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臺灣往中國的高等教育學生流動：推拉因素
Student Flows from Taiwan to China in Higher
Education: Push-Pull Factors

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中華民國 108 年 6 月
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Abstract

Cross-strait integration and cooperation between Taiwan and mainland China in recent years has been focused in economic, cultural, and academic spheres, while political relations between the governing authorities on either side of the Taiwan Strait remain strained. While the Taiwanese business community in mainland China is well-studied in the context of cross-strait integration, the communities formed by student migration from Taiwan to China is a relatively more recent phenomenon that has attracted relatively less academic interest. Drawing upon the “push-pull” theory of migration, integration across political systems through the linkage community framework, and the marketization and globalization of higher education, this thesis examines the factors contributing to Taiwanese students’ decisions to study in mainland China’s universities in graduate programs. Open-ended questionnaires with Taiwanese students enrolled in Mainland graduate programs and semi-structured interviews revealed economic factors as well as social/cultural factors that students considered in their choice to study in mainland China. Finally, this thesis assesses the extent to which Taiwanese students in Chinese universities contribute to the formation of linkage communities intertwining the two sides of the Taiwan Strait together.

Key words: International higher education, cross-strait relations, push-pull theory, integration theory, economic relations

摘要

近年來，經濟，文化和學術是台灣與大陸兩岸統一及合作時所專注的三個領域，但是他們之間的政治關係仍然保持在緊張的狀態。當了解台灣與大陸的兩岸關係時，在大陸的台商已經被深入的研究了，而相對比較新的現象；選擇在大陸讀書的台灣學生們並他們形成的團體，還沒有得到充分的學術分析。借鑒“推-拉”遷移理論，並通過聯繫群體結構而導致的政治體系整合，以及高等教育的市場化和全球化，本論文研究台灣學生決定遷移到大陸的大學去讀研究所時影響及考慮的因素。通過開放式的調查問卷和半結構化的訪問，調查顯示台灣學生們在選擇去大陸讀研究所時有考慮到經濟，社會與文化的因素。最後，本論文評估了台灣學生在中國的大學所形成的團體是否有助於台灣與大陸的連接並這些群體在何種程度上促成了兩岸交織在一起。

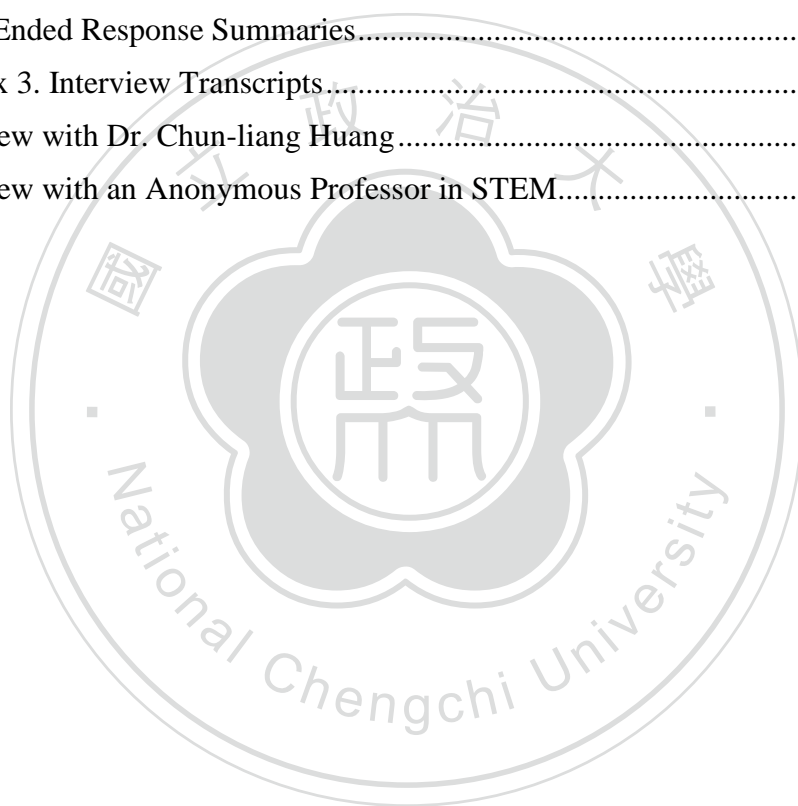
關鍵詞：國際高等教育，台灣大陸兩岸關係，推拉理論，整合理論，經濟關係

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List of Abbreviations

- ARATS: Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits
- BRI: Belt and Road Initiative
- CCP/CPC: Chinese Communist Party/Communist Party of China
- CUCAS: China's University and College Application System
- DPP: Democratic Progressive Party
- ECFA: Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement
- IIE: Institute of International Education
- KMT: Kuomintang/Guomindang, Chinese Nationalist Party
- MAC: Mainland Affairs Council
- NIE: Newly Industrialized Economy
- OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
- PRC: People's Republic of China
- QS: Quacquarelli Symonds
- ROC: Republic of China
- SEF: Straits Exchange Foundation
- SOE: State-owned enterprise
- STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- TSAs: Taiwanese Student Associations
- UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
- WTO: World Trade Organization

臺灣往中國的高等教育學生流動：推拉因素

Student Flows from Taiwan to China in Higher Education: Push-Pull Factors

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Since the 1949 retreat of the Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang or Guomindang, hereafter KMT) to Taiwan at the end of the Chinese Civil War, the island of Taiwan and the Chinese mainland have been locked in political conflict characterized by little to no high-level interaction between the governments of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC). While the ROC government exercises *de facto* sovereignty over the islands of Taiwan, Penghu, Matsu, and Jinmen, the PRC enjoys a much larger share of diplomatic partners internationally and power to prevent Taiwan from pursuing *de jure* independence via a "One China Principle," by which the PRC will not tolerate an independent Taiwan and will strive for the island's unification with the mainland.

While political relations between the two governing systems in Taiwan and mainland China have remained cold and official contact between the two nonexistent, interaction and movement between the people of the two sides today has never been easier. With the lifting of martial law in Taiwan came a lifting on a ban to travel to mainland China; since then, both formal and informal cooperation between China and Taiwan has been in social and economic realms, such as trade, investment, cultural links, and education exchange.

However, challenges still abound in the Taiwan-China relationship: a growing sense of Taiwanese national identity and a consolidating democracy in Taiwan contribute to preventing spillover of economic interdependence into policies that bring China and Taiwan closer together. Differences in size and development in the Taiwanese and Chinese economies stoke fears in Taiwan that economic dependence on China will result in the hollowing out of Taiwan's economy or coercing Taiwan into unwanted unification. On the other hand, the rapidly growing Chinese economy provides many opportunities for Taiwanese businesspeople and professionals to gain more than on their home island. Integration with China's economy is a phenomenon that Taiwan's people recognize as politically sensitive but carrying many economic rewards. Despite changes in political

leadership, political outlook, and national identification in Taiwan, the island's relationship with China remains a salient issue in the minds of those who interact with the mainland.

The focus of this thesis rests upon this increased integration despite perceived political risk in the China-Taiwan relationship. While much scholarly attention is paid to the perspectives of Taiwanese businesspeople in China and their effect on broader issues in cross-strait relations, much less research has focused on Taiwanese students who study in the Chinese mainland. While Mainland Chinese universities have been open to recruiting Taiwanese students since 1985, the volume of Taiwanese students enrolling in universities in China has increased over the 2010s.¹ These cohorts of Taiwanese students in Mainland universities form a “linkage community” between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. These communities have the potential to forge understanding and mutual trust between China and Taiwan. Understanding their decision process in choosing the Mainland for study may reveal more about larger dynamics in the cross-strait relationship and the development of international student mobility.

1.2. Research Motivation and Approach

My motivation for choosing this topic and completing a thesis in this area are twofold. Firstly, my professional and academic interests in both cross-strait relations and education stretch back many years to my time as an undergraduate student. Having researched topics in cross-strait relations, worked with international students, and been an international student myself, I am motivated to pursue a thesis that combines my past experiences and professional interests. This may allow me to bring a unique perspective to the topic of education exchange in cross-strait relations and serve as a basis for further studies on the role and significance of cross-border student mobility.

Secondly, studies of cross-strait movement and migration over the past several years tend to focus on Taiwanese businesspeople in China or cross-strait tourism and their role in cross-strait relations. These studies are especially important for understanding economic interdependence between China and Taiwan. However, I have found that little research has been done regarding the movement of students, whose motivations for traveling to the other side may differ from those of businesspeople and tourists. What can

¹ William Yat Lai Lo, “The Political Economy of Cross-Border Higher Education: The Intra-National Flow of Students in Greater China,” in Misa Izuhara, ed. *Handbook on East Asian Social Policy*, Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013, pp. 452-471.

this cohort of Taiwanese students in the Mainland tell us about the larger state of cross-strait relations? Through document analysis, and interviews with professionals in the cross-strait education industry, and questionnaires with prospective graduate students, this study aims to glean a more complete picture of conditions in Taiwan and mainland China that drive cross-strait interactions, migration, and integration among the people of both sides.

The research approach for this thesis is interdisciplinary by nature, drawing from the fields of demography, international relations, and political economy, education, and policy. This includes two main theoretical frameworks to conceptualize cross-border student mobility and cross-strait integration between China and Taiwan. The first framework involves theories of migration and individual decision-making processes. Everett Lee's theory on migration guides individual decision-making in the context of migration.² Building off the migration literature, Mazzarol and Soutar's work on international student mobility forms the "push-pull" framework that operationalizes student decision-making processes.³ These models are grounded in the marketization and liberalization of higher education that creates a higher education marketplace in which students choose institutions to invest their financial and personal resources for future professional and social opportunity (see Chapter 2). The second framework involves the specific case of China-Taiwan relations, specifically frameworks of mobility and integration between the people of the two sides in the absence of warm governmental relations. Yung Wei's conception of multi-system nations and linkage communities provides the theoretical context for the importance of people-to-people ties for the future of cross-strait relations and integration (see Chapter 3, section 3.1.3).⁴ The cross-strait migration of students potentially creates a linkage community of Taiwanese students in China who understand and have a stake in the peaceful development of cross-strait relations.

1.3 Research Question and Objectives

This study aims to answer the following research question: what pull factors in mainland China and in push factors in Taiwan motivate Taiwanese students to migrate to

² Everett S. Lee, "A Theory of Migration," *Demography*, vol. 3 no. 1, 1966, pp. 47-57

³ Tim Mazzarol and Geoffrey N. Soutar, "'Push-Pull' Factors Influencing International Student Destination Choice," *International Journal of Educational Management*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2002, pp. 82-90.

⁴ Yung Wei, "From 'Multi-System Nations' to 'Linkage Communities': A New Conceptual Scheme for the Integration of Divided Nations," *Issues and Studies* vol. 33, no. 10 1997, pp. 1-19.

China for higher education? Conversely, are there reverse push factors in China or positive pull factors in Taiwan that students weigh in their choice of graduate school location?

The objectives of this research are twofold. Firstly, this study aims to identify and contextualize the social, economic, and/or personal factors Taiwanese students consider in their decision of whether to pursue graduate studies in mainland China. Secondly, this study attempts to tie these considerations into the larger body of work on cross-strait economic relations and the role of students in integrating the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. More specifically, this study frames these considerations in terms of the push-pull framework. Following frameworks of migration proposed by Everett S. Lee, Mazzarol and Soutar, and Li and Bray, this study defines both positive and negative push factors in both Taiwan and China that may affect student choice in graduate school location.⁵

Regarding the “push” side of the push-pull framework, this study examines the push factors associated with Taiwan as well as with China. Following other literature on student mobility, push factors include conditions at home that motivate a person to move elsewhere. Push factors may also include negative conditions in the destination locale that make that destination unwelcoming.⁶ For the purposes of this study, “push” factors will be characterized as the negative factors within Taiwan that make students feel the need to move somewhere else to pursue an advanced degree, which may include the dissatisfaction with salary levels or opportunities for professional advancement in Taiwan. Push factors can also work in the opposite direction, which in this case would include negative aspects of life and studies in mainland China that Taiwanese students consider that could also alter their decisions, such as perceptions of academic and social freedom in China or the quality of a Mainland graduate program as compared to a local Taiwanese one.

On the other hand, “pull” factors make up the attractive traits or perceptions of the destination that draw a person there, or the positive aspects of home that may prevent a person from leaving. In this study, “pull” factors comprise of the benefits, both real and perceived, of mainland China as a destination for Taiwanese students. Conversely, pull factors operating in the opposite direction include the positive aspects of not migrating for

⁵ See Everett S. Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-57; Mazzarol and Soutar, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-90, and Mei Li and Mark Bray, “Cross-Border flows of students for higher education: push-pull factors and motivations of mainland Chinese students in Hong Kong and Macau,” *Higher Education*, vol. 53, 2007, pp. 791-818.

⁶ See Everett S. Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-57; Mazzarol and Soutar, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-90, and Mei Li and Mark Bray, *op. cit.*, pp. 791-818.

graduate studies and staying in Taiwan, which may include proximity to friends and family or the general ease of staying in one's home locale to study. Through open-ended questionnaires with Taiwanese graduate students currently studying in the Mainland as well as interviews with professionals familiar with cross-strait advanced studies, this thesis aims to identify and describe prevalent "push" and "pull" factors motivating Taiwanese students to study in China.

After identifying the various factors pushing these students out of Taiwan and pulling them toward mainland China for higher education through this two-way push-pull framework, the second objective of this thesis is to evaluate whether these factors contribute to the formation of a "linkage community" of Taiwanese students in China, as formulated by Yung Wei and Shu Keng for gauging cross-strait integration.⁷ Do these Taiwanese students choose to study in China out of a desire to understand and identify with the other side, or are their economic and social prospects after graduation their main concern? While current studies have focused largely on cross-strait business and tourism flows to apply the linkage community framework, the same framework can apply to the movement of students, whose purpose for migration differs from both cross-strait entrepreneurs and tourists.

1.4. Research Methods

This thesis focuses narrowly on economic, political, legal, and personal factors affecting the decision-making process of Taiwanese students enrolled in graduate programs in the PRC and takes a variety of qualitative methodological approaches to examine this phenomenon. This study employs a document analysis of secondary source materials such as books, journal articles, and periodicals. Primary source documents for analysis include ROC and PRC law and government papers regarding Taiwan and China's political relationship, economic interactions, and higher education systems.

Because in-depth studies of Taiwanese students in mainland China are currently scarce, this study uses semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires with higher education professionals and Taiwanese graduate students in mainland China to supplement the document analysis. Two semi-structured interviews occurred in Taipei. One interview was conducted with Dr. Chun-liang Huang, Secretary General of Chinese

⁷ See Yung Wei, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-19; and Shu Keng, "Integrating from Below: Observing the 'Linkage Communities' across the Taiwan Strait," *European Research Center on Contemporary Taiwan Online Paper Series*, no. 1, 2007, pp. 1-18.

School of Future Education Society (中華未來學校教育學會), whose experience and expertise in the area of cross-strait education provided insight and context for the questionnaire responses. The second interview took place with a Taipei-based professor (who wished to remain anonymous) whose experience with graduate students in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields provides a counterpoint to evidence of increasing cross-strait student mobility. These interviews focused on the market for cross-strait education as well as their own perceptions of students' motives to study in mainland China. With the interviewees' permission, our conversations were recorded for my own playback and analysis purposes only. Recordings may be destroyed at the end of the study at the request of the interviewees.

Dr. Huang Chun-liang assisted in locating willing participants for the open-ended questionnaire. Questionnaire respondents included students currently enrolled full-time in graduate programs in China. Willing respondents received a virtual, open-ended questionnaire in both English and Chinese in the form of a Microsoft Word document that was then sent back to me by email. Questionnaire items focused on factors that students consider when making the decision to go to mainland China for graduate studies. Questionnaire items were framed in terms of students' rationales for applying to graduate school (1) outside of Taiwan and (2) in mainland China. While upwards of 30 questionnaires were sent, this study yielded eleven valid responses. Questionnaire respondents remained anonymous in this study.

Because few studies have explored student flows from Taiwan to China, students' self-formulated responses served as primary data and as a starting point for analysis based on secondary sources, placing student responses in the context of social and economic literature. Despite the small sample size that limits the applicability of the data to the larger population of Taiwanese students in China, the questionnaire response data uncovered directions in the analysis for which academic documentation is more plentiful. The analysis connects the micro-level rationales for cross-border graduate study from the student questionnaires with the macro-level trends and developments in cross-strait political, economic, and educational relations.

1.5. Chapter Outline

This thesis consists of six chapters examining the motivations and decision-making process of Taiwanese students considering attending universities in the Chinese

mainland. Chapter 1 introduces the topic and themes of the thesis, including research approach and objectives, research methods and hypotheses, and limitations of the study. Chapter 2 provides a literature review covering the expansion of higher education, which includes its massification, marketization, and internationalization that has occurred in tandem with increased economic globalization and liberalization. Chapter 2 also presents the push-pull framework of student mobility and reviews previous studies that apply the framework to cross-border movement of students in higher education.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of cross-Taiwan Strait relations between the PRC and ROC. This chapter includes theories and frameworks of cross-strait relations as they relate to this thesis particularly the divided nations framework, integration theory, and the linkage community framework. The chapter also provides a brief political and economic history of China and Taiwan's relationship. Chapter 4 explores the landscapes and development of higher education systems in Taiwan and China, respectively. Chapter 4 also reviews interactions happening in higher education across the Taiwan Strait today and conceptualizes China as a destination for foreign students rather than its historical role as a significant source of international students.

Chapter 5 presents the findings of this thesis, which are the specific economic, social, and personal factors students consider in their decision to pursue higher education in China. This chapter includes interview findings and questionnaire results that distill the various factors into two themes. These findings are then discussed within the larger literature of cross-strait economic relations, development of higher education, and the linkage community framework. Chapter 6 concludes the thesis with implications of this research on Taiwan and China. The chapter also discusses areas for further research on higher education links between China and Taiwan.

1.6. Hypotheses

This thesis focuses heavily on Taiwanese students' perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of studying in Taiwan versus in China. Since the research objectives mentioned above for this study are twofold, two main hypotheses guide this thesis:

Hypothesis 1. Taiwanese students consider economic and social challenges associated with life in Taiwan as well as the economic advantages of studying in China when deciding where to pursue and enroll in higher education.

Hypothesis 2. While the cohort of Taiwanese students in China do fit the definition of a linkage community across the Taiwan strait, their individual reasons for studying in the Mainland are less related to their preferences for Taiwan and China's political future than to their perceptions of professional and economic advancement after graduation.

These hypotheses are based in existing frameworks, theories, and evidence of cross-border student mobility as well as the current state of relations between Taiwan and China. Several studies in recent years have shown that increased economic integration in trade and business openness between China and Taiwan has thus far failed to spill over into warmer political relations between the two sides' governments. Considering evidence of cross-strait integration among the Taiwanese business community in mainland China, this thesis hypothesizes that the flows of graduate students from Taiwan to China follow a similar pattern. Results from interviews and questionnaires with Taiwanese higher education professionals and graduate school applicants to Mainland Chinese graduate programs provide supplemental data needed to test these hypotheses and reveal which factors are common among this pool of students considering mainland China as a destination for graduate study.

