

DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE IN PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES AT JIANGSU PROVINCE IN CHINA

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Abstract: *The purpose of this study is to assess the development of international collaboration and exchange in private colleges and universities in the Chinese province of Jiangsu. Throughout the 1990s, the international development trend of the international industry was bolstered as a result of the promotion of economic globalisation, becoming the most current trend in the education of the global economy, and worldwide attention has expanded. China's higher education follows the trend of international development by aggressively integrating fresh ideas from across the globe and enhancing old ones. China's higher education and economic potential can only be expanded via internationalisation. A subsystem is a system with several internal components and numerous external impacts. The school- running quality of private colleges and universities is a thorough reflection of their school- running strength, encompassing two levels: the extension level, which refers to explicit elements such as the number of graduates and students, and teaching conditions; and the connotative level, which directly determines the quality of schools. The results show that professionals and researchers in higher education have been more interested in the internationalisation of private colleges and universities in recent years. One of the most notable modern examples of internationalisation in education is the rapid expansion of education services in several countries.*

Keywords: *Development, International, Cooperation, Exchange, Colleges, Universities, Jiangsu, China*

Introduction

During the 1990s, the international development trend of the international industry has been reinforced as a consequence of the promotion of economic globalisation, becoming the most current trend in the education of the world economy, and global attention has increased (Zhao, 2020). China's higher education follows the trend of international development by aggressively assimilating novel concepts from across the world and upgrading established ones. Only via internationalisation can China expand its higher education and economic potential (Li, 2016; Tham et al., 2017; Udriyah et al., 2019).

From short-term training sessions to unplanned self-study, diploma level, and undergraduate or master level, private colleges and universities in China have experienced development. With formal accreditation, private colleges and universities should, in theory, expand more quickly and improve. During a period of rapid development, China's private higher education has entered a period of stagnation, resulting in poor student quality and an illogical faculty organisation. At a time when private colleges and universities struggle to govern schools, China's economic and social development need a large number of high-quality international application-oriented and competent persons. Although the majority of private colleges and universities desire to run schools as application-oriented and skilled talents, they are powerless in this situation. The situation of private colleges' own development and the situation of national economic and social development need that private colleges and universities change their school running thinking, broaden their school running route, and implement transformation and development (Xue, 2018; Rachmawati et al., 2019; Azam et al.,



2021). Several academics believe that internationalisation aids private colleges in overcoming obstacles and evolving (Haur et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2019; Wei, 2020). In recent years, China has released the national medium and long-term education reform and development plan (2010-2020) and numerous viewpoints on education openness, which adhere expressly to opening up and welcome international cooperation. On the basis of this context, studying the factors affecting the international cooperation and exchange of private colleges and universities in Jiangsu Province and analysing the challenges faced by the internationalisation development of private colleges and universities will help to explore the typical path of the internationalisation development of private colleges and universities and assist private colleges and universities in carrying out international cooperation and exchange.

As early as the early 1950s, developed countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States began to encourage the internationalisation of higher education. Industrialized countries have created rich academic research through years of experience and accumulation, laying the framework for the internationalisation of higher education research themes. Clark (1980) believed that higher education should be international. Using the standard of “universality, communication, and openness,” Kitamura (1986) evaluates the development of internationalisation in higher education. Most domestic education internationalisation research started in the 1980s and has since grown. Chen (1997) outlined the idea and argument for higher education internationalisation. Zhou (2014) analysed the changes in my country’s higher education internationalisation policy and pointed out that higher education and colleges should base their decisions on the correct positioning of the school situation, actively study the experience of others, and explore the higher education internationalisation development path suitable for their own schools.

The internationalisation of higher education and colleges is formed against the background of the global trend of private higher education universities. According to Wang et al. (2017), private higher education colleges and universities are in a critical period of comprehensive transformation and development, and vigorously promoting the internationalisation of private higher education colleges and universities is an unavoidable choice for their transformation and improving the quality of private higher education. The internationalisation of higher education, according to Wang (2021), should comprise service-oriented, policy support, innovative models, multi-level collaboration, talent introduction, and awareness training. Liu and Lin (2021) pointed out that in the post-pandemic era, China should further strengthen the quality management of international students in China, take effective measures to continuously improve the quality of international students, and truly cultivate and use international students as strategic human resources. The success of talent training has formed a positive directing impact on the inflow of high-quality international students. According to Zheng et al. (2021), the internationalisation of higher education in the post-pandemic era faces multiple challenges, and colleges and universities should carefully consider how to innovate the work path for international exchange and cooperation and respond calmly to new changes and tendencies in the external environment.

