the results of the **GD model**. For example, it is hard to quantify *reputation* and *fame* without a significant longitudinal study. However, a future comparative study might be helpful to analyse relationships before and after using the *GD* model, in order to understand whether the **GD model** contributes to the overall efficiency and success of relationships.

The sample size is not large enough to generalise or draw any conclusions that could represent the overall state of Chinese higher education with other analysis, this work serves as an initial case-study for these kinds of behaviours. Widening the scope of data collection in the future to include more arts departments from universities, normal universities for examples, in order to generate a complete picture of higher education in China could be the focus of future research.

My personal observations demonstrated that apart from ZGY (one of the participating institutions in this research), international co-operations in other arts-related institutions remain at a surface level, even though some institutions have a long history of international co-operation, such as ZYY, where I did not have the chance to arrange an interview. However, I only have another two institutions to prove that UK-China co-operation still has long way to go, and that there are many areas that need development, but this is merely an assumption, and not enough evidence to say with confidence that this applies to UK-China cooperation in general. This is an assumption that would need be tested in future research.

During fieldwork, I encountered problems collecting questionnaires from the UK

participants. While this particular thesis is not a comparative study, future work could systematically analyse all UK organisations in order to obtain an overall national picture: however, the remit of this particular study was to look at specific case study data. However, the range of qualitative data collection could be much wider in future research to test further application of the **GD model**.

7.3.2. Future work

This work is an initial study into a field where previous research has not been extensively conducted. As a result, there many areas which can be extended for future work. This could include a study on the tendencies of UK-China co-operation, as this research indicates that current motivations Chinese HEIs have for conducting international co-operation might become significantly weakened in the near future. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the greatest discontinuity in the history of international relations, and several institutions have put their existing students programmes on pause for security and safety reasons. Due to the present state of trade agreements between US and China, the CCP may change its policies regarding international relations, which would affect UK-China relationships. The more staff that graduate from overseas institutions, the less Chinese institutions have to rely on international co-operation. When Chinese arts-related institutions start appearing in the *QS* or *Times* league tables this demonstrates that they might not even need to have international co-operation anymore. Above all other else, these major uncertainties and tensions within UK-China international co-operation in arts-related institutions require further studies to identify the constantly developing tendencies, governmentality and ideologies in the field.

Alternatively, this topic could be approached differently, using management

theories, such as service-dominant (S-D) logic, which has been widely used in many areas of research in higher education sectors (Chalcraft and Lynch, 2011). The current research discusses social and cultural phenomena from a philosophical perspective and human behaviours from cultural and humanist perspectives. Based on the theory of S-D logic, this topic could be extended to the area of marketing and iterative customers or services dominated solutions, which could indicate more implications in day-to-day empirical practice.

Macroscopically, co-operation research does not need to be restricted to these two countries. There is a significant increase of students from other Asian countries studying abroad, and the destination countries are not restricted to the UK: the US, Australia, Canada, and mainland Europe are all high-ranking destination countries. Therefore, this research could be used to analyse a wide range of international cooperation between the East and West, as well as providing a framework for how to approach the differences between pairs of different countries and other areas. The *GD model* could also be tested in a wider geographical distribution, as Confucian culture exists in other Asian countries along with a similar *guanxi*-esque system of social hierarchies, especially in Japan and South Korea.

7.4. Final Implications

This research provides readers with an insight into Chinese culture and the role of *guanxi* in society, as well as an understanding of the Confucian culture-rooted behaviours and tendencies of people within modern Chinese society.. This is presented as a tool which can be used to build a cultural cognition in China-related relationships, business, and studies. Furthermore, cultural cognition will inevitably

become more and more important, given the current shift of Chinese philosophers and researchers towards cultural self-awareness, in order to emphasise national identity in a global context. An understanding of Chinese culture and Chinese cultural cognition will prove essential in the future for anyone looking to deal with China.

Although China has become more and more international, *guanxi* still exists in human behaviour. Some research indicates that *guanxi* has a weakened tendency in modern-day China compared to the 20th century. This research confirms that *guanxi* has not been weakened, but rather *simplified* and interpreted in different ways in international relationships. The *guanxi* system is shown to be valid and useful in empirical practices.