1.7. Limitations

While the purpose of this study strives to cover the topic of student flows from Taiwan to China as thoroughly as possible, a few limitations may be identified. Firstly, the qualitative nature of this research aims to identify common factors among Taiwanese students driving their decision-making. Measurement of the relative importance of each factor will not be included in this study. Moreover, the results obtained in the present study cannot be applied to the whole population of Taiwanese students in mainland China. Secondly, this study deals extensively with students' *perceptions* rather than the *reality* of economic, social, and political conditions in Taiwan and China, since students' decision-making process is based largely in their perceptions of macro-level conditions as well as personal factors. While current data and evidence on economic and political relations between Taiwan and China will be considered in this study to illustrate the relative quality of life between China and Taiwan, this thesis does not necessarily compare or evaluate whether students' perceptions of the costs and benefits of studying in China are well-founded or match the reality of current cross-strait relations. Finally, the

scope of respondent selection has been limited to Taiwanese students to Mainland graduate school programs rather than applicants to undergraduate or exchange programs. As graduate school applicants tend to be older, more experienced, and more independent than their high-school aged counterparts applying for undergraduate programs, their interview responses may better reflect their own perspectives of their opportunities in mainland China. Moreover, graduate-level applicants, in applying for long-term degree programs, consider a different set of factors than students seeking an exchange program experience of only one or two semesters.



Chapter 2. Literature Review

The international migration of students today takes place within widely expanded, marketized, and internationalized higher education systems. The current status of higher education systems today has followed many other changes in the global political economy since the end of World War II. This literature review covers the relevant scholarship on the expansion, marketization, and internationalization of higher education in the globalized economy, especially as these phenomena relate to the global mobility of students. This body of literature is then placed in the context of the wider scholarship on migration frameworks and theory. This chapter then presents the push-pull framework of international student mobility and concludes by reviewing relevant existing studies that have applied the framework globally and to the Asia Pacific Region.

2.1. Expansion of Higher Education

2.1.1. *Expansion in Access and Demand*

While the concept of the university has survived since the middle ages, the university's form, function, and role in society has changed dramatically as more people have demanded and gained access to institutions of higher education, especially in the period following World War II.¹ In terms of access, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Higher Education Programme provides the following data for 2015-2016 on the participation of young people in higher education:

Based on current patterns of graduation, an average of 35% of today's young people across OECD countries is expected to graduate from tertiary education at least once before the age of 30, some 57% are expected to enter a bachelor's degree or equivalent programme, and 22% are expected to enter a master's degree or equivalent programme over their lifetime.

On average across OECD countries, 54% of new entrants into tertiary education are women, and 82% are under the age of 25. In addition some 13% of all entrants are international students.²

These data illustrate how higher education is becoming more widely attainable and, in some places, even becoming an expectation among young people. The OECD

¹ Sarah Guri-Rosenblit, Helena Šebková, and Ulrich Teichler, "Massification and Diversity of higher Education Systems: Interplay of Complex Dimensions," *Higher Education Policy*, vol. 20, 2007, p. 373.
² Cláudia Sarrico, "Chapter 1: Higher Education Today," in Andrew McQueen and Shane Samuelson, eds., *State of Higher Education: 2015-16* (Paris: OECD Higher Education Programme, 2017), 4.

report further notes that in all but two OECD countries, “the share of younger adults (25-34 year-olds) with tertiary qualifications is larger than that of older adults (55-64 year-olds) with that level of qualification.”³ This generational difference illustrates the rapid and recent nature of mass higher education participation and tertiary degree attainment. Martin Trow’s 1973 analysis of massification in higher education identified three forms of higher education: elite, mass, and universal.⁴ In the transition from an elite (15 percent or less of the relevant age cohort participating in higher education) to mass (15 to 50 percent) system of higher education, the role of tertiary education shifts from building up the character and minds of a small, elite class to transmitting skills to a larger proportion of the population in preparation for economic vocational roles. When reaching universal levels (over 50 percent relevant cohort participation), higher education encompasses nearly all members of the relevant population and becomes viewed as an obligation for individuals, even when not compulsory.⁵

These trends of massification and expansion in higher education systems are not limited to the developed and industrialized countries. Philip G. Altbach, one of the foremost scholars of comparative and international higher education, notes that since the end of World War II, expansion in higher education accelerated across nearly all countries, regardless of level of economic development.⁶ In this process, higher education institutions have grown in size, number, and function to match the needs and demands of industrializing economies. The massification of higher education has occurred in tandem with economic globalization as economies in both the developed and developing world have transitioned from manufacturing and industry-based economies to a larger emphasis on services and the knowledge sector: Altbach notes that today’s interdependent service and knowledge economies increasingly rely on a highly-trained work force, which institutions of higher education are increasingly expected to provide.⁷

Shifting from the macro-economic level to the individual level, increased participation and demand for tertiary education may be explained through human capital

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Martin Trow, *Problems in the Transition from Elite to Mass Higher Education*, (Berkeley, CA: Carnegie Commission on Higher Education Reprint, 1973), p. 2.

⁵ Martin Trow, “Reflections on the Transition from Elite to Mass to Universal Access: Forms and Phases of Higher Education in Modern Societies since WWII,” in James J.F. Forrest and Philip G. Altbach, eds., *International Handbook of Higher Education*, (Rotterdam, Netherlands: Springer, 2006), p. 243.

⁶ Philip G. Altbach, *Comparative Higher Education: Knowledge, the University, and Development*, (Westport, CT: Ablex Publishing, 1998), p. 7.

⁷ Altbach, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

theory. First articulated in the 1960s by American scholar Gary S. Becker, human capital theory posits that individuals who invest in the development of their own human capital by completing a university degree will have an advantage in the labor market, therefore earning more in their lifetime despite the immediate costs of pursuing higher education.⁸ Rather than the accumulation of physical capital through earning wages, higher education serves the purpose of enhancing one's human resources. This theory has generally proven true; the aforementioned OECD report found that the average university graduate reaps many financial benefits, including increased earnings and decreased likelihood of unemployment.⁹ A recent review of private and social returns on investment in higher education attainment commissioned by the World Bank finds that the private return on investment (in the form of income) remained high over the past decade, with higher returns for people in low-income countries compared to middle and high income countries.¹⁰

In today's societies, tertiary education gives graduates the necessary certifications for many high-level and powerful roles in both the public and private sectors of the economy, contributing to the common perspective that higher education is an investment for one's future private gains. Altbach and others have furthermore linked economic liberalization in many countries to the growth of a middle class which views higher education as the key to success and social mobility: these middle classes in industrialized economies in turn demand better access to higher education, believing that tertiary education serves the purpose of providing training for relevant jobs.¹¹

2.1.2 Diversification in Institutions

While expansion has occurred in access for populations around the globe, expansion has also occurred in the of form, function, and level of higher education institutions. Ulrich Teichler views diversity in higher education systems in terms of four major areas of classification: (1) knowledge, addressing the substance of the material taught and researched, (2) processes and people by which knowledge is disseminated and

⁸ Gary S. Becker, "Investment in Human Capital: A Theoretical Analysis," *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 70, no. 9, 1962, p. 9.

⁹ Cláudia Sarrico, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-14.

¹⁰ George Psacharopoulos and Harry Antony Patrinos, *Returns to Investment in Education: A Decennial Review of the Global Literature*, Policy Research Working Paper, no. WPS 8402, Washington, DC: World Bank Group, 2018, pp. 11-12.

¹¹ Philip G. Altbach, *op. cit.*, p. 9, 12.

to whom, (3) organizational matters that involve macro-level supervision, control, and accountability issues, and (4) quantitative-structural issues, which refer to the size and shape of the overall higher education system.¹²

Tertiary-level vocational schools, research institutions, community colleges, junior colleges, liberal arts schools, and polytechnic institutions today may all fall within or outside higher education systems, depending on a variety of system boundaries that vary from country to country. Guri-Rosenblit et al speak of higher education systems defined by internal and external boundaries that give these systems horizontal and vertical structure, determining the types of institutions that a government considers as part of the system. External boundaries place limits from the outside on the system, such as laws that define the types of institutions included in the system, while internal boundaries reflect differences between institutions in dimensions such as types of programs or level of degrees offered.¹³ This diversification in higher education systems worldwide has been made possible by deep-cutting changes in the state's role in providing and funding tertiary education; the privatization of higher educational services and operations are explored in the following section.

2.2. Privatization and Marketization of Higher Education

The marketization and privatization of higher education are both linked to the ongoing privatization of welfare in many countries. As the role of governments in higher education diminish in direct oversight, higher education institutions have increasingly turned to market-oriented strategies and tactics to support their own operations and meet increased demand for educational services. This section explores the relevant literature on the privatization and marketization of higher education globally.

2.2.1. Privatization of Higher Education

As government support and oversight of higher education services decreases over time, a private sector of tertiary-level educational institutions has developed in several countries. Privately funded for-profit and non-profit colleges and universities have emerged over the last several decades to meet increased demand for higher education. As demand for higher education has increased over the past several decades, a growing

¹² Ulrich Teichler, "Diversification? Trends and Explanations of the Shape and Size of Higher Education," *Higher Education*, vol. 56, 2008, pp. 349-379.

¹³ Sarah Guri-Rosenblit, Helena Šebková, and Ulrich Teichler, *op. cit.*, pp. 375-376.

private sector of tertiary education institutions has developed to fill in gaps where governments have reduced their fiscal and regulatory responsibility over social welfare systems, including education systems. Governments with limited resources to support a growing demand for higher education thereby gave rise to the growth of private educational institutions, which largely set their own curricula, manage their own finances, and require students to pay for at least part of their education. Especially in the context of the United States' higher education system, neoliberal economic logic applies free market principles to social and public goods, including research and teaching, turning them into businesses-like entities.¹⁴

Jandhyala Tilak in 1991 categorizes higher education privatization into two larger trends.¹⁵ The first being excess demand for higher education by populations that the private market of higher education institutions can meet. The second trend is demand for different qualities of higher education, which private actors can meet to differentiate themselves from public institutions. Of important note is that while some countries exhibit a mix of public- and privately funded institutions, the mix is not always clearly differentiated. Tilak analyses privatization on a scale: on one end is “an extreme version of privatization” in which colleges and universities operate and fund themselves completely privately. Further down the scale are strong and moderate privatization that uses a mix of public and private resources. Lastly, pseudo-privatization in which institutions originally created by non-governmental bodies are financially supported nearly completely by the government.¹⁶ The variety of ways that higher education institutions may be supported further illustrates contemporary trends in the organization and structure of global higher education.

2.2.2. *Marketization of Higher Education*

Higher education over the past several decades has expanded at a faster rate than the expansion of resources to support them, leading to privatization as well as marketization in an expanding higher education “sector” of the economy. Kwong defines marketization in education as “the adoption of free market practices in running

¹⁴ Richard Münch, *Academic Capitalism: Universities in the Global Struggle for Excellence*, New York: Routledge, 2014, p. 128.

¹⁵ Jandhyala B. G. Tilak, “The Privatization of Higher Education,” *Prospects*, vol. 21, no. 2, 1991, pp. 227-239.

¹⁶ Jandhyala B. G. Tilak, *op. cit.*, pp. 227-228, 239.

schools.”¹⁷ These practices include “business practices of cutting production cost, abandoning goods not in demand, producing only popular products, and advertising products to increase sales and the profit margin.”¹⁸ These practices have had a significant effect on the role and purpose of higher education in today’s societies. Marketization has also fueled growing perceptions of students (and their families) as the “consumers” of higher education services for whom higher education institutions compete.

Schuetze and Mendiola’s 2012 book *State and Market in Higher Education Reforms* outlines the general trends of marketization and the transformation of state governments from the sole provider of education into a regulatory body shaping the rules of competition.¹⁹ This process has thus turned students and families into “consumers” of educational services and universities into revenue-seeking organizations to support their own operations, such as recruiting fee-paying students, competing for government grants, and attracting corporate sponsors for research.²⁰ This has resulted in a global system in which education is viewed as a private commodity that can be bought, sold, and marketed, even across borders.²¹ In this system, the purpose of the university and higher education in general has changed from its old role of shaping the minds and character of the elite classes to a new one as a business-like entity selling its products (knowledge) to consumers (students). In the case of highly prestigious universities, their prestige in the form of social capital can be converted into economic capital when they establish branch campuses in foreign countries.²²

Debates abound on whether this change has been beneficial for societies and parallel larger debates on the purpose and benefit of neoliberal economic practices of global free trade and privatization of public goods. Les Levidow in 2002 criticized projects such as the World Bank Higher Education Reform Agenda as neoliberal strategies that “imposes greater exploitation upon human and natural resources” via

¹⁷ Julia Kwong, “Introduction: Marketization and Privatization in Education,” *International Journal of Educational Development*, vol. 20, 2000, p. 89.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ German Alvarez Mendiola, “State and Market in Higher Education Reforms: Overview of the Issues,” in Hans G. Schuetze and German Alvarex Mandiola, eds., *State and Market in Higher Education Reforms*, (Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2012), p. 8.

²⁰ See German Alvarez Mendiola, *op. cit.*, p. 8, and Inger Askehave, “The Impact of Marketization on Higher Education Genres – The International Student Prospectus as a Case in Point,” *Discourse Studies*, vol. 9, no. 6, 2007, p. 724.

²¹ Hans G. Schuetze and German Alvarex Mandiola, “Introduction,” in Hans G. Schuetze and German Alvarex Mandiola, eds., *State and Market in Higher Education Reforms*, (Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2012), pp. 1-2.

²² Richard Münch, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

global market competition.²³ Writing in 2003, Giroux argued that neoliberal capitalism and “corporate culture” in the American context of higher education is dangerous to the democratic and social function of the university through.²⁴ Giroux also expressed concerns that private, corporate interests drive university research agendas, unfairly influencing and degrading the moral and civic purpose of the university.²⁵

While diversification and expansion in the types of institutions in higher education systems provides populations with a greater variety of options, many higher education systems are now unequally stratified in terms of prestige, influence, and resources. In the United States, for instance, Richard Münch writes that competition between universities for students, especially at the undergraduate level, has intensified, not only raising tuition costs for students but also exacerbating socioeconomic inequalities. As universities become more selective in their admissions criteria, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds who have fewer opportunities for academic achievement in turn become less likely to gain entrance into top universities. Deregulation in England follows similar trends: universities now compete for not only the best students, but also for the best professors, researchers, and funding opportunities in a “quasi-market.”²⁶

Whether beneficial or not, marketization and privatization have already affected higher education systems around the world, including China and Taiwan. Market mechanisms have replaced strict government oversight in Taiwan, and efforts to balance private and public initiatives to improve Mainland Chinese higher education are underway. Chapter 4 more deeply explores the growth and marketization of China and Taiwan’s higher education systems.

2.3. Globalization and Internationalization of Higher Education

2.3.1. Internationalization at the Institutional Level

In addition to massification and marketization within economies, higher education institutions themselves have pursued policies, curricula, and programs to embed themselves within the global economy. The term *internationalization* has emerged to

²³ Les Levidow, “Marketizing Higher Education: Neoliberal Strategies and Counter-Strategies,” in Kevin Robins and Frank Webster, eds., *The Virtual University?*, (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 228.

²⁴ Henry A. Giroux, “Selling Out Higher Education,” *Policy Futures in Education*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2003, pp. 179-200.

²⁵ Henry A. Giroux, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

²⁶ Richard Münch, *op. cit.*, pp. 129, 133.

describe these developments in higher education since the 1980s that integrate education systems with the globalized economy and aim to develop a more international outlook. As a scholar at the forefront of the discussion, Jane Knight defines internationalization in higher education as "...the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education." This describes the active and continuous efforts of higher education institutions to incorporate an international or intercultural dimension into their policies, curricula, and services.²⁷ While internationalization is related to economic globalization, Altbach and Knight in 2007 argue that these two concepts are not identical: while globalization is seen as an "unalterable" phenomenon that involves the emerging interconnectedness of economic and social systems, internationalization involves the many choices higher education institutions make to and cope align themselves with the larger trends of globalization.

Traditionally, internationalization efforts at the university campus level include initiatives such as study abroad or foreign exchange programs, enhanced foreign language and international studies curricula, the establishment of satellite campuses abroad, and the recruitment and sponsorship of foreign students. In the early 21st century, Altbach and Knight identify trends such as the cross-border movement of students and programs, the growth of international markets for highly-educated professionals, and the commercialization of higher education to summarize the landscape of internationalization. Several factors motivate higher education institutions to pursue internationalization, including revenue generation for the institution, access provision in locales with high demand for higher education services, and curriculum enhancement with international and cross-cultural perspectives for students. Altbach and Knight ultimately emphasize the role of individual students in driving international education markets: as largely self-funded, today's international students number over 2 million and form the largest source of funding for internationalization in higher education.²⁸

2.3.2. *The Global Network of Higher Education*

While contemporary universities and other institutions of higher education generally retain high levels of autonomy, they are hardly isolated or completely

²⁷ Jane Knight, "Updating the Definition of Internationalization," *International Higher Education*, vol. 33, 2015, pp. 2-3.

²⁸ Philip G. Altbach and Jane Knight, "The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motives and Realities," *Journal of Studies in International Education*, vol. 11, no. 3, 2007, pp. 291-294.

independent from regulatory oversight. Guri-Rosenblit et al. view higher education institutions as “embedded in in common frameworks of societal expectations, regulatory frameworks, and cooperative or competitive linkages.”²⁹ In this context, we may speak of higher education systems as networks of institutions falling under a common set of regulations, rather than governments overseeing or applying laws to individual institutions.³⁰ The changing role of state as a regulatory actor in higher education systems is linked to the marketization and diversification of higher education institutions, allowing them to act more like private businesses than public institutions.

The concurrent massification and internationalization efforts of higher education institutions and systems have created a highly uniform global network of institutions and universities based on the Western European and American models, with few exceptions.³¹ Universities around the world by and large follow similar accreditation and curriculum standards in accordance to western conceptions of learning, research, and knowledge creation and dissemination. In this international system of higher education, the academic credit serves as the “currency” with which students can accumulate credentials and transfer them between institutions, even across international borders.³² This global credit-transfer system highlights the flexibility with which higher education systems can operate. Additionally, English serves as the universally necessary language for not only scholars and researchers but also students in the global higher education system.³³ This flexibility within a relatively uniform global network forms the foundation upon which international student recruitment and exchanges may take place between higher education institutions.

2.3.3. *International Student Flows*

Analyses of international student flows often highlight the general trend of students from developing countries migrating to Western Europe and North America. Chen and Barnett’s macro-level analysis of international student exchange networks in the later part of the 20th century found that international student flows followed this general pattern between 1985, 1989, and 1995.³⁴ The industrialized, Western countries

²⁹ Sarah Guri-Rosenblit et al., *op. cit.*, p. 375.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Philip G. Altbach, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

³² Sarah Guri-Rosenblit et al., *op. cit.*, p. 382.