The General Office of the Jiangsu Provincial Government (2021) pointed out that introducing high-quality overseas educational resources and working with foreign level and scientific research institutions to build high-quality scientific exchange platforms are crucial for private colleges and universities to improve the level of educational foreign exchanges and accelerate the training of international talents. Develop meaningful collaboration with abroad high-level universities and academic institutes, and carry out high-level collaborative talent training via mutual recognition of credits and degree giving. Carry out the development of special disciplines for global exchange and strengthen Jiangsu education’s international effect. The situation of internationalisation at the higher education level has never been better owing to the ever-changing international education environment. With the in-depth development and innovation of the international cooperation and exchange modules of private colleges and universities in Jiangsu Province, how to measure the internationalisation level of colleges and universities has become an increasingly important issue for scholars, leading to the emergence of a number of evaluation index systems (Dewi et al., 2019; Nguyen et al., 2019).



The internationalisation index level evaluation system of colleges and universities provides the basis for universities to participate in the internationalisation index system. In 2010, the country index system for higher education evaluation was introduced in the United States. Scholars in related fields of education evaluation in my country, Nanjing University, Sun Yat-sen University, Southwest Jiaotong University, and other universities and related institutions, have also released the evaluation index system for the internationalisation level of the country on the basis of learning from the experience of mature international education systems abroad.

For seven years running, Southwest Jiaotong University has released a list of the top 120 domestic universities in the University Internationalization Ranking (URI) and the Internationalization of Teachers, Internationalization, and Scientific Research. The evaluation index system of Southwest Jiaotong University combines quantitative (70%) and qualitative (30%) techniques. The evaluation system may give full play to the functions of university counselling, review, and inspection via the development of the university international evaluation system and research, therefore promoting the internationalisation of Chinese universities. develop. In 2015, the Chinese Association for International Exchange of Education conducted a study on the development of China's higher education internationalisation over seven years. The China International Education Association conducts a questionnaire survey on the internationalisation level of domestic universities based on the internationalisation evaluation system of Chinese university internationalisation research indicators in order to comprehend and improve the internationalisation development of Chinese universities.

This study selects the four cores of the first-level indicators of the internationalisation level situation of Southwest Jiaotong University and the internationalisation research and evaluation system of Chinese universities based on the aforementioned two evaluation systems for the internationalisation level of colleges and universities and the actual situation and key modules of the internationalisation development of private colleges and universities. Indicators: Internationalization of Students, Internationalization of Teachers, Internationalization of Scientific Research, and Internationalization of Courses, as the variables impacting the international level of exchanges and cooperation in private colleges and universities.

Throughout the last forty years of reform and opening up, China's private higher education has achieved remarkable progress. For instance, the structural system has undergone historic changes (the scale and volume have increased significantly, the forms and types have become increasingly rich, and the hierarchical structure has gradually moved up), and the endogenous ability of the organisation has been fundamentally improved (the basic conditions have been significantly improved, the overall strength of teachers has been greatly enhanced, and the scientific research ability has improved significantly) (the basic conditions have been significantly improved, the overall strength of teachers has been greatly enhanced, and the scientific research ability has improved significantly). The autonomy of private colleges and universities in operating schools is growing, the government's financial support for private higher education is growing, and the institutional framework of categorised administration of for-profit and non-profit formed higher education is largely in place. The development of higher private education in China has several challenges as well. In view of the shifting backdrop of the times, how can higher education in the private sector speed up the transformation of development mode, enhance education, and increase efficiency? The existence of these issues indirectly contributes to the increasingly difficult survival and development of private colleges and universities in recent years, and the transformation and development of private colleges and universities in China is urgent. In this regard, numerous studies have pointed out that internationalisation, particularly international exchanges and cooperation, is one of the important and desirable paths for private colleges and universities to achieve breakthroughs in school administration and achieve transformation and development (Pushpakumara et al., 2019; Jin, 2022). Also, Zhai (2022) pointed out that the international exchange of teachers and students is a two-way process, with private colleges and universities in Anhui focusing more on "going out," or exchanges between students, than "bringing in," which includes the lack of teachers, scientific exchange, and international exchange. For instance: (1) the concept of international education development is