This research could change how Western practitioners think about and approach international co-operation with China, as Chinese institutions have less motivations than Western institutions for conducting or sustaining international relationships and collaborations. Western HEIs may need to re-evaluate their propositions towards their Chinese partners. Western researchers and practitioners will be able to understand that there is a discipline power within the governmentality in China, which will need to be factored into their risk management analysis. They would also need to be able to understand the strong cultural influences in China, gain a nuanced awareness of cultural cognition and plan their cooperation strategies accordingly. Perhaps in the not-too distant future, Confucian culture will become well-recognised in the West, and internationalisation between the East and West will consist of a new form of common sense built upon mutual understanding and respect.

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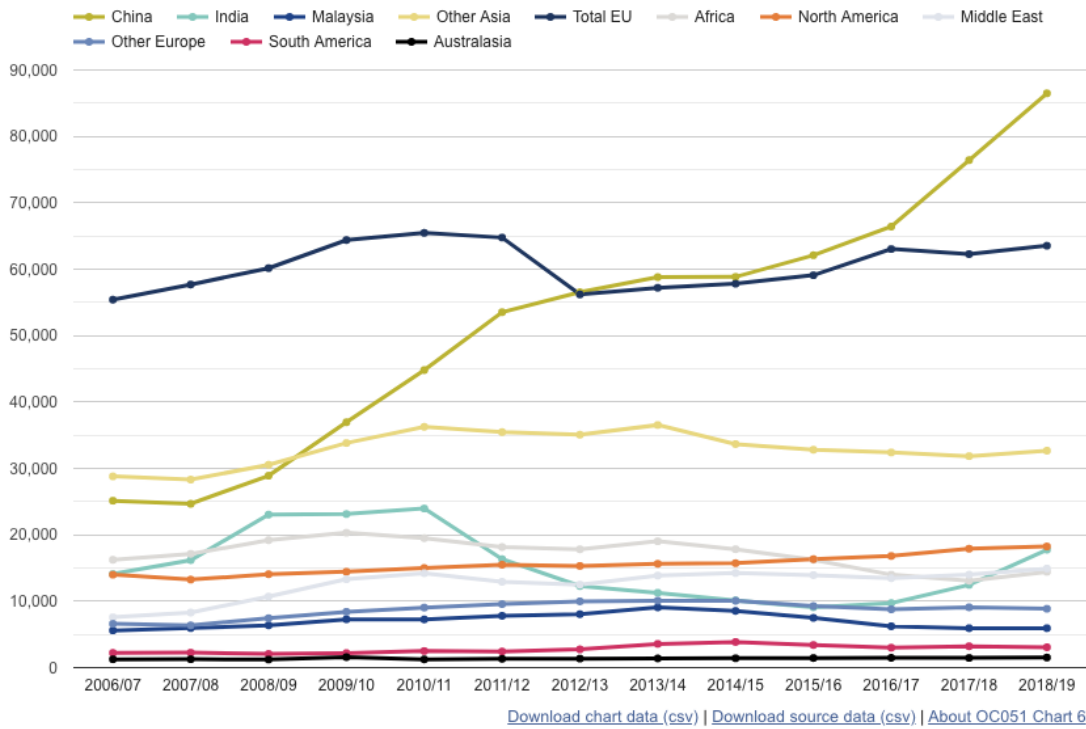
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Appendix

Appendix 1. First year non-UK domiciled students by domicile Academic years 2006/07 to 2018/19

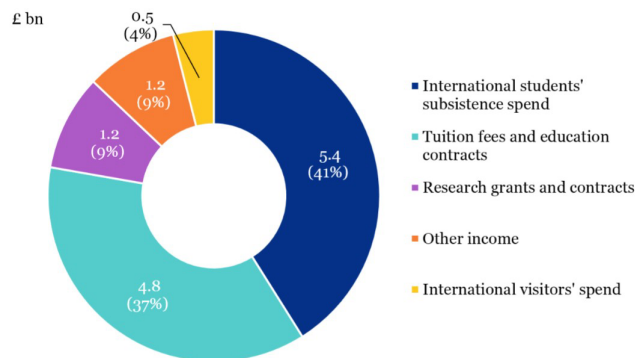
First year non-UK domiciled students by domicile
Academic years 2006/07 to 2018/19



Key fact: In 2018/19, 32% of first year non-UK domiciled students come from China.