³³ Philip G. Altbach, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

³⁴ Tse-Mei Chen and George A. Barnett, “Research on International Student Flows from a Macro Perspective: A Network Analysis of 1985, 1989, and 1995,” *Higher Education*, vol. 39, 2000, p.435.

such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Canada formed the center of international exchange networks as the most popular destinations for students. Tying student flows to relative economic development, Chen and Barnett noted that economically powerful countries hold a concentration of educational resources and remain at the center of international student flows, while less developed countries have remained on the periphery, attracting fewer international students.³⁵ Countries experiencing recent strides in economic development, such as the newly-industrialized economies (NIEs) of Asia, the newly-independent (at that time) post-Soviet states, and Eastern European countries with recent economic and political reforms had started to “catch up” in terms of attracting international students and becoming embedded in networks of international student flows.³⁶

In this regard, the global configuration of higher education institutions and the flow of international student exchanges mirror global economic disparities that have developed under globalization. Altbach also spoke of the global higher education network as one of a center and periphery, to borrow terms from World Systems Theory of the international relations discipline.³⁷ Former colonial relationships also impact the flow of international students, with students from former colonies forming a significant share of international students in the former metropole.³⁸ Therefore, today’s networks of higher education not only reflect changes in individual institutions’ policies to recruit more foreign students but also reflect geo-political relations and inequalities between countries.

2.4. Push-and-Pull Factors of Student Mobility

Within discussions of higher education in the globalized world, the cross-border mobility of students stands out as a defining feature of internationalized higher education central to this current study. As borders become more permeable and university systems work to promote international connections and recruit international students, consumers now have more destinations and institutions to choose outside their home country. Studies that examine the cross-border experiences of students and their motivations for pursuing international education are numerous, and many draw upon the push-pull framework of student mobility in their analysis. Using a variety of methods and analysis strategies,

³⁵ Tse-Mei Chen and George A. Barnett, *op. cit.*, p. 451.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ See Philip G. Altbach, *op. cit.*, p 148; and Tse-Mei Chen and George A. Barnett, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

³⁸ Philip G. Altbach, *op. cit.*, p 147.

these studies all attempt to identify and explain the factors affecting students' decision-making process, which in turn can inform the future strategies and policies of university recruitment and national-level migration policy.

2.4.1. Explanation of the Push-Pull Framework

The push-pull framework draws upon theories of migration regarding the perceived benefits and costs in a person's choice to migrate. Everett Lee defined migration in 1966 simply as "a permanent or semi-permanent change in residence...No matter how short or long [the distance], every act of migration involves an origin, a destination, and an intervening set of obstacles." These obstacles constitute a larger set of factors influencing a person's decision to migrate in addition to factors associated with the place of origin, the destination, and personal factors related to the individual. The mix of both positive and negative factors associated with the origin and the destination, which Lee denotes with pluses (+) and minuses (-), factors into an individual's decision to migrate. The decision to migrate must involve not only a favorable ratio of positive to negative factors in the destination but also a mix of intervening obstacles and personal factors that can override the natural inertia to stay in one's place of origin. Furthermore, the mix of pluses and minuses is specific to each individual and is limited by their own perceptions and imperfect knowledge of the destination: what may constitute as a benefit of a destination for one person may constitute a drawback or neutral aspect of the local for someone else.³⁹

The push-pull framework applies Lee's basic theory of migration to the phenomenon of the international movement of students. By applying this theory to the cross-border mobility of students, Altbach described the movement of students in terms of a push-pull phenomenon, where "push" factors in developing countries motivate students to look outside one's home for study and "pull" factors abroad draw them to the developed world for education.⁴⁰ More specifically, Altbach argued for the further study of foreign students not as an undifferentiated group, but as individuals for whom several factors impact their decision and satisfaction with studying abroad.⁴¹

Mazzarol and Soutar further developed the "push-pull" model to define the external factors that influence students' decisions to migrate for higher education. They

³⁹ Everett S. Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-51.

⁴⁰ Philip G. Altbach, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

characterized the decision-making process in three stages: in stage one, the student makes the decision to migrate abroad instead of staying in their home country. In stage two, the student chooses a host country. In stage three, the student chooses a host institution. Mazzarol and Soutar defined “push factors” as those within the place of origin that “initiate a student’s decision to undertake international study,” corresponding with stage one of the decision-making process to pursue education outside of one’s home country. These push factors would correspond to the “minuses” in the origin locale of Lee’s theory of migration.

Conversely, “pull factors” are those that make a destination relatively attractive for a student, corresponding to the “pluses” in the destination of Lee’s theory, as illustrated in Figure 1.⁴² These pull factors, therefore, correspond to stages two and three of Mazzarol and Soutar’s three-stage characterization of international student mobility choice (choosing a host country and institution). Following the traditional logic that higher education serves as a function of enhancing one’s social and economic status and the commonly observed flow of students from developing economies to developed economies, past studies using the push-pull model emphasize relative economic relations between sending and receiving countries of international students. In this vein, McMahon in 1992 identified macroeconomic push factors in a country of origin such as its relative economic power, its level of involvement in the global economy, state priority on education, and availability (or lack thereof) of educational opportunities.⁴³

Among pull factors, Mazzarol et al. in 1997 identified six factors that influence an individual student’s choice of destination for study: (1) cost issues, (2) knowledge and awareness of the destination, (3) the environment (both physical and social), (4) personal recommendations for the destination, (5) social links in the form of family or friends in the destination, and (6) geographical proximity.⁴⁴ On the macroeconomic level, McMahon identified factors such as the relative size of the destination country, existing economic links between the sending and receiving countries, the host country’s political interest in the sending country, and the host country’s support of international students.⁴⁵

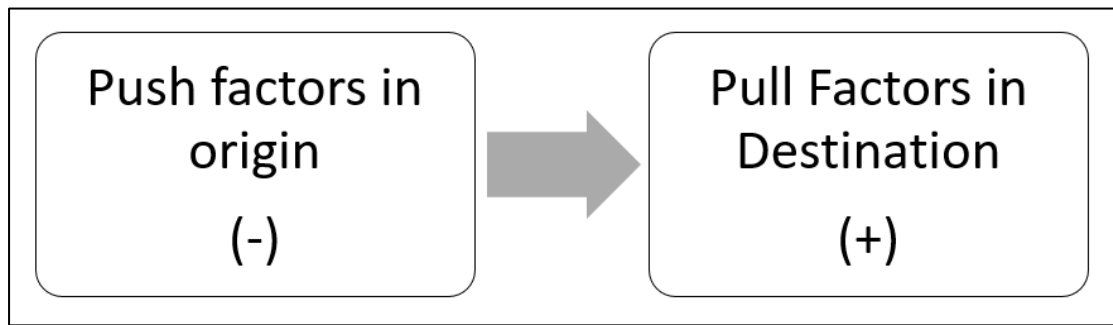
⁴² Mazzarol and Soutar, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-90.

⁴³ Mary E. McMahon, “Higher Education in a World Market: An historical look at the global context of international study,” *Higher Education*, vol. 24, 1992, pp. 468-69.

⁴⁴ Tim Mazzarol, Steven Kemp, and Lawson Savery, *International Students who Choose not to Study in Australia: An Examination of Taiwan and Indonesia*, (Perth, Western Australia: Institute for Research into International Competitiveness (IRIC), 1997), p. 37-38.

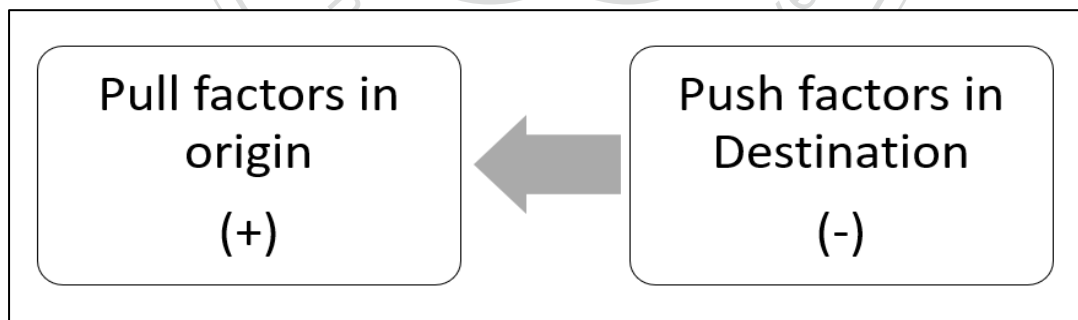
⁴⁵ McMahon, *op. cit.*, p. 469.

Figure 1: Push and Pull Factors in Student Mobility



A 2007 study by Li and Bray Applied and expanded the push-pull framework to include factors that work against a student's decision to undertake international study; that is, the negative push factors in the destination that make it unappealing or difficult to access and the positive pull factors of the origin that make staying in one's home country for study appealing. Li and Bray call these factors that may prevent students from migrating "reverse push-pull factors, as illustrated in Figure 2." Li and Bray used this two-way push-pull framework to examine the motivations of Mainland Chinese students studying in Hong Kong and Macau. They found that the push factors and pull factors both at home and in the host location, combined with personal characteristics and perceptions, informed the decisions of students and their families.

Figure 2: Reverse Push and Pull Factors



The mix of pluses and minuses, or push and pull factors, is specific to an individual's experience and perceptions of their home versus their destination choice, as well as personal factors affecting a student's ultimate decision. Li and Bray defined these as "internal" and "external" factors, wherein external factors are associated with a place itself and internal factors associated with a person's own personal background and

characteristics.⁴⁶ For students, external factors may include the relative strength of the economy or education system at home that make leaving an option, or the policies and scholarship opportunities in a destination that make it an attractive option. Internal factors may include a student's competitiveness in the education systems they seek to enter, personal contacts in the destination country, and familiarity with the destination. While historically we have seen that the industrialized countries of North America and Western Europe have dominated in international student recruitment, several studies have applied the push-pull framework to student mobility around the Asia Pacific region.

2.4.2. *Studies Applying the Push-Pull Framework*

Several studies have applied the push-pull framework to groups of international students in recent years, using a variety of research and analytical methods. Eder, Smith, and Pitts' 2010 study of international students' destination choice conducted interviews with international students via online chat about their decisions to study in the United States.⁴⁷ The study utilized qualitative analysis methods to identify the most prevalent push and pull factors affecting the students' choices, who consisted of semester- or year-long exchange students. The authors identified personal growth in a new country, the importance of language learning in a foreign context, and benefits to the students' future careers as the most prevalent push factors affecting student's choice to pursue a study-abroad program, indicating that foreign students "exhibit forward thinking and planning" in their decision to get a study abroad experience. The study found that significant pull factors for the United States involved the characteristics of the college (such as course offerings, availability of departments and programs, and the atmosphere of the American college), the physical geography of the host institution's city, and American culture. One significant structural issue, which could be characterized as a negative push factor of the United States as a study abroad destination, is the complex and expensive visa application process.⁴⁸ This study therefore paints a portrait of a sample of international students in the United States for short-term study as a group of forward-thinking individuals. Furthermore, the United States benefits from having strong cultural assets that make it an

⁴⁶ Mei Li and Mark Bray, *op. cit.*, pp. 791-818.

⁴⁷ Judith Eder, Wayne W. Smith, and Robert E. Pitts, "Exploring Factors Influencing Student Study Abroad Destination Choice," *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism*, vol. 10, 2010, pp. 232-250.

⁴⁸ Judith Eder, Wayne W. Smith, and Robert E. Pitts, *op. cit.*, pp. 238-242.

attractive destination for students, despite structural constraints such as the visa application process.

Maringe and Carter applied the framework to the movement of African students to universities in the United Kingdom.⁴⁹ Utilizing focus group interviews with students and staff of two universities in England, the authors found push factors linked to the economic and political circumstances in their home countries. Students spoke of economic stagnation, political instability, and a general lack of capacity in local higher education systems that drove them to seek out their tertiary degrees away from home. Pull factors in the United Kingdom that drove students' decision to study there included international recognition and quality of UK higher education institutions as well as a safe teaching and learning environment. The United Kingdom's university relatively simple and straightforward application process for students was also a significant pull factor for students, especially when compared to the United States. These comprise strong external pull factors for African students choosing the United Kingdom for study. Internal pull factors relating to the students' own aspiration included opportunities for better career prospects with a UK degree and the opportunity to experience life abroad.⁵⁰

In the Asia Pacific Region, several studies have attempted to draw the conversation Eastward. Mazzarol and Soutar are among the most prevalent authors applying the push-pull framework to international student flows, particularly to Australia. Using surveys of international students, they conducted several studies revealing key pull factors of Australia and Australian institutions. The aforementioned study by Mazzarol, Kemp, and Savery analyzed the factors influencing Taiwanese and Indonesian international students' decisions to study in countries other than Australia.⁵¹ While their research aimed to evaluate Australia's international higher education marketing strategy and determine places for improvement in the recruitment of international students, Mazzarol et al concluded at the time that availability of information and pre-existing ties to a destination country were strong pull factors for Taiwanese students to choose the United States over Australia, even though both countries provided similar advantages for international students.⁵² Other factors include cost issues. Mazzarol and Soutar defined

⁴⁹ Felix Maringe and Steve Carter, "International Students' motivations for studying in UK HE: Insights into the Choice and Decision Making of African Students," *International Journal of Educational Management*, vol. 21, no. 6, 2007, pp. 459-475.

⁵⁰ Felix Maringe and Steve Carter, *op. cit.*, pp. 465-467.

⁵¹ Tim Mazzarol, Steven Kemp, and Lawson Savery, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁵² Tim Mazzarol, Steven Kemp, and Lawson Savery, *op. cit.*, p. 16

these as not only the immediate monetary cost of studying abroad but also the social cost associated with migrating for school, which includes the level of crime or racial discrimination in a host country, the population of overseas students in the host country, and other social and environmental factors that contribute to the comfort of an international student in a host country.⁵³

Also mentioned above is Li and Bray's 2007 study of the flow of students in Greater China, which analyzed the push and pull factors of Mainland Chinese students choosing to study in Hong Kong and Macau. Also drawing from questionnaires and interviews, Li and Bray's study revealed some common motivations and characteristics for Chinese students to choose universities in Hong Kong and Macau. For Mainland Chinese students, the draw of Hong Kong and Macau included a common ethnic identity, the blending of Chinese and Western influence in education, and specific features of institutions themselves. Chinese students in Hong Kong were drawn most strongly by academic motivations, while Chinese students in Macau were drawn by social and cultural motivations firstly, followed by academic motivations. This study also highlights the thinking of Chinese students and their families: students in this study viewed higher education outside of China serves as a tool of upward social mobility and individual economic advancement. Disadvantages of Hong Kong and Macau as places to study for mainland Chinese students (comprising the negative push factors in the model) included limited space, limited employment opportunities after graduation, and lower value placed on some fields and institutions in the case of Macau.⁵⁴ Li and Bray's study both applies a two-way push-pull framework and focuses on the Asia Pacific region, both of which are of interest to the current study.

Looking specifically at China and Taiwan, Chuing Prudence Chou and Gregory S. Ching in 2015 analyzed the motivations and rationales of Mainland Chinese students in Taiwanese higher education institutions.⁵⁵ Their study surveyed both degree-seeking and exchange students from the Chinese mainland who were in Taiwan, focusing mainly on the pull factors Taiwan offers. The results of Chou and Ching's study emphasized the academic and cultural advantages of studying in Taiwan, including "knowing the culture

⁵³ Tim Mazarol and Geoffrey Norman Soutar, *The Global Market for Higher Education: Sustainable Competitive Strategies for the New Millennium*, Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2001, pp. 63-64.

⁵⁴ Mei Li and Mark Bray, *op. cit.*, pp. 791-818.

⁵⁵ Chuing Prudence Chou and Gregory S. Ching, "Cross-Stratization of Higher Education: Voices of the Mainland Chinese Students Studying in Taiwan," *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2015: pp. 89-94.

first hand...the opportunity to travel and experience life in Taiwan, various curriculum programs' availability, numerous cultural related activities, shopping experiences, and healthy lifestyle." Negative push factors in Taiwan for Mainland students included legal restrictions on students' work and scholarship opportunities, a lack of activities for Mainland Chinese students, and misconceptions among locals about Mainland Chinese people. On the whole, however, the Mainland students surveyed in Chou and Ching's study largely reported positive experiences on the island.⁵⁶ Overall, the study highlights both internal and external push and pull factors associated with Mainland Chinese students migrating to Taiwan for study. Legal restrictions on Chinese students' ability to choose particular fields of study, work in Taiwan, or stay in Taiwan after their studies conclude make up several strong external push factors of Taiwan as a place for mainland Chinese students to study. However, the internal pull factor of students' desire to understand Taiwan first-hand and experience a different culture also contributed to Chinese students' assessments of their own decisions to study in Taiwan.

The current literature on international students in the Asia Pacific region highlight push factors and pull factors associated not only with macro-level political and economic structures but also the internal motivations and aspirations of individual students. These studies also continue to view mainland China as a significant source of cross-border students. While this decision-making process is highly subjective and personal to each individual, the studies reviewed above demonstrate several ways to apply the push-pull framework to understand the movement of students across borders.

Applying the push-pull framework to the flow of students from Taiwan to mainland China provides an opportunity to observe commonalities in perceptions of Taiwanese graduate school applicants within the context of Taiwan and China's complex political and economic relationship. By considering Taiwan and China's relative positions in the global economy the relative status of their higher education systems, and interest in each other's political affairs, we may understand more about the population of students who migrate to mainland China for study and their role in building cross-strait relations.

⁵⁶ Chuing Prudence Chou and Gregory S. Ching, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-93.

Chapter 3. Cross-Taiwan Strait Relations in Retrospect

Relations between the Republic of China on Taiwan and the People's Republic of China on the Chinese mainland have received much scholarly attention and analysis since the end of World War II. While many ways of framing and theorizing the cross-Taiwan Strait relationship have developed over the years, this study examines two theoretical approaches most relevant to the development of higher education on each side and cross-strait interaction through student exchanges. These are the divided nations framework (Section 3.1.1) and integration theory (Section 3.1.2), both of which feed into the multi-system nations and linkage community framework (Section 3.1.3) that describes interactions between people on either side of the Taiwan Strait. This chapter then provides a brief overview of the political history of China-Taiwan relations. The chapter concludes with an analysis of evidence of linkage community formation between China and Taiwan over the past few decades based on existing studies of the Taiwanese business community in mainland China and literature on cross-strait tourism.

3.1. Theories and Frameworks in Cross-Strait Integration

3.1.1. *The Divided Nations Framework*

The post-World War II era produced several instances of division that split former states and colonial holdings into two or more political parts. While some of these nations have achieved unification, such as the former East and West Germany and the former North and South Vietnam, others, such as North and South Korea, Israel and Palestine, and China and Taiwan, have yet to resolve their political conflict. Henderson and Lebow defined “divided nations” as “countries with marked ethnic homogeneity, a common historical tradition and experience of political unity, that have been subsequently divided into two separate political units.”¹ For these authors, this division is artificial and instigated or prolonged by external factors, distinguishing divided nations from “partitioned countries,” which are split due to internal ethnic, linguistic, or religious conflict.² Many of the divided nations that emerged in the period after World War II can be linked to the Cold War, by which ideological and political conflict between the United

¹ Gregory Henderson and Richard Ned Lebow, “Conclusions,” in Gregory Henderson, Richard Ned Lebow, and John G. Stoessinger, eds. *Divided Nations in a Divided World*, (New York: David Mackay Company, 1974), p. 434.

² *Ibid.*

States and the Soviet Union applied external influence on post-War international relations. The two Germanys, the two Vietnams, the two Koreas, and the two Chinas all emerged out of post-World War II ideological wherein each side of the divided nations received significant backing from one of the two superpowers. These external factors contributed to the solidification of divisions between these nations.