deviated; (2) international strategic planning is not systematic; (3) international capital guarantee is lacking; (4) the internationalisation of the faculty and student structure is low; (5) there are few Sino-foreign cooperative education projects; and (6) the internationalisation of scientific research is lacking (Zhai, 2022).

From an economic standpoint, Wang (2020) looked at the international development of private universities and colleges. (1) The contrast between private colleges and university education paradigms.

Private higher education's internationalisation in universities and colleges is seen as one-sided. They believe that international development is a cooperative educational paradigm encompassing colleges and universities. (2) The planning problem of private institutions' and universities' education strategies. Most local colleges and universities lack practical experience and professional orientation on how to realise the international development of private education strategies, and are unable to make judgements about the long-term development of students in the local educational environment, demonstrating educational resources and quality, etc. Geography and brand influence education at private colleges and universities. Education majors and school branding are routinely used as important ploys to recruit students. It is also susceptible to variance across teachers and public relations majors.

Development of Private Colleges and Universities

Under the "Interim Rules on the Creation of Private Colleges and Universities," "Private Colleges and Universities" first appeared. The private colleges and universities in this study are those that execute state-recognized higher education by non-governmental organisations and people utilising non-state financial education funds and in compliance with the established norms of higher education. The autonomy, adaptability, and uniqueness of operating a school are its defining characteristics (Wang, 2019; Pambreni et al., 2019; Do et al., 2019; Do et al., 2020).

St. John's University, which was created in Shanghai by a foreign church at the end of the 19th century, is usually regarded as the oldest private university in the modern sense in my country. It was formerly the finest comprehensive university in the country, but it was subsequently dismantled and its faculties were divided into regional public universities. The Wuchang Zhonghua University was the first private university established by indigenous in my country. From the end of the Qing Dynasty until before the foundation of the People's Republic of my country, the aforementioned two private colleges and universities, as well as several normal private colleges, were formed. All private colleges and universities in the country were thereafter taken over by the Chinese government in 1950. In 1952, the countrywide reorganisation of colleges and departments started. The next year, all private colleges and universities have been turned into public colleges and universities, or their departments have been absorbed by other public colleges and universities. Since then, after the reform and opening of private colleges, the idea of private colleges does not exist in my country. Since the reform and opening up, after more than 40 years of development, my country's private colleges and universities have progressively developed from nothing, amassed more, gotten stronger and more diversified, and have achieved significant accomplishments in terms of number, size, level, and quality. With the strengthening of the national education policy and the fast social and economic development, it has fulfilled the rising demand of the people for higher education and become an essential component of the higher education system (Zou, 2021).

Since the promulgation and implementation of the National Education Planning Outline, private colleges and universities in my country have entered the stage of establishing high-level private colleges and universities, and the strategic orientation of the development of private colleges and universities is quality improvement, according to Xue (2018). The development tasks of each stage of private higher education in my country are obviously different, under the guidance of national laws, regulations, and policies, changes in social needs, and the law of private higher education itself, as can be seen by reviewing the main viewpoints of the research on the stages of private higher education in my country. It is a significant element influencing the strategic direction of private higher education development. Starting with a comprehensive grasp of the fundamental backdrop of

the development of private higher education in my country over the last several decades, this study may serve as a background to support the development of this research.

The challenges of transformation and universities are now being faced by private colleges and universities in my country as a result of the fast economic and social development. In the process of transformation and development, private colleges and universities must seize historical development possibilities to meet the challenges posed by the society's external environment and the internal challenges of colleges and universities. Need private universities and colleges The quality of talent training and school-running level in application-oriented private colleges and universities can be improved by strengthening the construction of its own cultural characteristic model, the integration of production and education, the practise of school-enterprise cooperation, and the acceleration of connotative development (Hu, 2022).