Appendix 2. Total exports generated by universities, their international students' subsistence spend and their visitors' expenditure, 2014-15

Figure 2: Total exports generated by universities, their international students' subsistence spend and their visitors' expenditure, 2014-15



Source: HESA, IPS, Oxford Economics

Appendix 3. The economic impact of international students on the English regions



Appendix 4. Top ten non-EU sending countries

Top Ten non-EU sending countries

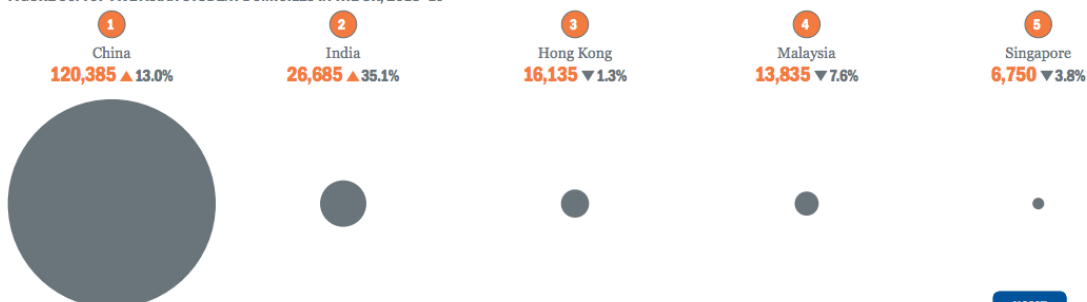
Country	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14
China (PRC)	91,215	89,540	87,895
Malaysia	17,405	17,060	16,635
United States of America	17,115	16,865	16,485
India	16,745	18,320	19,750
Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region)	16,745	16,215	14,725
Nigeria	16,100	17,920	18,020
Saudi Arabia	8,570	8,595	9,060
Singapore	7,540	7,295	6,790
Thailand	6,095	6,240	6,340
Canada	5,980	6,075	6,350

Source: HESA First Statistical Release 242 (2015-16) Table 9

Appendix 5. Total number of international students from Asia in the UK in 2018-19

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
 Total number of international students from Asia in the UK in 2018-19: **224,610** ▲9.9% since 2017-18

FIGURE 36: TOP FIVE ASIAN STUDENT DOMICILES IN THE UK, 2018-19

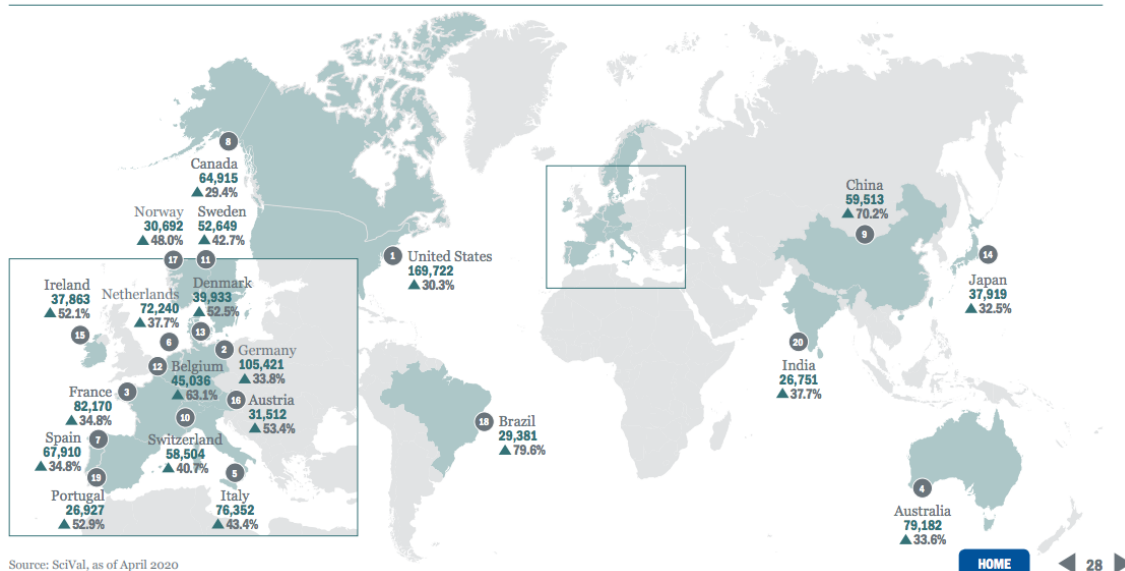


Appendix 6. UK's top collaborative partners

WHICH COUNTRIES ARE THE UK'S TOP COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS?

The UK's most frequent collaborative research partners are the US, Germany and France, with 36.4%, 49.1% and 52.3% of publications in the respective countries featuring a UK co-author. Most notably, research collaborations with Brazil have increased by 79.6% since 2014, while collaborations with China have increased by 70.2%. The UK itself is also a popular partner, ranking first for Ireland, second for the majority of its other partners, third for Austria, Switzerland and Canada, and fourth for Japan.