Many authors have theorized the process of unification among the post-war divided nations. Henderson et al. proposed a four-stage model to illustrate the progression toward unification between divided nations. The model illustrates relations that range from intense hostility and middle-term division (Stages I and II) to rapprochement and unification (Stages III and IV), wherein each unit of a divided nation moves from intense hostility and dependence on a superpower to decreased hostility, tacit acceptance of the division, and increased economic and political cooperation.³

Writing two years prior to Henderson et al., Jo and Walker refer to a paradigm of political unification proposed by Etzioni in 1965; in this paradigm, political unification is also referred to as a dynamic process, rather than a static feature of a state or system.⁴ Etzioni's model consists of a five-point scale to describe the transition of states from 0 (international systems of separate states) to 5 (amalgamated political communities). In this model, Etzioni defines political communities as those possessing high levels of control over the use of violence, a center of decision making for the entire community, and a singular "dominant focus of political identification."⁵ The unification process therefore is "one in which the means of violence, the capacity to allocate resources and rewards, and the locus of identification are transferred from member-units to the system in which they are members."⁶ This process may occur at in different sectors of societies and at different speeds. Etzioni also applies this paradigm to federations and unions that are not considered "divided nations," such as the Nordic Associational Web and the (failed) Federation of the West Indies.⁷ While these authors apply the assumption that unification is the end goal of relations between divided nations, only two cases of the twentieth-century divided nations have successfully reunified: Germany and Vietnam.

³ Gregory Henderson and Richard Ned Lebow, *op. cit.*, p. 439-441.

⁴ Yung-Hwan Jo and Stephen Walker, "Divided Nations and Reunification Strategies," *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 9, no. 3, 1972, p. 250.

⁵ Amitai Etzioni, *Political Unification: A Comparative Study of Leaders and Forces* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1965), pp. 4, 9-13.

⁶ Amitai Etzioni, *op. cit.*, 16.

⁷ Amitai Etzioni, *op. cit.*, 138, 184.

This illustrates that the divided nations of today have outlasted the Cold War ideological conflict.

When applied to China and Taiwan, however, the divided nations framework cannot account for all developments in the cross-strait relationship. Yu-Shan Wu observes that the China-Taiwan dyad is similar to the two Koreas and (former) two Germanys in that they share external factors that consolidated their division, such as the ideological conflict between communism and capitalism and the influence of the United States and Soviet Union on the divided nations' foreign policies.⁸ However, Wu argues that the divided nations model fits imperfectly on China and Taiwan in that the nature of the relationship does not match those of other divided nations. For one, China and Taiwan lack equality in recognition, as Beijing under the "One China Principle" has not recognized the division with Taiwan.⁹ As a result, Taiwan and China experience disparate levels of recognition in the international community under the "One China Principle" that makes recognition of either the ROC or PRC as mutually exclusive. Unlike the former East and West Germany and the current North and South Korea, the ROC and PRC cannot share diplomatic recognition from other states. Secondly, the Taipei and Beijing authorities lack institutionalized communication channels, which are present between the two Koreas and were a feature of inter-Germany relations before unification.¹⁰ This is also symptomatic of the lack of recognition between each side's governments.

Despite the above critiques of the divided nations framework as a model of China-Taiwan relations, the divided nations framework describes many of the external factors that gave rise to the political conflict across the Taiwan Strait today, including outside influence from Cold-War ideology. In terms of the models described above, China and Taiwan are no closer to political unification today as they were several decades ago. However, when accounting for the recent growth in economic, cultural, or so-called "low-level" relations between the people and societies of each side, a paradigm of cross-strait relations needs additional frameworks. Given that economic exchanges are an important part of the China-Taiwan relationship but are downplayed by the divided nations model, Wu finds that integration theory can further explain interaction between China and Taiwan.¹¹

⁸ Yu-shan Wu, "Theorizing on Relations across the Taiwan Strait: Nine contending approaches," *Journal of Contemporary China*, vol. 9, no. 25, 2000, p. 410.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Yu-shan Wu, *op. cit.*, 411.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

3.1.2 Integration Theory

Integration theory developed to theorize and promote integration in post- World War II Europe. Gehring's analysis of the role of integration theory in explaining the development of the European Community identifies functionalism and neo-functionalism as a middle ground between the institutions-based designs of legalism and the power-competition foundation of realism.¹² Functionalism and neo-functionalism in this regard emphasize the difference between "low politics" in the form of social and economic welfare and "high politics" in the form of political power. Those who developed the theories of functionalism and neo-functionalism sought to seek a middle ground between the competitive and self-reliant realist conception of international relations and the completely institutionalized "grand designs" of legalism in international law and relations.¹³ Rather than complete anarchy or complete legalism, these functionalist scholars advocated for the importance of "low politics" in finding common interests and areas of cooperation between states, which could later produce political spillover effects.¹⁴ Practical integration that arises organically can form the basis for formal frameworks to develop at the governmental level.

Economic linkages play an important role in the application of integration theory, which emphasizes integration among the most practical areas of trade and economic linkages first, letting their benefits spill over into political areas later.¹⁵ This political spillover forms a feedback loop in which cooperative strategies and institutions grow into what Schmitter called a "self-maintaining international subsystem."¹⁶ With positive spillover effects for governments as illustrated by the integration of the European economic community, Ernst B. Haas emphasizes that functional integration can develop a "new political community superimposed over the pre-existing ones."¹⁷ This form of integration among practical and economic lines maintains the political sovereignty of

¹² Thomas Gehring, "Integrating Integration Theory: Neo-functionalism and International Regimes," *Global Society*, vol. 10, no. 3, 1996, pp. 227-228.

¹³ Thomas Gehring, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

¹⁴ Thomas Gehring, *op. cit.*, pp. 228-229.

¹⁵ Yu-Shan Wu, *op. cit.*, p. 411.

¹⁶ Philippe C. Schmitter, "A Revised Theory of Regional Integration," *International Organization*, vol. 24, no. 4, 1970, p. 840.

¹⁷ Ernst B. Haas, *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social, and Economic Forces, 1950-1957*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1958), p. 16.

member states while creating a advantageous and interdependent economic system between them.

It should be stressed that integration theory as explored above was developed and influenced largely in the context of the European Union and economic community and therefore is an imperfect model for describing integration between China and Taiwan. Applied to China-Taiwan relations, integration theory can illustrate the general trend of economic interactions across the Taiwan Strait, but must be considered in the context of routinely tense political relations. Returning to Wu's analysis, integration theory can explain Taipei and Beijing's policies toward each other that promote economic integration while leaving political unification out of discussions.¹⁸ However, authors note that the strides made in economic integration have had little effect in influencing political relations across the Taiwan Strait. Cal Clark writes in 2003:

“...the periodic crises between Beijing and Taipei demonstrate that the spillover of low politics into high politics has been much more circumscribed in the Chinese case than in the European one, and in particular, economic and social links remain almost irrelevant to resolving the central issue of sovereignty that dominates high politics in cross-strait relations.”¹⁹

Section 3.3 examines evidence of Clark's claim in the cross-strait formation of business and tourism links to show the robust networks of low-level integration occurring despite political tension between China and Taiwan. The following sections will examine further frameworks developed to illustrate integration in the specific context of China-Taiwan relations, most notably the linkage community framework of cross-strait integration.

3.1.3 The Linkage Community Framework in Cross-Strait Relations

Branching off from traditional integration theory, Yung Wei in 1997 introduced the linkage community framework within his previously proposed “multi-system nations” framework for application specifically to the China-Taiwan dyad.²⁰ Rather than viewing the divided nations—including North and South Korea, the former East and West Germany, and the former North and South Vietnam—as “divided states,” the “multi-

¹⁸ Yu-Shan Wu, *op. cit.*, p. 413.

¹⁹ Cal Clark, “Does European Integration Provide a Model for Moderating Cross-Strait Relations?” *Asian Affairs: an American Review*, vol.29, no. 4, 2003, p. 196.

²⁰ Yung Wei, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

system nations” model retains the idea of one nation of people governed under separate political jurisdictions, where interactions between the systems are not international in nature.²¹ Wei applied this model to argue that China and Taiwan, as one ethnic and cultural nation, can also adopt the multi-system nations model in which international recognition for the PRC and ROC are no longer mutually exclusive, and that each political system may have its own “international personality.”²²

Because the Beijing and Taipei governments have yet to resolve the issue of dual recognition in the international arena, Wei built off the multi-systems nations model to propose a model for functional integration with political spillover. Perhaps as beliefs and cultural values converge between the nation of “China,” which shares cultural and linguistic history, power and politics will diminish in importance and build peace.²³ This hypothesis builds from the integration theory literature discussed above.

Wei introduced the term “linkage community” to illustrate how people-to-people ties enact this process. He defined a linkage community within a multi-system nation as “the existence of a group of people who have had such extensive social, cultural, commercial, or other types of contacts with the people and society of the opposite system that they have developed an understanding, sensitivity, and empathy with the people and society across system boundaries.” Wei argued that the successful unification of West and East Germany was due to robust networks of people, goods, and information crossing borders even before their governments reached a legal framework for unification. Conversely, very little people-to-people interaction occurs between the two Koreas, contributing to a continuously tense security outlook on the peninsula, despite intergovernmental contact.²⁴ The informal movement of people, goods, and information across borders of a multi-system nation can mitigate political tension and is essential to formal political unification between rival political systems.

Applied to the China-Taiwan relationship, Wei argued that while high-level talks between Beijing and Taipei had not made headway toward a peace agreement or a plan for unification, people-to-people interactions indicated that functional integration was nevertheless drawing the two sides together. Moreover, the ties developing at this

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² See Yung Wei, *op. cit.*, p. 5, and Shu Keng, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

²³ Chien-Min Chao, “Will Economic Integration Between mainland China and Taiwan Lead to a Congenial Political Culture?” *Asian Survey* vol. 43, no. 2, 2003, p. 280.

²⁴ Yung Wei, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

informal, practical level are paving the way to future functional, and perhaps even political, integration of China and Taiwan.²⁵ By examining the growth in economic activity between Taiwan and China as well as data available on the number of visits of Taiwanese to the mainland and mainland Chinese to Taiwan, Wei argued that the linkage communities between the two were already quite large in 1997. In terms of economic impact, Wei estimated that almost 2.4 million people's livelihoods in the Chinese mainland were tied to Taiwan's economy and society. In terms of tourism, Wei concluded that given the three million visitors to the mainland from Taiwan in the ten years since the lifting of the travel ban, a linkage community exists in Taiwan of twelve million people who have visited the mainland or have a family member who visited.²⁶ Wei ultimately recommended that the ROC and PRC should pursue neither quick unification nor Taiwanese independence, but build up linkage communities within the "multi system nations" framework.²⁷ This matches the overall trend of cross-strait integration over the past twenty years.

While also an imperfect match to the state of cross-strait relations today in that Wei's predicted economic spillover has yet to occur in the Taiwan-China relationship, the linkage community model stands out as an example of applied integration theory developed specifically for describing and steering relations between China and Taiwan. The following section provides an overview and brief history of political and economic relations between China and Taiwan before turning to analyze current evidence of linkage community formation across the Taiwan Strait.

3.2 Political and Economic Development of Cross-Strait Relations

While this thesis mostly concerns economic and social relations between Taiwan and China, a brief background on the political environment of cross-Taiwan strait relations highlights the challenges in developing educational exchange policy and the frequent disconnect that occurs between political relations at the governmental level and economic integration at the level of private individuals and businesses. The development of a Taiwanese political, social, and cultural identity on the island forms a crucial piece to consider in the cross-strait movement of students.

²⁵ Yung Wei, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

²⁶ Yung Wei, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

²⁷ Yung Wei, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

3.2.1 Political Relations between Taiwan and China: A Brief History

Dr. Sun Yat-sen and the KMT led a revolution in 1911 that established the Republic of China (ROC), thereby ending Qing imperial rule in China. By the 1930s the KMT, then led by Sun Yat-sen's successor Chiang Kai-shek, launched military campaigns to fight the Chinese Communist Party (CCP or CPC, Communist Party of China) and the Japanese invasion of China in the second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945).²⁸ At the conclusion of this war in 1945 (coinciding with the end of World War II), Taiwan was reverted to ROC jurisdiction after fifty years of Japanese colonial rule.²⁹ After World War II, China fell into civil war as the KMT turned to fight the CCP. By 1949 the KMT retreated to Taiwan, relocating the ROC government to Taipei. As Mao Zedong established the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the Chinese mainland, the KMT controlled Taiwan and the nearby Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu islands under martial law, still claiming the ROC as the legitimate government of all of China from the capital of Taipei.³⁰

While the PRC has never had official jurisdiction over Taiwan, its policy claims Taiwan as part of its national territory and has not renounced the use of force to prevent Taiwanese independence.³¹ China's goal for reunification with Taiwan follows the "One Country, Two Systems" model that has been applied to Hong Kong and Macau since their reunification with China in the late 1990s. This model for Taiwan would make the island a "special administrative region" with a "high degree of autonomy."³² Historically, Taiwan has rejected the One Country Two Systems model on the grounds that the model would degrade human rights and freedoms in Taiwan, eventually bringing about the loss of its democratic system.³³ Through today, the One Country Two Systems model is not acceptable to either political camp in Taiwan, especially as the Taiwanese observe changes in Hong Kong's political scene today under the model.³⁴

²⁸ Denny Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002, pp. 55-56.

²⁹ The Qing Dynasty government ceded Taiwan to Japan at the conclusion of the first Sino-Japanese war in 1895. See: Denny Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

³⁰ Richard Bush, *Uncharted Strait: The Future of China-Taiwan Relations*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013, p. 10

³¹ Andrew Scobell, "China and Taiwan: Balance of Rivalry with Weapons of Mass Democratization," *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 129, no. 3, 2014, p. 450.

³² Sean Cooney, "Why Taiwan is not Hong Kong: a review of the PRC's 'One Country Two Systems' Model for Reunification with Taiwan," *Pacific Rim Law and Policy Journal*, vol. 497, 1997: pp. 498-499.

³³ Sean Cooney, *op. cit.*, p. 507.

³⁴ Ho-fung Hung and Hui-ying Kuo, "'One Country, Two Systems' and its antagonists in Tibet and Taiwan," *China Information*, vol. 24, no. 3, p. 329.

While the PRC's insistence on a "One China" recognition policy has contributed to the Taiwan's current dilemma of recognition and participation in international organizations, the island has survived as a *de facto* autonomous actor with significant security backing from its informal yet substantial relationship with the United States.³⁵

Marital law on Taiwan, originally enacted in 1947 as a temporary measure as the KMT planned for another military campaign to retake the mainland, lasted for forty years.³⁶ Beginning with Chiang Ching-kuo's lifting of martial law in 1987, Taiwan has rapidly developed into a multiparty democracy with many differing views on policy toward China. The KMT survives in Taiwan as the largest of the "blue" camp of parties, which are associated with friendlier policies toward China. The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which developed as an opposition party to the KMT in the 1980s, is the largest party of the "green" camp, associated with a Taiwanese identity and a more cautious stance in mainland policy, with some of the "deepest green" members advocating Taiwanese independence.³⁷ Since 1996, executive leadership on Taiwan has alternated between the KMT and DPP.

While both blue and green leadership in Taiwan has at times restricted and opened political relations with the Mainland, and both have rejected the PRC's concept of "one country, two systems" for Taiwan, the PRC in recent years successfully worked with KMT leadership based on the "1992 consensus."³⁸ The 1992 consensus refers to an oral agreement reached in 1992 between Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) and China's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) by which both sides concurred orally that there is one China, but each holds a different view on what that "one China" actually is.³⁹ The 1992 consensus played a crucial role in the development of cross-strait economic relations during the KMT administration of Ma Ying-jeou between 2008 and 2016. The consensus let Taipei and Beijing preserve each side's constitutional definition of China's territory and sovereignty without producing a

³⁵ Richard Bush, *Uncharted Strait*, p. 10.

³⁶ Mark Stokes and Sabrina Tsai, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

³⁷ Richard Bush, *Uncharted Strait*, p. 23.

³⁸ Richard Bush, *Uncharted Strait.*, pp. 12, 248.

³⁹ Shiquan Xu, "The 1992 Consensus: A Review and Assessment of Consultations between the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait and the Straits Exchange Foundation," *American Foreign Policy Interests: The Journal of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy*, vol. 23, no. 3, 2001, pp. 127-128.

“two-Chinas” framework.⁴⁰ The Ma administration and the SEF heralded the 1992 consensus as instrumental for the signing of the Cross-Straits Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) in 2010.⁴¹ Thus, this unwritten agreement, crafted more than two decades ago, has played a major role in economic policy and served as a precondition for negotiations with China from 2008 to 2016.⁴²

On the other hand, the DPP historically and currently has not accepted the 1992 consensus, thus straining the relationship between China and Taiwan’s high-level contacts since 2016. As the DPP platform includes Taiwanese independence (at least in name), Tsai is unable to publicly profess adherence to the 1992 consensus, even if her administration’s policies contribute to the status quo in the Taiwan Strait. While this recent development may indicate that the “high politics” of cross-strait relations remain distant, cross-strait integration in the “low politics” arena of trade, business, cultural, and educational ties have continued to develop. While the political background and recent history of cross-strait political relations provide the foundation upon which educational exchanges between Taiwan and China are built, the continued integration occurring in the economic and social realms are equally significant in student flows.

3.2.2 *Taiwanese Identity in Cross-Strait Relations*

Especially since political liberalization and democratization in the ROC, a growing sense of Taiwanese identity has become a salient point of debate in Taiwan’s domestic politics as well as in conversations on cross-strait relations. Writing in 1994, Alan M. Wachman observed that the Taiwanese identification among people in the ROC is influenced by several factors dealing largely with collective memories of Taiwan’s separation from mainland China and long periods of (often repressive) governance by outsiders. Taiwan’s physical separation from mainland China by the Taiwan strait enhances the perspective that Taiwan is different, as well as a long history of European and later Japanese occupation of the island separate from imperial projects occurring on the Mainland. Besides the geographical separation from the Chinese mainland and multi-

⁴⁰ See: Chi-hung Wei, “Producing and reproducing the 1992 Consensus: The Sociolinguistic Construction of the Political Economy of China-Taiwan relations,” *Asian Security*, vol. 11, 2015, p. 75; and Alan D. Romberg, “After the Taiwan Elections: Planning for the Future,” *China Leadership Monitor*, vol. 37, 2012, p. 5.

⁴¹ Straits Exchange Foundation, “Cross-Strait Situation,” accessed February 22, 2019, <http://www.sef.org.tw/ct.asp?xItem=110671&CtNode=4716&mp=300>.

⁴² Min-Hua Chiang, “Cross-Strait Economic Integration in the Regional Political Economy,” *International Journal of China Studies* vol. 2, no. 3, 2011, p. 691.

generational colonial existence under the Japanese, memories of the authoritarian nature of KMT governance and early conflict between locals and Mainlander newcomers in the 1940s informs the sense that Taiwanese people are different from Mainlanders. These early conflicts include the 228 incident and subsequent “White Terror,” during which the KMT violently and systematically repressed political protests and executed the Taiwanese political and intellectual elite.⁴³ Thus, a significant part of the Taiwanese identity stems from the people’s relationship with their island’s history and collective memories of political and social strife.