The "Twelfth Five-Year Plan" stage represents a crucial strategic window for the international development of Chinese private colleges and universities. With a larger perspective, more open and strategic thinking, private colleges and universities should seize the opportunity and develop methods appropriate for the internationalisation of private colleges and universities.

Level of Private Colleges and Universities

The curriculum of private colleges and universities at the school level is extensive. Harman and Rosenberg noted: "Education is merely one component of a vast social system. The tactics of the education system alone cannot address educational difficulties." A subsystem is a system comprised of several internal components and influenced by numerous external influences.


The school-running quality of private colleges and universities is a comprehensive reflection of their school-running strength, encompassing two levels: the extension level, which refers to explicit elements such as the number of graduates and students, and teaching conditions; and the connotative level, which directly determines the quality of colleges, such as running schools.

Wang (2012) discovered that there are few comprehensive and systematic studies on the "running level" of private colleges and universities, and related research publications only concentrate on two aspects: one element is the various evaluation indicators of private colleges and universities.

Nowadays, the state primarily monitors the educational quality of private colleges and universities at the level of education. Since private colleges and universities' notion of "school-running level" has evolved from legislative requirements to social appeals to their own development demands, private higher education has continued to advance. It is hotly debated, but the academic circles have different understandings of the "level of running a school". There is no definitive explanation for the idea of "school-running level" since the grading criteria vary depending on the context. By an analysis of the assessment indicators of the school-running level of colleges and universities in Jiangsu Province, we intend to elucidate the main factors that influence the development of international exchanges and cooperation in private colleges and universities.

International Cooperation and Exchange in Private Colleges and Universities

The internationalisation of education in private colleges and universities in recent years has drawn the attention of professionals and scholars in higher education. Shen (2011) noted in the research that internationalisation is the strategic decision of Chinese higher education. According to Chen et al. (2009), internationalisation is simply catching up for universities in developing nations to join the academic community of Western English-speaking countries and conduct their own research in accordance with those norms. Sun (2020) noted that the internationalisation of private higher education entails "optimising the allocation of various educational resources, making full use of domestic and foreign higher education markets, and carefully cultivating a group of people with an international perspective through active introduction, exit, digestion, integration, and other means. Application-oriented abilities, and then achieve the leap-forward development of private higher education in our nation." Several renowned private colleges and international universities in China are actively pursuing internationalisation. They have repeatedly developed special management institutes in cooperation with universities in the United States, Australia, South Korea, and other




nations, emphasising teaching quality, enhancing teamwork, and expanding from a single project to a range of initiatives. Several international cooperative education students have created a solid basis for internationalisation. Xi'an Institute of International Affairs, for instance, is the only private university in Shaanxi Province that is authorised to enrol international students. To achieve mutual complementarity of advantages and sharing of high-quality educational resources in the form of mutual recognition of credits, teacher quality, and degree exchange, well-known foreign universities and educational institutions have established cooperation and education relationships and reached education agreements (Shen, 2011). In addition, with the comprehensive implementation of the national plan "One Belt, One Road," the social and economic development of the nations and regions along the route has been enhanced, therefore driving the internationalisation of higher education. In recent years, application-oriented private colleges and universities in Shaanxi Province have made useful explorations in international teaching, including the expansion of cross-cultural subject courses, the growth of student exchanges between China and abroad, and the development of bilingual curriculum systems (Chen, 2021).