FIGURE 25: TOP 20 UK COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE, 2014-19



Appendix 7. Total UK publications with an Asian co-author, between 2016 and 2019

CO-AUTHORED PUBLICATIONS
Total UK publications with an Asian co-author, between 2016 and 2019:

145,815

FIGURE 40: TOP FIVE TOTAL PUBLICATIONS WITH AN ASIAN CO-AUTHOR BY COUNTRY, 2016-2019

Country	Publications	% Change 2016-2019
China	56,556	▲ 41.9%
Japan	17,634	▲ 11.8%
India	13,695	▲ 22.4%
South Korea	8,131	▲ 22.1%
Singapore	8,016	▲ 15.8%

Appendix 8. International student enrollment trends in the US

Enrollment Trends						
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT DATA FROM THE 2020 OPEN DOORS® REPORT						
Year	Enrolled Int'l Students	OPT	Total Int'l Students	Total U.S. Enrollment*	% Int'l	Annual % Change
2019/20	851,957	223,539	1,075,496	19,720,000	5.5	-1.8
2018/19	872,214	223,085	1,095,299	19,828,000	5.5	0.05
2017/18	891,330	203,462	1,094,792	19,831,000	5.5	1.5
2016/17	903,127	175,695	1,078,822	20,185,000	5.3	3.4
2015/16	896,341	147,498	1,043,839	20,264,000	5.2	7.1
2014/15	854,639	120,287	974,926	20,300,000	4.8	10.0
2013/14	780,055	105,997	886,052	21,216,000	4.2	8.1
2012/13	724,725	94,919	819,644	21,253,000	3.9	7.2
2011/12	679,338	85,157	764,495	20,625,000	3.7	5.7

Appendix 9. Questionnaire of this research

Questionnaire

This questionnaire is based on the research that analysing Chinese social concept guanxi in the international relationships at higher education sector.

Part 1.

Age

What is your highest education background?

- Senior high school
- Vocational high school
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctoral degree

What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Self-describe
- Prefer not to tell

What is your professional background (according to your highest degree)?

- Arts and Humanities
- Business and management
- Engineering

- Science
- Agriculture and bio-technology
- Medicine
- Design
- Other _____

What type of the institution that you are working at?

- Conservatory
- University
- Arts College

How many years have you been dealing with international co-operation?

- 1-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 20-40 years
- 40-60 years

What was/were the reason(s) for doing international co-operation in the last two years (please pick all that apply)?

- Student/staff exchange
- Concert/culture exchange
- Increase institution's reputation/ranking
- Increase income
- Others _____

What was/were the criteria of choosing a partner in last two years (please pick the all that applied)?

- The partner has good relationships with famous oversea institutions
- The partner has good relationships with large institutions
- The partner has a comparatively higher position in the HEIs
- The partner has similar organisational values
- Others, please be more specific _____

Please choose the rate that you think is the most suitable one for your situation from Extremely Disagree (1) to Extremely Agree (5)

Extremely Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely Agree

Expertise

- The partner, in the most recent co-operation, is knowledgeable in their area
- The partner, in the most recent co-operation, is knowledgeable in the market
- The partner, in the most recent co-operation, was able to provide solutions to improve our existing operation
- The partner, in the most recent co-operation, was able to propose alternative products to suit our applications

Please choose the rate that you think is the most suitable one for your situation from Unsuccessful (1) to Very Successful (5)

Unsuccessful 1 2 3 4 5 Very Successful

Successness of the co-operation in the last two years?

- Overall
- Student programme
- Joint Research project
- Cultural exchange
- Others _____

To what degree to you agree or disagree with the subsequent statements
Extremely Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely Agree

- Overall, you have difficulties promoting international co-operation
- You met misunderstanding/communication failure
- You do not have enough funding
- You received low interest from students
- You received low interest from staff
- You received low interest from the top managerial staff
- The cooperation was influenced by policies
- Others

Do you have any solutions to the problems that you have encountered so far in your co-operation?

- Yes, please explain _____
- No

Part 2

Do you know a Chinese term 'guanxi'?

- Yes
- No

Do you think you have used 'guanxi' for the relationships with UK universities?

- Yes
- No

How did you start your relationship with your partner in the last two ears?