Data compiled continuously by the Election Studies Center at National Chengchi University is widely cited to illustrate the shrinking number of people in Taiwan identifying as “Chinese” alone, with a growing percentage of survey respondents preferring to call themselves “Taiwanese” or “both Chinese and Taiwanese.” By the end of 2018, 54.5 percent of respondents identified as “Taiwanese” and 38.2 percent identified as “both Chinese and Taiwanese,” leaving 7.3 percent identifying as “Chinese” or giving no response. These data contrast with those of the 1990s, during which the proportion of respondents identifying as Chinese peaked in 1994 at 26.2 percent, during which those identifying as Taiwanese made up 20.2 percent of respondents and those identifying as “both Chinese and Taiwanese” made up 44.6 percent. The Taiwanese identity response overtook the “Taiwanese and Chinese” response between 2007 and 2008.⁴⁴

This rise in Taiwanese consciousness has not translated into increased momentum toward Taiwanese independence though: over the past twenty years, data from the Election Study Center continue to show that public support for the cross-strait “status quo” of neither independence nor unification, at least in the short term, remains overwhelmingly popular. Responses of “maintain status quo, decide at a later date” and “maintain status quo indefinitely” have remained the two most popular responses in this survey since 2003, making up 57.4 percent of responses in 2018.⁴⁵ Independence or unification as soon as possible consistently remain the least popular responses in the

⁴³ Alan M. Wachman, *Taiwan: National Identity and Democratization*, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994, pp. 91-99.

⁴⁴ Hui-ling Chen, “Taiwanese / Chinese Identification Trend Distribution in Taiwan(1992/06~2018/12),” National Chengchi University Election Studies Center, published January 28, 2019, accessed February 22, 2019, <http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=166>.

⁴⁵ Hui-ling Chen, “Taiwan Independence vs. Unification with the Mainland Trend Distribution in Taiwan(1992/06~2018/12),” National Chengchi University Election Studies Center, published January 28, 2018, accessed February 22, 2019, <http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=167>.

Election Study Center survey, indicating that Taiwanese voters perceive a high level of risk if Taiwan were to change the political status quo with China, despite a growth in Taiwanese and combined Taiwanese and Chinese identification over a Chinese one.

This Taiwanese identity appears prevalent even among groups of Taiwanese with extensive contacts in China: Rigger and Schubert find that individuals with a deep connection and identification with China are outnumbered by those who, while currently residing in the Mainland, identify themselves as Taiwanese.⁴⁶ This is further evidence that despite increased social and commercial contact between the two sides, Taiwanese identity remains strong. The issue of Taiwanese identity remains important in the discussion of cross-strait relations because as economic and social ties grow between China and Taiwan, the political identity of the Taiwanese appears to remain separate.

3.3. Evidence of Cross-Strait Integration

3.3.1. Business and Economic Links

Even in the absence of political relations, cross-strait ties have built up between people of each side since Taiwan's democratization. Travel between the Mainland and Taiwan was lifted in 1987, coinciding with the end of martial law in Taiwan and its first steps toward democratization.⁴⁷ As Taiwan's export-driven industrial economy started losing competitiveness as manufacturing costs rose on the island, the opening of the Chinese mainland offered opportunities for Taiwanese businesspeople to move offshore to a cheaper labor market.⁴⁸ Despite attempts over the years to limit trade and investment, Taiwan's economic interactions with China continued to grow: Lee Teng-Hui's "No Haste, Be Patient" policy enacted in 1996 and discarded in 2001 by the Chen Shui-bian administration proved to be ineffective at curbing Taiwanese trade and investment in China: T.Y. Wang found that two-way indirect trade between China and Taiwan in fact increased even during the "No Haste, Be Patient" policy, as businesspeople skirted around regulations to gain access to China's markets, often moving through Hong Kong. Facing

⁴⁶ Shelley Rigger and Gunter Schubert, "Taiwan's Contribution to China's Economic Rise and Its Implications for Cross-Strait Integration," in Steve Tsang, ed., *Taiwan's Impact on China: Why Soft Power Matters More than Economic or Political Inputs*, (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017): p.117.

⁴⁷ Rigger and Schubert, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

⁴⁸ Cal Clark, "Taiwan-mainland China Economic Relations: Recent Developments and Problems in Community Building," in Winston L. Yang and Deborah A. Brown, eds. *Across the Taiwan Strait: Exchanges, Conflicts, and Negotiations*, (Jamaica, NY: Center of Asian Studies, St. John's University, 1999), p. 88.

pressure from the business community and political opponents in 2001, the Chen Shui-bian administration lifted restrictions on trade with China in the face of Taiwan's economic slump.⁴⁹

The life and death of the “No Haste, Be Patient” policy could be indicative of the strength of the linkage community of Taiwanese businesspeople in China, known as *Taishang*, affecting policy change in favor of cross-strait integration: the swift-moving cross-strait business community effectively forced Taiwan's policymakers to acknowledge the *fait accompli* of economic links that were already forming across the Strait. In the face of tense political relations, Steve Chan noted that “...civil society's pursuit of commercial interests has led to a process of détente and even de facto economic integration with China. It offers an example of politics being trumped by economics.”⁵⁰

In addition, economic interactions between Taiwanese and Chinese businesspeople have continued in despite heightened political tension. During the 1995-1996 cross-straits crisis, Chinese officials reassured that Taiwanese business interests would be protected in times of political confrontation. Likewise, during the 1999 cross-straits crisis Beijing “showed restraint” and did not enact economic sanctions against Taiwan's businesspeople. The entanglement of China and Taiwan's economies has protected the Taiwan Strait against escalation between the two political systems: the linkage community of Taiwanese businesspeople in China has acted as a buffer when political relations have gone sour and kept informal interactions intact. This is a trend that Wei Yung himself would have observed in the 1995-1996 crisis, when Beijing's missile tests in the Taiwan Strait were coupled with private reassurance to Taiwanese investors that their holdings on the Mainland would be safe.⁵¹

More recently, Taiwan's current DPP administration's “New Southbound Policy” aims to encourage trade and investment with South and Southeast Asia, harkening back to Lee Teng-hui's “Go South” policy of the late 1990s. The late Alan Romberg interpreted the New southbound Policy as a measure to limit trade and economic dependence on the Chinese mainland. However, the Tsai administration knows that separating the Taiwanese

⁴⁹ T.Y. Wang, “Lifting the ‘No Haste, Be Patient’ Policy: Implications for Cross-Strait Relations,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* vol. 15, no. 1, 2002, pp. 134, 136.

⁵⁰ Steve Chan, “Unbalanced Threat or Rising Integration? Explaining relations across the Taiwan Strait,” in Jean-Marc F. Blanchard and Dennis V. Hickey, eds., *New Thinking about the Taiwan Issue: Theoretical Insights into its Origins, Dynamics, and Prospects*, (New York: Routledge, 2012), p. 93.

⁵¹ Murray Scot Tanner, *Chinese Economic Coercion Against Taiwan: A Tricky Weapon to Use* Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2007, p. 113.

and Chinese markets is impossible, so the New Southbound Policy is promoted as a policy that contributes to “cross-strait peace and stability.”⁵² The Tsai administration must work within the context of the policies and progress made during Ma Ying-jeou’s term, which included the historic signing of the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) in trade between the Mainland and Taiwan.⁵³ In the interests of keeping cross-strait relations stable after the period of rapid economic integration promoted by the Ma administration for eight years prior, Tsai’s administration can do little to undo the progress already made. This shows that the deepening cross-strait economic integration that has been developing since the 1990s is now entrenched and perhaps irreversible. Thanks to the activities of linkage communities, a future of an independent Taiwan seems unlikely, as cross-strait interdependence has made independence an unfeasible option, even when the pro-Taiwan DPP holds power.

Beijing’s Taiwan policy, especially under Hu Jintao in the early 2000s, followed an approach of reducing security threats on one hand and encouraging economic integration on the other, with the *Taishang* as a key target.⁵⁴ The strength of Taiwanese businesspeople in affecting cross-strait policy in Taiwan, however, appears to have its limits in the political realm. Available evidence suggests that as China and Taiwan’s economies become more intertwined, their people do not appear to support political integration. A RAND Corporation study of Chinese economic coercion of the Taiwanese found that China’s ability to influence Taiwanese voters, particularly the *Taishang* community, into supporting PRC positions on cross-strait relations has been largely unsuccessful.⁵⁵ The Taiwanese business community in China has historically not acted as a single voting bloc to sway politics back home.⁵⁶ Contrary to the expectations of both Beijing and Taipei, outside of advocating for favorable trade and economic policies, the *Taishang*’s political views span the entire spectrum of blue to green, providing little evidence that their voting behavior significantly sways elections toward pro-China

⁵² Alan D. Romberg, “The Bull in the China Shop,” *China Leadership Monitor*, vol. 52, 2017, p. 2.

⁵³ Jorge Tavares da Silva, “Informal and nonofficial interactions in the new start of cross-strait relations: the case of Taiwanese businessmen,” in Jean-Marc F. Blanchard and Dennis V. Hickey, eds., *New Thinking about the Taiwan Issue: Theoretical Insights into its Origins, Dynamics, and Prospects*, (New York: Routledge, 2012), p.126.

⁵⁴ Shu Keng and Gunter Schubert, “Agents of Taiwan-China Unification? The Political Roles of Taiwanese Business People in the process of Cross-Strait Integration,” *Asian Survey*, vol. 50, no. 2, 2010, p. 296.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Murray Scot Tanner, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

candidates, as shown in Chen Shui-bian's 2000 and 2004 elections and the variety of *Taishang* voices that both supported and opposed him.⁵⁷

In fact, many businesspeople do not openly discuss Taiwan's politics at all for fear of backlash in both China and Taiwan.⁵⁸ Rather than building bridges of understanding between the people of Taiwan and China, the *Taishang* have purposefully avoided speaking on politics. This constitutes a challenge for the formation of linkage communities, showing that interactions between businesspeople in China and Taiwan are not necessarily facilitating political understanding on either side or uniting everyone within a linkage community with the same point of view. At present, the linkage community of *Taishang* in the Chinese mainland have not established a political agenda that makes them a predictable voting bloc in Taiwan. While deepening economic interactions between China and Taiwan have created a system of interdependence that protects against drastic changes in the political status quo, these interactions will face challenges in spilling over to the political sphere.

3.3.2. *Tourism and Cultural Links*

Research on the culture and tourism side of cross-strait integration and community formation remains relatively uncommon compared to the business and economic side. A 1999 review of social and cultural contacts across the Taiwan Strait found that cross-strait exchange from mainland China to Taiwan mainly took the form of academic conferences, presentations, joint research ventures, and public performances in the performing arts.⁵⁹ However, these cooperative efforts were vulnerable to changes in the cross-strait political and security relationship.⁶⁰

As the political environment between China and Taiwan changes, cultural exchanges may expand or shrink depending on the agenda of those in power. While both the KMT and DPP have shifted toward the center preference of keeping the cross-strait status quo, each party's identity has influenced the growth of cross-strait interactions.⁶¹ Wei and Lai create an identity-rationality framework to explain the differing approaches

⁵⁷ Murray Scot Tanner, *op. cit.*, p. 116-117.

⁵⁸ Murray Scot Tanner, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

⁵⁹ Wen-Hui Tsai, "Taiwan-mainland China Relations: Cultural and Other Exchanges and Cooperation," in Winston L. Yang and Deborah A. Brown, eds. *Across the Taiwan Strait: Exchanges, Conflicts, and Negotiations*, (Jamaica, NY: Center of Asian Studies, St. John's University, 1999), p. 113.

⁶⁰ Wen-Hui Tsai, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

⁶¹ Chin-hao Huang and Patrick James, "Blue, Green, or Aquamarine? Taiwan and the Status Quo Preference in Cross-Strait Relations," *China Quarterly* 219 (2014), 670-692.

to cross-strait policy undertaken by DPP and KMT administrations. The KMT and DPP use different rationales for expanding or limiting cross-strait integration depending on their identity orientation. Wei and Lai argue that the DPP's independence-minded identity has led to DPP administrations limiting cross-strait exchanges during times of stability and expanding them when tensions rise. During cross-strait crises in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Taiwan-identifying administrations in the ROC expanded educational and cultural exchanges with the Mainland to ease tensions. On the other hand, the KMT, in accordance with their integration-minded identity, has expanded cross-strait integration policies when relations with China are stable and has limited them in times of cross-strait tension.⁶² This framework illustrates that the volume of cultural and educational exchanges remain sensitive to the cross-strait policy environment, unlike Taiwanese business community that was able to find ways into China despite restrictive policies in Taiwan.

In tourism, the PRC has been open to Taiwanese tourists in China since the opening of travel across the Taiwan Strait, while tourism from mainland China to Taiwan opened only in 2008.⁶³ While cross-strait tourists constitute a linkage community between China and Taiwan, their emotional connection to each other appears weaker. J.J. Zhang's 2013 study of travelers' behaviors while traversing through China and Taiwan's airports found that Taiwanese visitors do not necessarily identify with the mainland: while interviewees could appear ambivalent about the political situation between China and Taiwan, they still viewed a difference between the two places.⁶⁴ Regarding Chinese tourists in Taiwan, Rowen's 2014 study found that the PRC is able to reach into Taiwan's tourism industry in the form of group tours to influence a PRC tourist's experience of Taiwan as a part of China.⁶⁵ While this "territorialization" is effective on PRC visitors to Taiwan, the interaction of PRC tourists with Taiwanese locals has not necessarily produced the shared empathy or sensitivity toward each other that the linkage community framework posits.

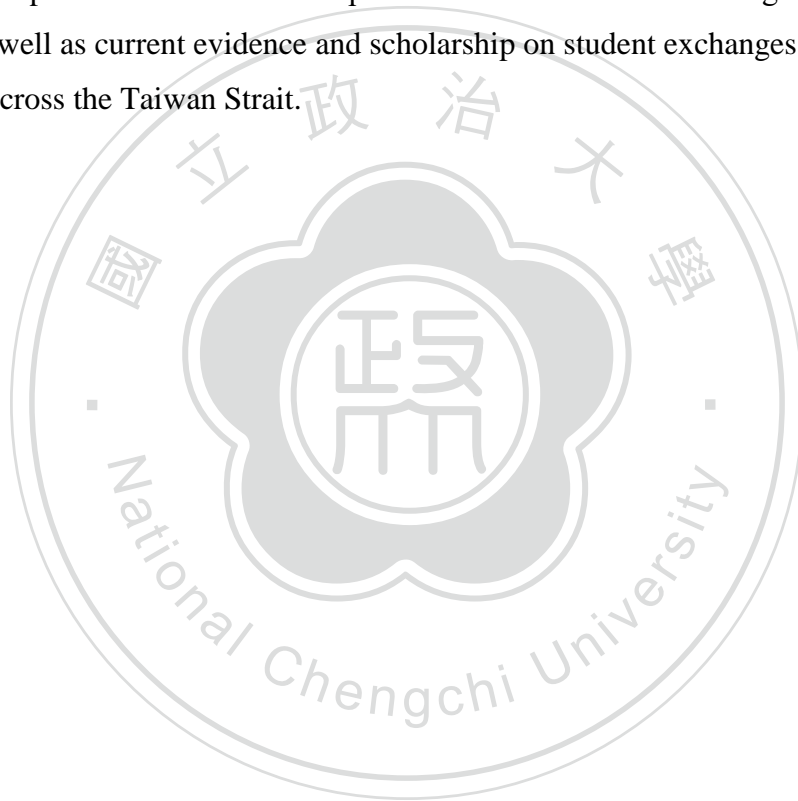
⁶² Chi-hung Wei and Christina J. Lai, "Identities, Rationality and Taiwan's China Policy: The Dynamics of Cross-Strait Exchanges," *Asian Studies Review* 41:1 (2017), pp. 139, 144.

⁶³ Min-Hua Chiang, "Tourism Development Across the Taiwan Strait," *East Asia*, vol. 29, 2012, pp. 236, 239.

⁶⁴ J.J. Zhang, "Borders on the Move: Cross-Strait Tourists' Material Moments on 'The Other Side' in the Midst of Rapprochement between China and Taiwan," *Geoforum*, vol. 48 2013, p. 95.

⁶⁵ Ian Rowen, "Tourism as a Territorial Strategy: The Case of China and Taiwan," *Annals of Tourism Research* vol. 46, 2014, pp. 65-66.

This section has highlighted that while integration and linkage communities in the form of cross-strait business and cultural interactions have grown, people-to-people ties between Taiwan and China have yet to create an environment in which people identify politically with each other and want a change in Taiwan's political status quo. This chapter has further placed the current status of China and Taiwan's political relationship within a historical and theoretical context of integration between divided nations. Considering the salient Taiwanese identity developing in Taiwan and preference for the political status quo, the connections at the "low politics" level of economic and cultural ties have yet to produce spillover into goodwill at the level of governmental relations. The following chapter examines the development of Taiwan and China's higher education systems as well as current evidence and scholarship on student exchanges in higher education across the Taiwan Strait.



Chapter 4. Higher Education Across the Taiwan Strait

This chapter focuses on the development of Taiwan and China's higher education systems and the ways in which they interact today in terms of student exchanges and migration. Sections 4.1 and 4.2 give a brief historical overview of Taiwan and China's higher education systems from the 1960s through present day, focusing on how each government's political imperatives and economic goals have affected the development of their higher education systems. Taiwan and China both face unique challenges as a result of the expansion of higher education access. Section 4.3 provides an overview of the legal and political basis for exchanges in students between China and Taiwan. Section 4.4 investigates the current state of student flows and reviews relevant research on cross-strait student exchanges.

4.1. Development of Taiwan's Higher Education System

The expansion of the higher education system in Taiwan has largely followed global trends in privatization, marketization, and massification over the past several decades as discussed in Chapter 2. After a period of strict control over higher education institutions from the 1950s through the early 1980s, the ROC now features a highly expanded and marketized higher education system, having quickly achieved universal access. These developments occurred in tandem with the transition from an agricultural economy to manufacturing, and subsequently to a service-based economy over the course of the late twentieth century. These liberalization efforts in the education sector also reflect Taiwan's transition from military to democratic government. Taiwan's near-universal higher education system today, while mirroring existing trends of massification throughout the world, also experiences its own set of unique challenges in terms of inequality in status among institutions and competition for student recruitment.

4.1.1. Historical Overview

Taiwan's higher education system today has expanded rapidly to the point that 95 percent of high school graduates enroll in tertiary education.¹ Higher education institutions in Taiwan increased from only seven in 1950 to 158 by 2015.² For Taiwan,

¹ Chia-Ming Hsueh, "Higher Education Crisis in Taiwan," *Inside Higher Ed*, August 5, 2018, accessed January 16, 2018, <https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/world-view/higher-education-crisis-taiwan>.

² Robin J. Chen, "Public and Private Universities in Taiwan: To Compete or Not to Compete?" *RIHE International Seminar Reports*, no. 23, 2015, p. 102.

the growth in size and number of higher education institutions took off with their deregulation starting in the late 1980s. Before then, the KMT tightly controlled the higher education system in accordance to larger political and economic goals. As Taiwan's economy shifted from import-substitution to export-led growth in the 1960s, the government encouraged the expansion and addition of vocational junior colleges and restricted growth in academic institutions to generate skilled workers for the manufacturing sector and meet the island's industrialization needs. The vocational sector of higher education continued to expand through the 1970s with the upgrading of Taiwan's industries. Throughout Taiwan's period of martial law, the KMT government maintained tight control over the higher education sector to bring together the industrial needs of the economy with the human capital of students. This control over the higher education system would loosen with the political and economic liberalization of the 1980s.