Zhang (2021) noted that there are some issues that need to be fixed in my country's current process of internationalising higher education: the internationalisation of the teaching staff is low, the internationalisation of talent training is low, the degree of internationalisation of education and teaching is low, and the internationalisation of academic exchanges and cooperation is low. There are five areas that need to be improved. Wang (2018) used Shenyang Institute of Technology as an example and said that the majority of internationalisation work at private colleges and universities has a poor basis, began late, has a low social reputation, and its features are obscure. Zhao said that the internationalisation of private colleges and universities in Guangxi lacked institutional guarantees, a closed school operating model, international flexibility in professional structure and curriculum, and internationalised faculty creation. Zhai (2022) came to the conclusion that private colleges and universities in Anhui Province have made some attempts and useful explorations in internationalisation, including Sino-foreign cooperation in school administration, scientific cooperation and academic cooperation, and inter-school exchanges. Problems such as internationalisation and lack of internationalisation of teacher organisation need immediate adjustment and formulation of relevant responses. Ma (2016) noted that the internationalisation of private colleges and universities in Shaanxi generally has a weak internationalisation concept, insufficient organisational guarantee and funding, few teachers with international backgrounds, poor international mobility of students, low rate of internationalisation of courses, and degree of internationalisation of scientific research.

Findings and Discussion

Private colleges and universities have less social impact and prestige than public colleges and universities, and their recognition by the international community is low, making international cooperation and exchange difficult (Wang et al., 2018; Wei, 2020; Zhai, 2022). The investigation of international cooperation in private colleges and universities is mostly focused on conventional Chinese-foreign exchanges, exchange of international students, "2+2" or "1+3" cooperation, and other initiatives. Also, Chen (2021) noted that there is a problem of homogeneity in the internationalised undergraduate education model of various colleges and universities, which fails to fully reflect the school's school-running characteristics and hinders the achievement of the diversity goal of international talent training. The primary cause of this issue is the absence of policy direction on the internationalisation of private colleges and universities, particularly in terms of talent training and curriculum system development; there are only general norms and no specific practical standards.

Nowadays, private colleges and universities are often deficient in professors with international experience, administrators with an international viewpoint, and foreign teachers. Zhao (2022) came to the conclusion that many professors at private colleges and universities in Guangxi have never studied abroad, and their ability to use foreign language skills is weak. The adoption of international teaching methods in Guangxi's private colleges and universities will be negatively impacted by a lack



of instructors and professional competence. Zhai (2022) noted that the number of foreign instructors at Anhui's private colleges and universities is more than ten, fewer than ten, and zero in certain institutions, accounting for a tiny percentage of professors; these foreign teachers are mostly language majors. There are fewer class instructors. Since the outbreak, private colleges and universities have faced difficulties such as limited recruiting channels and arduous visa applications, making it more challenging to hire foreign professors.

Dai (2020) noted that the trend of anti-globalization has intensified and evolved alongside the spread of the pandemic, and the cultivation of students' internationalisation ability in local colleges and universities faces more complex situations, such as in the internationalisation of colleges and universities, in the development of internationalisation in higher education, and in the internationalisation of higher education. The internationalisation programmes of private colleges and universities are now restricted to a few colleges and a few majors. In many instances, they provide students to foreign universities unilaterally, and they are unable to attract international students, which hinders the sustainable development of private colleges and universities. (Xiao, 2020). Peng (2018) said that, using Wuchang Shouyi College as an example, less than 100 students go overseas for exchange each year. The percentage is less than 2.51% based on the number of students enrolled in the institution in 2017 (3,110 undergraduates and 880 junior college students). The shortage of teachers in private universities, the inadequacy of platforms and mechanisms for international exchanges and cooperation, and the inadequacy of the education and teaching system have created the realistic dilemma of the low international exchange flow rate of students in private universities and colleges in Wuhan.

Liu (2013) noted that, compared to public colleges, the methods of implementing curriculum internationalisation in private colleges are constrained by a number of factors, focusing primarily on two aspects: foreign language learning and bilingual curriculum construction, indicating a level and single-oriented situation. The development of internationalised courses by private colleges lacks solid institutional guarantees and enough financial support, and it is unclear if internationalised courses are intended to increase students' comprehension and awareness of international competition and cooperation. The penetration and incorporation of international ideas and international awareness in general education Students' contacts and debates on international issues cannot be stimulated by the one-way transmission stage. While private colleges and universities conduct research, design, and experiential international courses, public colleges and universities actively absorb the experience of foreign students in curriculum construction, increase the proportion of practical courses, and promote "construction" with "introduction." There is a shortage of breakthroughs and innovations in practise, "transnational" curriculum internationalisation is in its early stages, and there is a significant gap with the mature stage of "cross-cultural" at several public universities. The curriculum internationalisation of private colleges and universities should go beyond the project level and take action at the school level to create an inclusive and open international campus culture as well as an international exchange support and international cooperation environment that meets the diverse needs of students.