No relationship 1 2 3 4 5 Close relationship

- Do you have close relationships with the top people at partner institutions?
- Do you have close relationships with one of the staff at partner universities/conservatories?
- Do you have close relationships with the top people at Education Ministry in your home country?
- Do you have close relationships with the top people at Education Ministry in your partner's country?
- Do you have close relatives who are working at partner universities/conservatories?
- Do you have close relatives who are the top people at your partner universities/conservatories?
- Do you have close relatives who are the top people at Education Ministry?
- Others

Please think about the most recent two or three co-operations with UK institutions, and answer the following questions:

Extremely Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely Agree

Face ('Mianzi', which is an individual's public image)

- Both we and the partner care about face
- The more respect we receive, the more 'face' we have
- We give 'face' to the partner, and they also give us face

Reciprocal favour ('Renqing', means favours' exchange)

- We will do the partner a favour if they did one for us before
- The partner will do us a favour if we did one for they before

- We do favour exchanges based on legality and rules
- We do favour exchanges based on morality and social norms

Empathy ('Ganqing' means affection and empathy)

- The partner sometimes presents us with gifts or souvenirs
- We sometimes presents gifts or souvenirs to our partners
- The partner sends greeting cards to us when there is a marriage, promotion, and so forth
- We send greeting cards to them when there is a marriage, promoteon, and so forth
- The partners are our good friends, and we care about each other wholeheartedly
- We like the partners, and they like us

Credit ('Xingyong', means reputation and credit, and the ability of returning favours)

- We always do what agreed with partners
- We always change what agreed with partners
- We sometimes have to change what agreed with partners
- We never do what agreed with partners
- Partners always do what has agreed with us
- Partners always change what agreed with us
- Partners sometimes have to change what agreed with us
- Partners never do what agreed with us

We trust our partners based on:

- Face/Mianzi
- Reciprocal exchange/Renqing
- Empathy/Ganqing
- Credit/Xinyong

Open questions:

Please list three the most successful things that you have done to setup a relationship with UK universities in last five years.

Please list three the most useful things that you did to stabiles a relationship with UK universities in last five years.

Thank you very much for your time to complete this questionnaire, which will help me to understand the guanxi formulation in the higher education sector and people's behaviour towards it. Furthermore, it will give me guidance for formulating the questions of the next stage fieldwork – interview.

Appendix 10. Pragmatism and its characteristics

Pragmatism	Characteristics
●	A middle ground between philosophical dogmatisms and skepticism; rejects traditional dualisms;
●	Recognizes the existence and importance of the natural of physical world as well as the emergent social and psychological world that includes language, culture, human institutions, and subjective thoughts;
●	Places high regard for the reality of and influence of the inner world of human experience in action;
●	Knowledge is viewed as being both constructed and based on the reality of the world we

	experience and live in;
●	Replaces the historically popular epistemic distinction between subject and external object with the naturalistic and process-oriented organism-environment transaction;
●	Endorses fallibilism; justification comes as warranted assertability (Dewey);
●	Theories are viewed instrumentally (they become true and they are true to different degrees based on how well they currently work; workability is judged especially on the criteria of predictability and applicability);
●	Endorses eclecticism and pluralism; Human inquiry (what we do in our day-to-day lives as we interact with our environments) is viewed as being analogous to experimental and scientific inquiry;
●	Endorses a strong and practical empiricism as the path to determine what works;
●	View current truth, meaning, and knowledge as tentative and as changing over time;
●	Capital Truth – “final opinion” at the end of history. Lowercase truths are given through experience and experimenting;
●	Instrumental truths are a matter of degree;
●	Prefers action to philosophizing (anti-philosophy);
●	Takes an explicitly value-oriented approach to research that is derived from cultural values; specifically endorses shared values such as democracy, freedom, equality, and progress;
●	Endorses practical theory; generally rejects reductionism;
●	Organisms are constantly adapting to new situations and environments;
●	Offers the ‘pragmatic method’ for solving traditional philosophical dualism as well as for making methodological choices.