The pattern of global economic liberalization has correspondingly impacted Taiwan's higher education system and changed the role of government in education. Government control of higher education shifted toward supervision and regulation in the late 1980s with Taiwan's moves toward democratization and economic neoliberalism. Higher education was deregulated in 1985 in response to pressure from civil society, along with the shift from a manufacturing industry-based economy to a service-based one.³ In 1994 and again in 2005 the ROC Executive Yuan Educational Reform Committee revised the University Act to loosen government control over higher education institutions, creating a more autonomous higher education system in terms of academic and administrative responsibility.⁴ These changes turned higher education institutions into entities that resemble businesses. The most recent version of the University Act largely leaves organizational, administrative, monetary, and curricular matters to the universities themselves to govern, with the Ministry of Education taking on a more supervisory role. The Act classifies universities into three categories: national, public, and private. Here, public universities refer to those established at the municipal or county level. The establishment of national and public universities occurs through national and local

³ Shu-ling Tsai and Yossi Shavit, "Taiwan: Higher Education—Expansion and Equality of Educational Opportunity," in Yossi Shavit, Richard Arum, and Adam Gamoran, eds., *Stratification on Higher Education: A Comparative Study*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007): pp. 143-146.

⁴ Chuing Prudence Chou, "Taiwan Higher Education at the Crossroads: Its Implication for China," *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, vol.1, no. 2, 2008, p. 149.

government approval channels, while the establishment of private universities is governed through the Private Institute Act.⁵

Since deregulation, the massification of Taiwan's higher education sector can be characterized by the growth in number of higher education institutions, especially in the private education sector. This growth has been characterized by not only the establishment of new private higher education institutions but also the upgrading of existing schools to "college" or "university" status. In the 1990s many private two- and three-year vocational colleges experienced upgrades in status, thereby joining the higher education system under new classifications.⁶ Robin J. Chen notes that this growth in private institutions was accompanied by a decrease in the number of polytechnic institutes in favor of colleges and universities, mirroring Taiwan's economic transition from manufacturing to services.⁷ Today, these private institutions outnumber public institutions. Expanded capacity is also a defining feature of massification in Taiwan's higher education system. Although the public universities have likewise expanded their capacities, a larger proportion of today's students are enrolled in private colleges and universities.⁸

Overall, the role and function of the university in Taiwan has changed in step with global economic imperatives of neoliberalism and trends of academic capitalism. From their role as engines of Taiwan's industrialization to institutions of the service and knowledge economy, Taiwan's colleges and universities have reformed and grown concurrently with contemporary trends of massification, privatization, and marketization in other countries around the world. The transformation of higher education in Taiwan, while extraordinary in terms of achieving universal access, has also revealed some issues. While Taiwan's education system reflects the larger trends of globalization, these institutions of higher education face several unique challenges considering Taiwan's current social and economic outlook.

4.1.2. Challenges in Taiwan's Higher Education System

⁵ Ministry of Education, *University Act*, Ministry of Education, Republic of China (Taiwan), 2015, accessed May 6, 2019, <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=H0030001>.

⁶ Chuing Prudence Chou, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-150.

⁷ Robin J. Chen, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

⁸ Sheng-Ju Chan and Liang-Wen Lin, "Massification of Higher Education in Taiwan: Shifting Pressure from Admission to Employment," *Higher Education Policy*, vol. 28, 2015, p. 25.

The privatization of the higher education system on one hand provided access to more students by easing government fiscal responsibility and oversight of higher education institutions. On the other hand, rapid expansion and privatization has contributed to several social problems in Taiwanese society today. Taiwan now has a stratified university system in which the national and public universities enjoy the best reputations, accept the highest-achieving students, and offer subsidized tuition. This has become a problem for economic inequality in Taiwanese society as access to higher education still favors richer families who can invest more in their students' educational achievement early in life. These students from more affluent households are then rewarded with not only a spot at a top-ranking university, but also enjoy cheaper tuition. This worsens social class segregation as lower-income students who cannot perform as well academically are funneled into private universities with higher fees and less favorable reputations among the population and employers.⁹ Chih-Chun Wu's 2009 study of undergraduate students found that students with lower-socioeconomic status were less likely to attend elite universities and were more likely to work part-time during their studies to relieve economic pressure. This indicates that while inequality in *access* to tertiary education has been eliminated in Taiwan, inequalities remain in the perceived *quality* of education students can attain depending on where they are able to enroll.¹⁰

Challenges facing universities and colleges in Taiwan naturally involve funding and revenue generation. While the role of the ROC government has changed from a controlling one to a merely regulatory one in supervising the activities and governance of universities and colleges, the government still plays a critical role in funding for higher education institutions: both public and private institutions rely heavily on winning government grants to meet their research, teaching, and other funding needs.¹¹ Public universities tend to enjoy better support and access to these government funds than private universities, contributing to the stratification in perceived quality and reputation between public and private institutions. However, constricted national budgets make government grants alone insufficient for universities' operation costs. While the public universities may have an advantage over public ones in terms of access to government grants and funding, both public and private institutions have turned to similar strategies of

⁹ Sheng-Ju Chan and Liang-Wen Lin, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

¹⁰ Chi-Chun Wu, "Higher Education Expansion and Low-Income Students in Taiwan," *International Journal of Educational Development* 29, (2009): 404.

¹¹ Robin J. Chen, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107.

revenue generation. These strategies include raising tuition fees and building up endowments with donations from alumni networks.¹² The ability for universities to change their funding structure has limits, as families oppose large tuition hikes and government grants continue to favor the more prestigious institutions.

Taiwan's demographic outlook also contributes to growing concerns of competition between universities. Like other high-income economies in East Asia (including Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and Hong Kong), Taiwan is starting to experience the effects of population aging. Taiwan's birth rate has been falling for several decades as a result of many economic, social, and cultural factors. This low birth rate within Taiwan will shrink university enrollment rates as higher education institutions compete for fewer college-age students in coming years. Indeed, higher education institutions are already experiencing the effects and challenges of low enrollment: Yu-Ying Kuo observes that "for the 2013 academic year, the enrollment quota was 324 thousand [students], but the actual enrollment was 259 thousand leaving a vacancy of 65 thousand." This trend of under-enrollment poses difficulties for universities and colleges that depend on student tuition in order to survive financially.¹³ The institutions that originally developed to meet growing demand for higher education in the 1980s and 1990s are now reckoning with the prospect of downsizing, merging, or otherwise reforming themselves to remain operational as enrolling class sizes continue to shrink each year.

Some strides have been made toward addressing the challenges Taiwan's higher education system faces today. The 2015 Innovative Transformation Policy put forth by the Ministry of Education aims to address these challenges through the merging, closure, and "re-shaping" of universities throughout Taiwan. More specifically, the policy involves assisting university faculty in transitioning from the education and teaching sector to industry, strengthening the relationship between universities and industry, and overseeing the closure, merging, and cooperation between universities to balance the supply of higher education with reduced demand.¹⁴ The Ministry of Education has continued to list these goals in their "Objectives for 2018," which also include goals to "encourage universities to develop distinguishing features...maintain a balance in

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Yu-Ying Kuo, "Taiwan Universities: Where to Go?" *Humanities*, vol. 5, no. 12, 2016, p. 4-5.

¹⁴ Yu-Ying Kuo, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

regional development...and vigorously implement technological and vocational education policies and programs.”¹⁵ These efforts aim to develop market diversity among universities and maintain the regional distribution of institutions while improving educational quality for students and the Taiwanese economy. While it is still early to evaluate the effectiveness of the Innovative Transformation Policy, we may conclude that Taiwan’s higher education institutions and education officials remain highly concerned about the island’s future competitiveness in the global higher education marketplace. The following section focuses on the expansion and reformation of mainland China’s higher education system.

4.2 Development of China’s Higher Education System

The expansion and marketization of China’s higher education system over the late 20th and early 21st centuries parallel significant and rapid changes in other areas of China’s development. This section first provides an overview of the Chinese higher educational system and how it achieved such rapid growth, also highlighting challenges in China’s higher education system. This section then turns to focus on the efforts of the Chinese government and universities to promote international connections in education and recruit international students. Finally, this section analyzes China’s growing role as a global and regional hub of international activity in higher education.

4.2.1. *Overview of Development and Challenges*

While China and Taiwan’s higher education both have traditions in Confucianism and share a common history in the political upheavals of 1911, the PRC government frequently changed educational policy over the course of the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution during the 1950s and 1960s. Following this period of social and political turmoil, Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms of the 1970s and 1980s reached the higher education institutions as well.¹⁶ Recognizing that modernizing China’s economy rested on the quality of its education system, Deng’s reforms between 1977 and 1984 focused on restoring the function of the university to pre-Cultural Revolution status. This

¹⁵ Ministry of Education, Republic of China (Taiwan), “Ministry of Education Objectives for 2018 (January-December),” published September 26, 2017, accessed May 1, 2019, <https://english.moe.gov.tw/cp-9-17161-B6F6B-1.html>.

¹⁶ Rui Yang, *Third Delight: The Internationalization of Higher Education in China*, (New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 36.

included the reinstatement of the college entrance exam (*Gaokao*), the rebuilding and restoration of key higher education institutions that had moved, split, or merged during the Cultural Revolution era, the reestablishment of postgraduate studies, and permitting international study for Chinese students.¹⁷

While still largely publicly administered, China's higher education institutions are becoming more marketized and privatized in the post-Mao era. Since the beginning of the Reform and Opening Policy in 1978, the Chinese higher education landscape has been characterized as an economic sector with an industrial orientation, which requires institutions to become more "managerial and entrepreneurial."¹⁸ Prior to 1985, higher education enrollment rates remained at around five percent. In this elite higher education system, students received complete support from the state. Several government policies since then have changed the higher education system to become more marketized. The 1985 *Decision on Reforming Chinese Educational System* relaxed government control of higher education to allow institutions to start their own recruitment activities; in 1989, the *Regulation on Higher Education Institution Tuition and Accommodation Fee* proposed that the government should relinquish responsibility of supporting students in higher education, thereby initiating the shift toward charging tuition fees for all students.¹⁹ Throughout the 1990s the PRC government promoted policies to expand access to higher education and orient higher education institutions toward market forces.

Ka Ho Mok identifies several trends in the marketization of China's universities, including a shift toward charging fees for enrollment and tuition, raising those tuition fees to meet funding needs, a growing emphasis on student choice in higher education, and the gradual opening of the private education market.²⁰ Meanwhile, Zha uses the historic strategic metaphor of "walking on two legs" to trace the massification of China's higher education system by identifying three sets of "legs:" (1) governmental planning versus market forces, (2) elite versus local institutions, and (3) public versus private funding. These sets of "legs" illustrate the balance between active government planning and opening the higher education sector to global market forces. This balance creates a quasi-

¹⁷ Lei Zhang, Ruyue Dai, and Kai Yu, "Chinese Higher Education Since 1977," in Shibao Guo and Yan Guo, eds., *Spotlight on China: Changes in Education under China's Market Economy*, (Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2016), pp. 177-178.

¹⁸ Fengliang Zhu and Sumin Li, "Marketization in Chinese Higher Education," in Hans G. Schuetze and German Alvarex Mandiola, *op. cit.*, 181.

¹⁹ Hongxia Shan and Shibao Guo, "Massification of Chinese Higher Education: Opportunities and Challenges in a Globalizing Context," in Shibao Guo and Yan Guo, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

²⁰ Ka Ho Mok, "Marketizing Higher Education in Post-Mao China," *International Journal of Educational Development*, vol. 20, 2000: pp. 114, 116.

market in higher education that is guided by government planning and oversight on one hand and driven by market forces on the other.

These strategies have resulted in growing university enrollment rates and a dramatic increase in the number of higher education institutions in China. Between 1998 and 2008, the number of higher education institutions increased by 121.4 percent from 1,022 to 2,263, making China's higher education system the largest in the world in terms of the number of institutions.²¹ Enrollment has also greatly expanded in China's higher education system, recently achieving universal levels. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), gross enrolment in tertiary education in the PRC reached 51.1 percent in 2017, up from only 20.67 percent in 2008.²² A particularly large jump in enrollments occurred between 1998 and 1999, wherein undergraduate enrollments increased by 47.4 percent over that one year alone.²³

While private institutions have grown in China and legislation has developed to meet the demand for private higher education since 2002, the proportion of students enrolled in private versus public institutions is much smaller than in Taiwan: about twenty percent of students enrolled in higher education are in private institutions. However, like Taiwan, China's university system now exhibits a hierarchical structure in which a small number of publicly-administered universities enjoy higher rankings, more prestige, and better resources than private institutions.²⁴ This was the result of the PRC's 21/1 and 98/5 projects launched in the late 1990s to enhance funding and global status of a small number of high-ranking public universities.²⁵ Project 21/1 launched in 1995 to make additional funding available to China's top 100 universities in their pursuit of high global status in academic and research activities. Project 98/5, which first launched in 1998, was also designed to funnel additional money and support to a small number of elite universities to quickly improve their status in the worldwide higher education

²¹ Qiang Zha, "Walking on Two Legs: A Policy Analysis of China's Move to Mass Higher Education," in Hans G. Schuetze and German Alvarex Mandiola, eds., *State and Market in Higher Education Reforms*, (Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2012), pp. 167-68.

²² UNESCO Institute of Statistics, "Browse by Country: China, Education in Literacy, Participation in Education," 2019, accessed February 16, 2019, <http://uis.unesco.org/country/CN>.

²³ Fengliang Zhu and Sumin Li, *op. cit.*, 181.

²⁴ Lei Zhang, Ruyue Dai, and Kai Yu, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

²⁵ Ruth Hayhoe and Jian Liu, "China's Universities, Cross-Border Education, and Dialogue among Civilizations," in David W. Chapman, William K Cummings, and Gerard A. Postiglione, eds., *Crossing Borders in East Asian Higher Education*, (Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, 2010), p. 78.

marketplace.²⁶ These 21/1 and 98/5 universities now form the upper ranks of China's higher education system. More recently, the PRC government's "Double First Class" plan aims to support top-tier universities with government funding, with the addition of targeted disciplines that are also getting support.²⁷ These government-supported institutions illustrate the PRC's efforts to create world-class universities in the global higher education market.

Higher education expansion has created its own set of challenges for Chinese society. As in Taiwan, inequalities have developed in mainland China's higher education system that result in differences in student experiences in elite versus local and public versus private institutions. Students attending less prestigious institutions in the private education market must pay relatively more while receiving a lower-quality education in return. The largest increase in number of higher education institutions in China has also been confined to the lower levels of the higher education hierarchy, which includes tertiary-level vocational schools and the growing number of privately-funded institutions.²⁸ These developments in China reflect similar trends in Taiwan, even as control of the Chinese higher education system's marketization and expansion is split between free market forces of privatization and guidance from the central government.

In China, the urban-rural divide manifests itself clearly in disparities in access to higher education. Shan and Guo point to rising tuition fees and aversion to taking on debt in the form of student loans as financial barriers to access among the lower-income rural population. Shan and Guo note that disparities exist even between the locally-administered public universities, as local governments receive varying amounts of funding dedicated toward maintaining higher education institutions.²⁹ Wang notes that the *Hukou* (household registration) system is at the root of the urban-rural divide in education because it restricts the mobility of rural residents to China's cities. The *Hukou* system therefore plays a role in preserving the division between urban and rural education

²⁶ Qiang Zha, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

²⁷ The Charlesworth Group., "New Chinese Double First Class University Plan Released," *Charlesworth Author Services*, October 3, 2017, accessed May 27, 2019, <https://cwauthors.com/article/double-first-class-list>.

²⁸ Qiang Zha, *op. cit.*, p. 173..

²⁹ Hongxia Shan and Shibao Guo, *op. cit.*, 224.

systems, as the primary and secondary schooling that prepares children for higher education also exhibits wide disparities depending on location.³⁰

4.2.2. *Internationalization in China's Higher Education System*

China's efforts to internationalize its higher education system largely parallel initiatives to enhance its economic competitiveness and integration into the international community since the opening of its economy.³¹ China liberalized trade in education as part of its ascension to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in the early 2000s. While individual institutions adopt their own internationalization strategies, the internationalization of higher education is also a national project of the PRC to strengthen its soft power through the recruitment of international students and improvement of its universities to world-class status.³² As a result, China's higher education system has expanded to parallel the higher education models of the rest of the world, while maintaining state control of higher education "quasi-markets." While the 21/1 and 98/5 initiatives have worked to enhance the global status of Chinese higher education institutions, internationalization efforts at both the state and institutional levels have also focused heavily on the recruitment of international students.

Typically, higher education literature views and analyzes China as an important source of international students in the global higher education market. However, while China remains a significant source of the world's international students, dynamics appear to be shifting as China becomes an important destination for foreign students, especially within the Asia Pacific region. With China's rise in economic power has also come a rise in China's prestige and recognition of its institutions of higher education: data from CSIS show that the number of international students choosing to study in China has grown considerably over the 2010s, becoming the third most popular study abroad destination in the world behind the United States and the United Kingdom.³³ More than half of these foreign students come from countries in the Asia Pacific region. With the recent

³⁰ Li Wang, "Widening Urban Rural Divides: Examining Social Exclusion and Education Inequality in Chinese Schools," in Shibao Guo and Yan Guo, *op. cit.*, 338-339.

³¹ See Rui Yang, *op. cit.*, p. 174; and Lei Zhang, Ruyue Dai, and Kai Yu, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

³² Wen Wen and Die Hu, "The Emergence of a Regional Education Hub: Rationales of International Students' Choice of China as the Study Destination," *Journal of Studies in International Education*, vol. 0, no 0, 2018, p. 4.

³³ Center for Strategic and International Studies China Power Project, *Is China both a Source and Hub for International Students?* Accessed November 21, 2018, <https://chinapower.csis.org/china-international-students/>.

introduction of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China views markets along proposed BRI project paths as important for the recruitment of international students and the promotion of China's soft power; foreign students from Southeast, South, and Central Asia as well as the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa have increased since the start of the BRI, which aims to develop China's soft power with partner nations as well as develop economic linkages. Wen and Hu note that compared to these regions in Asia and along the BRI, the share of students from the Western, developed countries has shrunk.³⁴ This shows that China is emerging as a regional hub for international students.

While most international students in China are self-funded, some foreign students also have access to scholarships from the Chinese government, especially for advanced degree programs.³⁵ According to China's University and College Application System (CUCAS), an online application platform for Chinese universities affiliated with the PRC Ministry of Education, scholarships target foreign students with funding for degree and exchange programs. These scholarships are sponsored by many actors, including the Chinese national government, provincial and municipal governments, individual universities, the Confucius Institutes, and Chinese enterprises.³⁶ In addition, many top-ranking Chinese universities offer relaxed admission requirements to international students compared to domestic Chinese students: requirements such as high college entrance exam scores or advanced language proficiency may be waived for international applicants to high-ranking Chinese universities, creating a strong incentive for students to look to China for their higher education.³⁷

Recent studies have started to explore the reasons and rationale behind foreign students' decisions to study abroad in China. Wen and Hu found that educational rationales, including the reputation and quality of the host institutions, were main pull factors in international students' choice to study in China. This was especially true for students from countries in the Asia Pacific region who viewed China's higher education institutions as more prestigious and reputable than those of their home countries.³⁸ In this regard, China serves as a hub in the Asia Pacific region offering high-quality educational opportunities to students from relatively less-developed countries.