Zhai (2022) noted that private colleges and universities in Anhui Province have a short school-running duration, a late start to scientific universities, and limited experience in school-running. The process of scientific research internationalisation at private colleges and universities, according to Li (2014), encounters several challenges, which are mostly shown in the following areas: (1) Lack of correlation between scientific research and educational modules. Due to the fact that private colleges and universities place an emphasis on the improvement of teaching ability during their own development, the shortcoming of teaching and scientific research tends to be in opposition; (2) There is a significant gap between managers' emphasis on the internationalisation of scientific research and public colleges. The underlying circumstances, conceptual awareness, and operational mechanism for scientific research internationalisation must be strengthened by private entities. International scientific research projects conducted in collaboration with overseas universities or institutions are small in scope and duration, impeding the further internationalisation of scientific research; (3) In the process of teacher development, the burdensome teaching responsibilities and the difficulty of



scientific research work objectively delays the internationalisation of scientific research in colleges and universities.

Concluding Remarks

Due to economic globalisation, the trend of internationalisation in the education sector has intensified and become a current trend in the development of the world's economic sphere; worldwide attention to it has also risen. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Bank, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have held conferences to discuss the global impact of education internationalisation and have made specific provisions for related policies. The fast spread of education services in many nations is one of the most significant contemporary expressions of internationalisation in education. Practically every country in the globe has been touched by this growth trend, and China is one of the nations that has been affected by this expansion trend the most. (Wen, 2010).

Looking back at the development history of education exchanges in China, there were several Chinese and foreign education exchange activities in ancient China, such as the Tang Dynasty's dispatch of envoys to ancient China. Yet, it was not until after the establishment of New China, and particularly with the execution of the reform and opening-up policy in 1978, that the concept of internationalisation of education, devoid of ideological prejudice, took on contemporary relevance (Zha Yuanli, 2012). In 1983, Deng Xiaoping proposed the "Three Orientations," or "education should be directed to modernity, the world, and the future," and for the first time officially proclaimed the slogan of internationalisation of education, comprehending the trend of the end of development of education in the world. In 1985, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) approved the Resolution on the Reform of the Education System, which stated that "the reform of the education system should draw on both the good and bad features of foreign education development." In the 1990s, the internationalisation of Chinese education entered a new stage of development, and the 1993 Outline of China's Education Reform and Development proposed "to further expand the opening of education to the outside world, strengthen international exchange and cooperation, and boldly absorb and learn from the successful experiences of other nations in developing and managing education." In 1995, the State issued and implemented the Provisional Rules on Chinese-Foreign Cooperative Education, noting that "Chinese-foreign cooperative education is a major type of international exchange and cooperation in Chinese education, and is a supplement to Chinese education."

China formally joined the World Trade Organization in 2001. (WTO). China agreed to trade in education services in conformity with the WTO's rules and in light of its own national circumstances. China's local education sector has now integrated itself into the global education industry (Zhou Mansheng, 2006). In 2016, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council announced "Many Views on the Opening-up of Education to the Outside World," which outlined the opening-up of education in the new age. "Firstly, to accelerate the development of study abroad and improve its quality; secondly, to improve institutional mechanisms and enhance the end of foreign-related education; thirdly, to strengthen high-level leadership to enhance our strength and innovation capabilities; fourthly, to enrich cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries and promote people-to-people exchanges; fifthly, to promote win-win cooperation in the field of education; and sixthly, to implement the "Belt" and a number of policies have been promulgated and put into effect, which has aided in the development of China's educational internationalisation. Nonetheless, the 2019 COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant influence on international cooperation and exchange. The pandemic acts as a catalyst to exacerbate objective geopolitical disputes. The stress brought on by geopolitical conflicts may be difficult to alleviate in the near term and will continue to exist and further disturb the global order and internationalisation in higher education.

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