Appendix 11. Timetable for data collection

2018/19 Timetable for Data Collection					
December		January		February	
Arranging pilot interviews	Conducting pilot interviews	Designing the hypotheses and the questionnaire	Using random decision technique and Sending the questionnaire to targeted participants	Starting record data to SPSS	Completing data recording process
Completing results analysis		Sending weekly reminding emails		Sending weekly reminding emails	
March		April		May	
Conducting data analysis for questionnaire	Arranging interviews with targeted participants in the China	Conducting interviews in the China	Coding the data into qualitative words and upload to Nvivo	Analysing data from the Chinese interviews	Arranging interviews for targeted UK institutions
Completing a draft report of quantitative data		Amendment of the quantitative report		Completing results analysis for quantitative study	
June		July		August	

Coding the data into qualitative words and upload to Nvivo	Amendment of the report of Chinese interviews	Conducting interviews in the UK	Analysing data from the UK interviews	Completing the qualitative report	Starting comparison analysis between quantitative and qualitative results
Completing a draft report of Chinese interview data		Writing a final report for the qualitative interviews		Writing the chapter of results	

Appendix 12. Correlations between *guanxi*'s elements

Correlations

	Face 1	Face 2	Face 3	Reciprocity 1	Reciprocity 2	Reciprocity 3	Reciprocity 4	Empathy 1	Empathy 2	Empathy 3	Empathy 4	Empathy 5	Empathy 6	Credit 1	Credit 2	Credit 3	Credit 4	Credit 5	Credit 6	Credit 7	Credit 8	
Face 1	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	18																				
Face 2	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.579*	1																			
Face 3	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.582**	.580*	1																		
Reciprocity 1	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.862**	.638**	.580*	1																	
Reciprocity 2	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.708**	.697**	.612**	.697**	1																
Reciprocity 3	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.584*	.564*	.326	.485*	.485*	1															
Reciprocity 4	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.662**	.576*	.308	.476*	.476*	.900**	1														
Empathy 1	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.300	-.096	-.198	.017	-.208	.416	.488*	1													
Empathy 2	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.226	.706	.430	.387	.407	.096	.040	.488*	1												
Empathy 3	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.624	.876	.624	.582*	.199	.303	.190	.000	.324	.900**	1										
Empathy 4	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.289	.408	.198	.485*	.485*	.041	.448	.193	.324	.900**	.324	.900**	1								
Empathy 5	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.150	.065	.340	.028	.032	.266	.399	-.082	.023	.688**	.023	.688**	.399	-.082	.023	.688**	1				
Empathy 6	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.283	.451	.234	.451	.327	.106	.243	.053	.303	.742**	.303	.742**	.106	.243	.053	.303	.742**	.303	.742**	1	
Credit 1	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.155	.246	.200	.246	-.109	.318	.364	.318	.546*	.318	.363	.625**	.318	.363	.625**	.318	.363	.625**	.318	.363	.625**
Credit 2	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.097	.285	-.093	-.008	-.195	.243	.338	.327	.531*	.338	.308	.398	.448	.338	.308	.398	.448	.338	.308	.398	.448
Credit 3	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.136	-.169	.038	.041	.233	.008	-.138	-.279	-.484*	-.196	-.179	-.178	-.321	-.673**	1						
Credit 4	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.591	.502	.881	.672	.352	.976	.594	.261	.042	.435	.477	.195	.002	.689**	.689**	1					
Credit 5	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.387	.189	.193	.331	.504*	-.122	-.070	-.428	-.560*	.153	.223	.144	-.289	-.632**	-.632**	.689**	1				
Credit 6	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.041	-.383	-.122	-.047	.075	-.350	-.304	-.085	-.193	-.133	-.121	-.114	-.601**	.235	.329	.1	.235	.329	.1		
Credit 7	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.871	.117	.630	.854	.769	.154	.220	.739	.442	.599	.632	.653	.468	.008	.347	.183	.468	.008	.347	.183	
Credit 8	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.968	.657	.319	.899	.304	.105	.046	.150	.119	.651	.451	.699	.236	.000	.108	.059	.016	.699	.236	.000	.108
	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.357	-.186	.171	.309	.296	-.128	.037	.128	-.037	.232	.146	.188	-.113	-.480*	.376	.435	.344	-.562*	.376	.435	.344
	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.146	.591	.497	.313	.233	.613	.885	.613	.885	.355	.564	.454	.655	.044	.124	.071	.163	.015	.655	.044	.124
	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.172	.751	.638	.486	.523	.466	.523	.466	.523	.474	.333	.478	1.000	-.365	.223	.413	.112	-.333	.478	1.000	-.365
	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.041	-.383	-.122	-.047	.075	-.350	-.304	-.085	-.193	-.133	-.121	-.114	-.601**	.235	.329	.1	.235	.329	.1		
	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.871	.117	.630	.854	.769	.154	.220	.739	.442	.599	.632	.653	.468	.008	.347	.183	.468	.008	.347	.183	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 13. The process of applying for a permission of an official overseas trip