³⁴ Wen Wen and Die Hu, *op. cit.*, p. 5

³⁵ Ruth Hayhoe and Jian Liu, *op. cit.* p. 80.

³⁶ "5 Types of China Scholarships for International Students," China's University and College Application System, accessed May 2, 2019, https://m.cucas.edu.cn/mobile_news/detail?id=3763.

³⁷ Wen Wen and Die Hu, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

³⁸ Wen Wen and Die Hu, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

Jiani's 2017 study applying the push-pull model found that student motivation to study in China also involved the country's recent, rapid economic development and optimism about the country's economic future. Students in Jiani's study, even those from Western Europe, emphasized better employment opportunities in China than in their home countries as a significant factor in choosing to study in China. Student respondents also emphasized the prospect of enhancing employability through mastery of the Chinese language as well as access to scholarships that make studying in China not only more affordable but also more prestigious. The study also highlighted the "Chinese Cultural Complex" experienced by students of Chinese descent who grew up and live outside of China; students who are ethnically Chinese but grew up in a different culture expressed that studying in China provided a way to access their cultural and linguistic roots and connect with their Chinese identity.³⁹ Overall, China's attractiveness as a study abroad destination includes the perception of enhanced economic and work prospects for students due to the country's rise in economic prosperity. The perspective that China is the best place to learn the Chinese language and culture also draws young people to study there, as well as a positive perception of China's higher education institutions.

4.3. The Legal Basis for Cross-Strait Education Flows

Cross-strait student mobility is a recent phenomenon made possible by not only the globalization of the higher education market but also by legal mandates in China and Taiwan. Ma Ying-Jeou's presidency between 2008 and 2016 marked a period of cooperation and growing rapprochement between China and Taiwan on economic and social areas of cooperation. This included ROC legislation in 2010 that opened 2,000 places in Taiwanese universities to Chinese students and allowed the recognition of degrees earned at 41 highly-ranked universities in the Mainland. In addition to expanding cooperative efforts with China, this legislation also aimed to help alleviate the aforementioned problem of higher education oversupply in Taiwan; the expansion of Taiwan's higher education sector coupled with a declining fertility rate has led to a shrinking applicant pool for Taiwanese higher education institutions.⁴⁰ Opening university enrollment to students from mainland China therefore widens the pool of

³⁹ M. A. Jiani, "Why and How International Students choose mainland China as a Higher Education Study Abroad Destination," *High Education*, vol. 74, 2017, pp. 569-571.

⁴⁰ William Yat Lai Lo, *op. cit.*, pp. 459-460, 464.

applicants to Taiwanese universities and expands funds in the form of more fee-paying students.

However, Taiwanese policy also enacts several restrictions on mainland Chinese students out of concern for Taiwan's competitiveness and national security. Considering the political conflict across the Taiwan strait, mainland Chinese students therefore fall under different laws from typical international students in Taiwan. These restrictions include a limit to the amount of time a Chinese students may stay in Taiwan after completing their studies, exclusion from work and scholarship opportunities while studying in Taiwan, and restrictions on students' fields of study to exclude topics of national security.⁴¹ Taiwan policy also restricts Chinese undergraduate students to private higher education institutions in order to funnel revenue and students to the lower-tier private education sector, which needs the extra enrollments more urgently than the public institutions.⁴² Mainland Chinese graduate students typically have better access to Taiwan's more-prestigious national universities and public institutions.

Regarding student flows from Taiwan to China, PRC law makes applying to mainland higher education institutions relatively easy for Taiwanese students. Taiwanese students have had access to Mainland Chinese universities since 1985, occurring in concert with China's lifting of labor regulations as Taiwanese graduates chose to work in China.⁴³ A 2017 directive from the PRC's Ministry of Education affirmed universities' ability to autonomously set enrollment quotas for and recruit students from Taiwan as well as Hong Kong and Macau.⁴⁴ Article 16 of this document allows students from Hong

⁴¹ Chuing Prudence Chou and Gregory S. Ching, "Cross-Straitization of Higher Education: Voices of the Mainland Chinese Students Studying in Taiwan," *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2015, p. 89.

⁴² Sheng-Ju Chan, "Cross-border Educational Collaboration Between Taiwan and China: the Implications for Educational Governance," *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, vol. 31, no. 3, p. 318.

⁴³ See: William Yat Lai Lo, *op. cit.*, p. 463; and Chuing Prudence Chou and Gregory S. Ching, *Taiwan Education at the Crossroad: When Globalization Meets Localization*. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), p. 267.

⁴⁴ Ministry of Education, People's Republic of China, "Jiaoyu Bu Deng Liu Bumen Guanyu Yinfa 'Putong Gaodeng Xuexiao Zhaoshou he Peiyang Xianggang Tebie Xingzheng Qu, Aomen Tebie Xingzheng Qu ji Taiwan Diqu Xuesheng de Guiding' de Tongzhi 教育部等六部门关于印发《普通高等学校招收和培养香港特别行政区、澳门特别行政区及台湾地区学生的规定》的通知 [Concerning the Ministry of Education and Six other Agencies' communique on 'Regulations on the Recruitment and Cultivation of Students in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Macao Special Administrative Region and the Taiwan Region'], Neidi (Zuguo Dalu) Gaoxiao Mianxiang Gang Ao Tai Zhaosheng Xinxi Wang 内地（祖国大陆）高校面嚮港澳臺招生信息網, published January 9, 2017, accessed May 30, 2017, <https://www.gatzs.com.cn/gatzs/pz/zcfg/201701/20170109/1578637873.html>.

Kong, Macau, and Taiwan to replace political and military course credits with “other national curriculum credits.”⁴⁵

For graduate school applicants, the process of entering a university in mainland China involves specialized subject and language testing as well as interviews with each institution to which Taiwanese students apply. The examinations and required depend on the applicant’s desired field of study and target institution. Students from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau have the option of taking the Hong Kong-Macau-Taiwan joint entrance exam (港澳臺聯合招生考試) for admission to mainland graduate programs or the mainland’s standard entrance exam. Taiwanese students may also apply their advanced subject test (學科能力測試) scores in Taiwan toward entrance to mainland universities.⁴⁶

In addition to the available legal documents on Taiwanese students in Mainland China, news and media reports have claimed over the past few years that Chinese universities are adopting more preferential policies to attract Taiwanese students. These policies include lowering entrance exam score requirements for admission, expanding quotas for the number of students that universities can recruit from Taiwan, and extending scholarships to admitted students from Taiwan.⁴⁷ Articles 13 and 26 of the PRC’s “31 Measures” document released in 2018 specifically target Taiwanese students and young professionals, including the ability for Taiwanese people to take mainland professional qualification exams and clinical certifications and transfer certifications obtained in Taiwan to mainland China.⁴⁸

4.4 Developments in Student Exchanges between China and Taiwan

Since 2011, Mainland Chinese students have flowed to Taiwan for higher education. While well-established today, flows of mainland Chinese students to Taiwan

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ See: Ben Halder, “China’s New Weapon Against Taiwan? Educating its Best and Brightest,” *OZY*, May 6, 2019, accessed May 8, 2019, <https://www.ozy.com/acumen/chinas-new-weapon-against-taiwan-educating-its-best-and-brightest/94039>; Brenda Goh and Jess Macy Yu, “China tries to charm tech-savvy Taiwanese youth as political ties fray,” *Reuters*, February 7, 2018, accessed May 8, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-taiwan-youth/china-tries-to-charm-tech-savvy-taiwanese-youth-as-political-ties-fray-idUSKBN1FR0LB>; and Chen-ju Lin, “Why are Taiwanese Students Choosing China for University?,” *Taiwan Gazette*, November 19, 2018, accessed May 8, 2019, <https://www.taiwangazette.org/news/2018/11/18/why-are-taiwanese-students-choosing-china-for-university>.

⁴⁸ Judith Norton and Edward J. Barss, “China’s 31 Measures,” East Asia Peace and Security Initiative, March 22, 2018, accessed May 17, 2019, <https://www.eapasi.com/blogs1/china-31-measures>.

have not risen consistently over the past seven years. The number of Mainland students in Taiwan increased from 928 in 2011 to 3,019 by 2015 for degree-seeking students, and from 11,227 to 34,114 students for short-term programs in that same time period. The number of new admissions of short-term and degree program students from mainland China has decreased each year after 2015, with 20,597 students in short-term programs and 2,140 students in degree programs entering Taiwan in 2018. Combining short-term and degree program enrollments, a total of 29,603 students from mainland China were in Taiwan in 2018.⁴⁹ News sources in Taiwan attribute the decrease in Mainland Chinese enrollments to the tense cross-strait relationship since the 2016 election of President Tsai Ing-wen of the Taiwan-centric DPP, which has resulted in China restricting the number of students allowed to apply for higher education programs in Taiwan.⁵⁰

While Taiwan has only recently opened its universities to Mainland Chinese students, China's policies toward Taiwanese students have long been open but difficult to quantify. Chinese statistics estimate that 12,000 Taiwanese students were in China in 2017, about twice as many as 2011 levels.⁵¹ PRC policy allowing Taiwanese students to study in Mainland universities mirrors other incentives China offers to Taiwan's people to improve cross-strait relations at the economic level. More recently, the 2018 unveiling of "31 incentives" for Taiwanese professionals, students, and residents in China includes easier access to institutions of higher education for Taiwanese people, among other incentives that make life more convenient for Taiwanese professionals and businesspeople in China.⁵² News reports show that Taiwan officials are weary of losing

⁴⁹ Mainland Affairs Council, "Mainland Chinese Students in Taiwan, Statistics on Mainland Students Researching and studying for Degrees in Taiwan," accessed May 6, 2019, https://www.mac.gov.tw/en/News_Content.aspx?n=CA7B5FA9C0EC7005&sms=D645444CA321A4FA&s=54D121541C911FB1.

⁵⁰ Keoni Everington, "China Halves Students Allotted for Taiwan, tries to lure Taiwanese," *Taiwan News*, July 6, 2017, accessed May 6, 2019, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3204297>.

⁵¹ Rachel Lin et al., "China Targeting Students using Stipends: source," *Taipei Times*, April 3, 2018, accessed November 22, 2018, <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2018/04/03/2003690576/1>.

⁵² See "Chinese Mainland promotes cross-Straits exchanges, cooperation," *Xinhua*, February 28, 2018, accessed November 22, 2018, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-02/28/c_137005735.htm; and Zhonggong Zhongyang Tai Ban, Guowu Yuan Tai Ban 中共中央臺辦, 國務院臺辦 [Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Taiwan Office], "Guanyu Yinfu 'Guanyu Cujin Liang'an Jingji Wenhua Jiaoliu Hezuo de Ruogan Cuoshi' de Tongzhi" 關於印發《關於促進兩岸經濟文化交流合作的若干措施》的通知 [Notice on the 'Several Measures on Promoting Cross-Straits Economic and Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation'], *Zhongguo Taiwan Wang* 中國臺灣網, February 28, 2018, accessed February 21, 2018, http://big5.taiwan.cn/xwzx/la/201802/t20180228_11928235.htm.

advanced talent and students to outside economies and especially to China.⁵³ These reports fuel concern in Taiwan that the island faces a “brain drain” of talent to the mainland as students and young graduates and professionals find preferential employment opportunities in mainland China.⁵⁴ These concerns are linked to other arguments in Taiwanese political circles that heavy reliance on the mainland’s economy may eventually harm Taiwan’.

Regarding the characteristics, motivations, and professional futures of students in cross-strait educational movement, several studies have viewed mainland China as a source of cross-border students, focused on student mobility from China to Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau. Chuing Prudence Chou and Gregory S. Ching’s aforementioned 2015 study of Mainland Chinese students in Taiwan used the push-pull framework to analyze student characteristics and motivations for choosing Taiwan as a destination for study. They found that Chinese students ranked “understanding Taiwan” as a main advantage (positive pull factor) of an educational experience in Taiwan, while disadvantages (negative push factors) of studying in Taiwan included the strict regulations, few scholarship opportunities, and overcoming Taiwanese misconceptions of Mainland Chinese students.⁵⁵ This illustrates the limited nature of student flows between Taiwan and China and how Taiwan’s cross-strait educational policies remain informed by the ROC’s security imperatives, placing mainland Chinese students in a separate category from typical international students in Taiwan.

While few studies so far have examined Taiwanese students in their choice to study in mainland China, one has shone light on the subject through the linkage community lens. Regarding the outlook and attitudes of Taiwanese students in mainland China, Davidson’s 2015 study of Taiwanese university students in mainland China

⁵³ See “CHINA’S 31 INCENTIVES: China’s incentives to have limited effect: NDC chief,” *Taipei Times*, March 13, 2018, accessed November 22, 2018, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2018/03/13/2003689184>; and Mimi Leung and Yojana Sharma, “China’s Equal Status Policy causes Taiwan Brain Drain,” *University World News*, March 1, 2018, accessed November 22, 2018, <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20180301165622684>.

⁵⁴ Simon Denyer, “Taiwan Battles Brain Drain as China Aims to Woo Young Talent,” *The Washington Post*, April 15, 2018, accessed September 19, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/taiwan-battles-a-brain-drain-as-china-aims-to-woo-young-talent-away/2018/04/13/338d096e-3940-11e8-af3c-2123715f78df_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.55ec35431ab1.

⁵⁵ Chuing Prudence Chou and Gregory Ching, “Cross-Straitization of Higher Education: Voices of the Mainland Chinese Students Studying in Taiwan,” *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2015, pp. 89-94.

utilized interviews to describe the ways in which Taiwanese students are linked to the Mainland through their academic and social lives.⁵⁶ The results of the study found that Taiwanese students in China do not necessarily integrate easily into Mainland society; Taiwanese participants in the study emphasized differences in economic background, upbringing, and education between Taiwanese and mainland Chinese students that makes building social connections between the two groups difficult.⁵⁷ As a result, the Taiwanese students surveyed formed more cohesive social groups with other Taiwanese students on their campuses and through the Taiwanese Student Associations (TSAs or *Taishenghui*, 臺生會) at their campuses in mainland China. The study applies the linkage community model to conceptualize Taiwanese students in mainland China as a linkage community between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. However, Davidson concluded that Taiwanese students, while linked to their Chinese counterparts at mainland higher education institutions and technically forming a community that has experience living and working in the mainland, do not necessarily constitute an influential group that would advocate for cross-strait policy in Taiwan.⁵⁸ This study shows that while Taiwanese students can easily enter a Mainland university, the social process of connecting with Mainland Chinese peers is not always successful.

Outside of academia, policy professionals also engage in the discussion of cross-strait mobility among students. A 2018 editorial by Lu Chen-wei of the KMT-backed National Policy Foundation analyzes studies published in Chinese on Taiwanese students in China to argue that their political identities do not change to favor mainland China. While Taiwanese students may change their perceptions of stereotypes of mainland China, over the course of their studies, their political identities do not necessarily change to support Taiwan's belonging or unification with China. Lu argues that this occurs because of the "native consciousness" that has developed among the younger generations of Taiwan by which they now view Taiwan and China as separate entities, prefer to separate economic relations from political relations, and identify as Taiwanese only.⁵⁹ Lu's editorial advances the point of view that Taiwanese students separate the political

⁵⁶ Lincoln Edward Davidson, "Linked without Linking: The Role of mainland China's Taiwanese Students in Cross-Strait Unification," *Asia Network Exchange*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2015, pp. 2-19.

⁵⁷ Lincoln Edward Davidson, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

⁵⁸ Lincoln Edward Davidson, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

⁵⁹ Lu Chen-wei, "For Taiwanese Youth, Does Studying in China Lead to Changes in Political Identity?" *The Taiwan Gazette*, September 11, 2018, accessed May 6, 2019, <https://www.taiwangazette.org/news/2018/10/5/for-taiwanese-students-does-studying-in-china-lead-to-changes-in-political-identity>.

relationship with China from the economic opportunities available in the Mainland and therefore do not constitute a threat to Taiwanese political identity.

This chapter has provided an overview of Taiwan and China's higher education systems from post-World War II through today. Both China and Taiwan have experienced periods of rapid economic change that are reflected in the massification, marketization, and internationalization of their higher education systems. While these education systems now display similar features, the different social and political contexts between Taiwan and China complicate the legal aspects of cross-strait exchanges. Political relations between China and Taiwan also complicate and at times restrict the movement of students across the Taiwan strait for higher education. Current evidence of cross-strait mobility shows that while students take advantage of educational opportunities on either side of the Taiwan strait, this interaction and integration in the education sector has also not yet led to political spillover in the cross-strait relationship, as Taiwanese students in mainland China tend to retain their Taiwanese political identity while pursuing higher education opportunities. The following chapter examines primary and secondary data that further explores Taiwanese students' rationales and decision-making processes in choosing mainland China for graduate studies.



Chapter 5. Push-Pull Factors for Taiwanese Graduate School Applicants to China

This chapter considers the findings and analyses of the previous three chapters as well as primary data from questionnaires and interviews to compile the various push and pull factors affecting Taiwanese applicants' decisions to pursue graduate studies in mainland China. After an overview of the characteristics of the questionnaire and interview respondents (section 5.1), this chapter outlines and discusses the common push factors in Taiwan and pull factors in mainland China, and reverse push-pull factors that these Taiwanese students considered in their decision to apply for graduate programs in China. While questionnaire respondents hailed from a variety of academic fields, walks of life, and studied at many different Mainland universities, several common themes emerged on the topic of China as a preferable study destination over Taiwan or other countries in the world. The factors that questionnaire respondents produced in the fell roughly into two themes of economic factors and social/cultural/personal factors. Section 5.2 is organized along these lines to present the results of the student questionnaires. Since the qualitative nature and relatively small sample size of the data collected prevents their application to the whole population of Taiwanese graduate students in mainland China, section 5.3 discusses the themes present in the questionnaire results through more academic sources on trends in international higher education and cross-strait relations.

5.1. The Questionnaire and Interview Respondents: An Overview

5.1.1. Characteristics of Respondents

Tables 1 and 2 show general characteristics of the students surveyed in this study. This study yielded 11 valid questionnaire responses from full-time graduate students currently studying in mainland China. Respondents represented six institutions in four distinct disciplines. Four students were studying for a master's degree and seven students were studying for a doctorate degree. Respondents' ages ranged from 25 to 50 years with a median age of 33 years. To account for the relatively small sample size, supplemental evidence to support the analyses later in this chapter came from material from Taiwanese cram school programs, insight from personal interviews, and data from other academic articles and news sources to contextualize and discuss common themes arising from the questionnaire responses. While the survey sample size is too small to apply the results to the larger population of Taiwanese students in China, several common themes emerged

that are worthy of further discussion in section 5.3 and can be connected with well-documented trends and developments at the macro level.

Table 1: Student questionnaire responses by institution

University	Frequency
Xiamen University	4
Peking University	2
Shanghai Jiaotong University	1
Shanghai Fudan University	1
Fujian Normal University	1
Nankai University	1

Table 2: Student questionnaire responses by field and level of study

Fields of Study	Level	Frequency
Education	Master's	2
	Doctorate	3
Business Management	Master's	1
	Doctorate	3
Finance	Doctorate	1
Engineering	Master's	1

5.1.2. Fields of Study

Popular fields of study among respondents included education-related programs and business management fields. Of the several cram schools in Taipei that offer services related to testing and application preparation for graduate school entrance in China, fields of study promoted the most heavily included medicine, economics, literature, law, and business fields such as management and finance. These cram schools advertise their services to help students enter the top-tier 98/5 and 21/1 universities in mainland China.¹

¹ “Dalu Yanjiusuo Tui Zhen Ruxue, 大陸研究所推甄入學 [Enrollment in Mainland China Graduate Institutes],” Gaodian Peiyou Zhishi Dasheng 高點培優知識達勝, accessed June 5, 2019, <http://www.ibrain.com.tw/kaoyan/course/apply.aspx>.

The interview with Dr. Huang Chun-liang yielded more insight into the fields of study students choose in China. Dr. Huang's perception of popular fields for Taiwanese applicants to Chinese graduate programs fall into the categories of business and the humanities. Fields like Chinese culture, literature, and history are popular for reasons of geographical proximity to sites of cultural heritage and significance. According to Dr. Huang, business fields remain popular in China not only because of China's growing economic influence, but also because many of these Taiwanese graduate students in China are pursuing graduate school while working: "many of these students are not 'full timers,' they will study at the same time as working... many have jobs in the mainland already."² Furthermore, whereas the social expectation in Taiwan for the most outstanding students is to attend medical school, the most prestigious fields of study among mainland Chinese students are economics, law, and computer science. These fields are featured prominently in cram schools' marketing materials to Taiwanese students considering graduate programs in China.

In the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, China appears less appealing than Taiwan for graduate studies. Cram schools with departments for Mainland-bound graduate applicants place less emphasis on stem fields. Furthermore, a personal interview with a STEM-field professor in Taipei revealed a consensus that graduate students pursuing STEM-related careers still find Taiwan the best place to obtain a master's degree before pursuing employment in Taiwan's semiconductor or electronics industry. For Taiwanese students in these fields, a master's degree "is a passport for a good job...Having a master's from National Taiwan University, National Tsinghua University, or National Jiaotong University is seen as the way to get a high-paying job at TSMC. The graduate degree is an investment."³

Furthermore, the United States remains a popular destination for Taiwanese students in STEM fields. According to data from the Institute of International Education (IIE), Taiwan ranked seventh in leading places of origin for international students in the United States during the 2017-2018 school year. Of the 22,454 Taiwanese students in the United States, over 9,000 were enrolled in graduate programs.⁴ Of the Taiwanese

² Personal interview with Dr. Chun-liang Huang, Taipei, June 7, 2019.

³ Personal interview with anonymous professor in STEM, Taipei, May 15, 2019.

⁴ Institute of International Education, "Leading Places of Origin," *Open Doors Report*, 2018, accessed May 22, 2019., <https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Data/International-Students/Places-of-Origin>.

students in the United States, engineering, business management, and math/computer science made up the top fields of study in 2017-2018.⁵ The interview with the STEM field professor corroborates the withstanding popularity of the United States for Taiwanese graduate students compared to China:

For the sciences, people still prefer to go to the [United] States, especially for PhD programs. A degree from the States is still seen as the most prestigious, provided that [students] can get a scholarship. That makes the US more attractive than China right now for graduate students. After that, they'll tend to come to my institution to find jobs as research assistants to start earning money and get research experience.⁶

In this case, the personal factor of a student's chosen field of study influences how favorably they view the prospect of graduate school in mainland China. Whereas fields related to business, economics, and medicine are popular choices for applicants to mainland graduate programs, examples from the STEM fields show that the United States remains more popular as a destination. Indeed, questionnaire results yielded only one response from graduate students in the natural sciences (master's in electrical engineering).

5.2 Push and Pull Factors: Results from Student Questionnaires

Figure 3 summarizes the main factors that emerged from the student questionnaires. The factors identified from the student questionnaires are largely reciprocal: responses given as benefits of studying in the mainland can often be directly linked to drawbacks of studying in Taiwan and vice versa. To better organize these reciprocal factors that form the two sides of the push-pull framework for this study, the individual factors identified from the survey are presented thematically. The first of these themes includes the explicitly economic factors of students' career plans, and job prospects in China versus Taiwan. The second theme highlights the sociocultural and personal factors affecting student rationale for going to China for graduate study, as observed through the questionnaire results. Thirdly, this section outlines prevalent reverse push-pull factors that emerged from the questionnaire, indicating advantages that Taiwan's study environment has over mainland China and the reciprocal drawbacks of studying in mainland China as a Taiwanese graduate student.

⁵ Institute of International Education, "Fields of Study by Place of Origin," *Open Doors Report*, 2018, accessed May 22, 2019, <https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Data/International-Students/Fields-of-Study>.

⁶ Personal interview with an anonymous professor in STEM, Taipei, May 15, 2019.

5.2.1 Economic Factors

While respondents hailed from several universities and fields of study, the questionnaire results reflect a common imperative across respondents to enhance their economic position through advanced academic training. In response to the questionnaire item “why did you want to apply to graduate programs?,” Questionnaire respondents explicitly mentioned enhancing their own competitiveness in the job market or knowing that an advanced degree was necessary for their career plans. Many respondents were early in their careers (six respondents had accumulated less than five years of work experience before applying for graduate studies). Respondents on the older side of the distribution also considered the graduate degree as necessary for their future career development: one master’s student in management with several years of work experience in Mainland China expressed that the educational value of a graduate degree “enhances workplace competitiveness” (增加工作職場的競爭力). Indeed, all but one questionnaire respondents indicated that they planned to work in China in the future. The interview with Dr. Huang revealed that Taiwanese people in China have other work opportunities as well:

I have also come across [Taiwanese] people working in foreign companies who have told me that they study in mainland China because their companies want to enter the Chinese market. [These companies] hope that Taiwanese people going to the mainland to penetrate the market can become a “bridge.” There is a saying that “Taiwanese people understand the world better than Chinese people.” That is also to say that Taiwanese people can help foreign companies better understand China’s markets, so they become a bridge between them.⁷

In this way, Taiwanese graduates have opportunities in mainland China not only in Taiwanese and Chinese companies but also in foreign companies attempting to break into the Chinese market. China’s growing market became a recurring theme among questionnaire respondents as well. When asked about their reasons for studying in China, several respondents mentioned in some form China’s recent economic growth and increasing international economic influence. Responses ranged from simply “mainland market factors” to “there are more opportunities to succeed here [in China] as a graduate student.” One respondent specifically viewed attending graduate school in China gives a

⁷ Personal interview with Dr. Chun-liang Huang, Taipei, June 7, 2019.

built-in advantage in the job market (有先天優勢在工作職場上). Respondents also mentioned the lower cost of living in China, especially as compared to the developed western countries when considering their graduate school destination.

Insight from the interview with Dr. Huang revealed that like many graduate students in the West, Taiwanese students in mainland China in general work and study at the same time: “[for instance,] Xiamen University has more than 712 PhD students who work this way...so very seldom do Taiwan doctoral students go to the mainland do become full time students.”⁸ Rather, Dr. Huang perceived that most students at the PhD level already have careers or businesses in progress at the time that they enroll in graduate studies. Moreover, graduate students also have cross-strait mobility typically unavailable to undergraduates: “my friend is a doctoral student at Xiamen University, but he has a corporation in Taiwan. Where can he say he studies for his Ph. D?”

In sum, the economic factors that drew these particular students to China for graduate study include enhancing competitiveness in the job market, the rising status of China’s economic markets and job opportunities, and the cheaper costs of living and tuition in China compared to other countries. These pull factors related to economics made China an attractive destination for this group of Taiwanese graduate students. Moreover, the interview with Dr. Huang revealed that many Taiwanese graduate students remain mobile between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait even during their studies and have the potential to serve as a bridge between foreign companies and the mainland Chinese markets.

5.2.2. *Social and Cultural Factors*

More than any other reason mentioned by questionnaire respondents, the need for international perspective (國際視野) emerged as both a reason to study outside of Taiwan and a reason to pursue a graduate degree in China. A majority of respondents listed the need to build international perspectives as either a reason to apply to graduate programs in general or a reason to apply for graduate programs outside of Taiwan. The desire to make friends with people of diverse backgrounds, ways of thinking, and points of view also emerged as both a push factor out of Taiwan and pull factor toward China for questionnaire respondents. Several reported this social need as a reason to either apply to graduate programs outside Taiwan or apply to graduate programs in China. Conversely,

⁸ Personal Interview with Dr. Chun-liang Huang, Taipei, June 7, 2019.

five respondents reported dissatisfaction with Taiwan's higher education system on this front, with some respondents referring to higher education in Taiwan as "homogenous" and "not internationalized enough."

Only two questionnaire respondents cited China's favorable policy toward Taiwanese students as a benefit of studying in China as opposed to Taiwan or another country. Indeed, China's economic and exchange policies toward Taiwan in recent years have made entry and residency in China relatively easy for Taiwanese people. In addition to the recent announcement of "31 incentives" to encourage cross-strait exchanges, China's policies for Taiwanese people's entrance to China for travel, business, and study remain open.⁹ This ease of access and cultural proximity may serve as a pull factor of China for Taiwanese students over other locations for higher education. Geographical proximity and language factors emerged as a factor mentioned relatively frequently, especially among respondents who indicated that their careers were already based in mainland China. While entrance exams to top graduate programs in mainland China often require a foreign language test score, four questionnaire respondents regarded the common language between China and Taiwan as a reason to study in China rather than a different country.

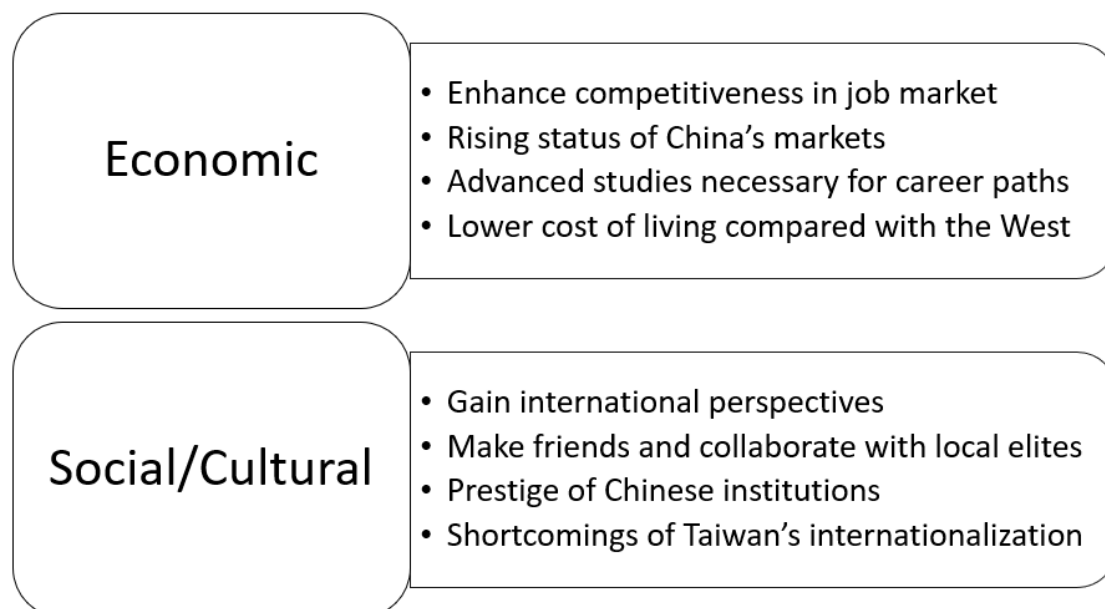
The perceived prestige of Mainland higher education institutions also emerged as a common social reason to go to graduate school in China. Questionnaire respondents mentioned the elite status of their institution, faculty, and/or peers as a reason to study in China rather than in Taiwan. Dr. Huang's interview also lent credence to this point of view: "[my friend's] advising professor has connections that he can introduce to my friend, so that afterwards when he has the degree from the mainland university, he'll have a good reputation in local circles in China."¹⁰ This opportunity to join elite social and professional circles in mainland China also emerged as a pull factor among questionnaire respondents. For the questionnaire respondents, the opportunity to gain experience with the elites of mainland China is an important pull factor that made China attractive. On the other hand, push factors out of Taiwan along the same theme included the island's

⁹ Zhonggong Zhongyang Tai Ban, Guowu Yuan Tai Ban 中共中央臺辦, 國務院臺辦 [Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Taiwan Office], "Guanyu Yinfa 'Guanyu Cujin Liang'an Jingji Wenhua Jiaoliu Hezuo de Ruogan Cuoshi' de Tongzhi" 關於印發《關於促進兩岸經濟文化交流合作的若干措施》的通知 [Notice on the "Several Measures on Promoting Cross-Strait Economic and Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation"] Zhongguo Taiwan Wang 中國臺灣網, February 28, 2018, accessed February 21, 2018, http://big5.taiwan.cn/xwzx/la/201802/t20180228_11928235.htm.

¹⁰ Personal interview with Dr. Chun-liang Huang, Taipei, June 7, 2019.

comparative lack of internationalization in education and relatively weaker global influence.

Figure 3: Push and pull factors from student questionnaires



5.2.3. Reverse Push-Pull Factors: Drawbacks of Studying in China

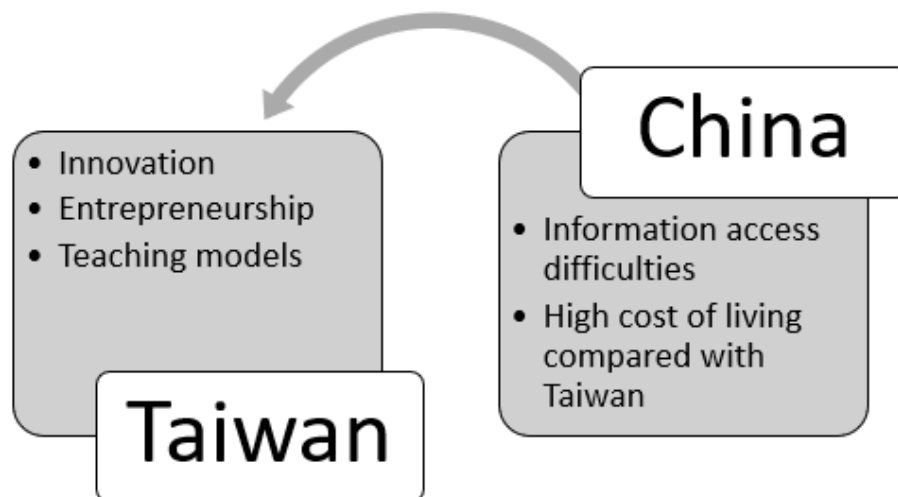
The reverse push-pull factors observed from the student questionnaire are summarized in Figure 4. Reverse push-pull factors, as described in Chapter 2, include the drawbacks of the host country or the positive aspects of the home country that work against the flow of students from one to the other. In the case of the current study, these reverse push-pull factors were revealed in the questionnaire item “What are the drawbacks to studying in mainland China instead of in Taiwan?” Responses to this item may be viewed as reciprocal aspects of cross-strait higher education that create positive pull factors for Taiwan and negative push factors in mainland China for Taiwanese graduate students.

When asked about the drawbacks of studying in mainland China instead of in Taiwan, a few themes arose among respondents. Among the most common was the comparative strength of innovation and entrepreneurship in Taiwan as compared to mainland China. Respondents mentioned innovative thinking, innovation models, or simply “innovation” (創新) as aspects of student life that are better in Taiwan than in the mainland. Entrepreneurship and “lively” teaching models were also mentioned in the same vein that respondents perceived as stronger in Taiwan than in mainland China.

Questionnaire respondents were not asked explicitly about their political views or about political topics in this study. As such, only one questionnaire respondent brought up political issues as a drawback to pursuing graduate school in China, citing China's closed and sensitive political system compared to the individual political freedoms enjoyed in Taiwan. While further research would be needed to investigate the specific perspectives of these students toward cross-strait relations, their self-reported responses continued to focus on the economic and business environment when considering the drawbacks of studying in the mainland compared to Taiwan.

Other drawbacks mentioned include the traditional teaching models in China as compared to Taiwan, difficulties in accessing information in the mainland, different cultural norms in China that cause inconvenience, and the higher cost of living in Chinese cities compared to Taiwanese cities. Viewed reciprocally, this indicates that these negative push factors in China are in turn positive pull factors for Taiwan. For the Taiwanese graduate students who chose to study in mainland China in this study, these factors are working in the opposite that make China less than ideal as a study destination.

Figure 4: Reverse push-pull factors from student questionnaires



5.3. Discussion

The micro-level rationales revealed in the student questionnaire can be linked to larger, macro-level trends and developments in cross-strait relations and global higher education. Many recent changes in Taiwan will affect the way cross-strait relations develop in the future. These include structural economic changes affecting the

socioeconomic status of Taiwan's young people, the concurrent development of Taiwanese identity with pragmatism toward relations with China among Taiwan's voters, and changing economic conditions in China that have the potential to lure Taiwanese professionals to the Mainland for better economic prospects. In this regard, several factors related to Taiwan's academic and work environment emerged from student questionnaires.

Insights from the student questionnaire, personal interviews, and other academic sources reveal that Taiwanese students consider factors relating to their career prospects, individual self-improvement, and interest in international perspectives in their decision to pursue a graduate degree in mainland China. While these students are by no means a homogenous group and the results from the current study cannot be applied to the entire population of Taiwanese graduate students in mainland China, the questionnaire results highlight several facets of the cross-strait relationship and the state of international higher education that have been given academic attention. The factors identified above are organized into three themes of discussion: considerations of cross-strait economic relations, individuals' needs to build and invest in their own human capital, and a common desire to encounter international perspectives through educational experiences.

5.4.1. Cross-Strait Economic Relations

The results from the student questionnaire indicate that China's importance in the world economy factored into their choice to migrate to China to pursue an advanced degree. These students' responses fit into the wider context of cross-strait economic relations as well as the literature on the benefits and risks of cross-strait economic integration for Taiwan's economy and society, especially over the last decade. The strength of China's economy, while an attractive factor for these graduate students from Taiwan, has been the subject of ongoing debates within political and academic spheres in Taiwan.

Today, Taiwan's economy is deeply connected with and relies heavily on China. Taiwan's economic policy toward China, while inconsistent over the decades since democratization, has produced changes in Taiwan that have made China an attractive option for students. One such change is the relative strength and positions of Taiwan and China in the world economy. While its economic growth has slowed in recent years, China's economy is currently in a much different position than that of thirty years ago

compared to Taiwan in size and influence. Worries that China's domestic companies, especially in the technological sector, may overtake the Taiwanese firms that have thrived on the mainland abound.¹¹ In UK-based firm Deloitte's 2013 report of the Asia-Pacific's 500 fastest-growing companies, China boasted 128 companies on the list, overtaking Taiwan's 108 listed companies.¹² A 2016 study of China's domestic economy and cross-strait relations found that the rise in China's state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and Chinese nationalism are crowding out Taiwanese businesses.¹³ As business communities continue to develop between Taiwan and China, Taiwan's firms will need to learn to stay ahead of the curve in technological innovation to remain relevant in the global economy and in China, lest technology and skill transfer generated between the Taiwanese and Chinese give China's domestic companies an upper hand in the future.¹⁴

A second new trend is social changes in Taiwan as a result of increased economic interactions with the Chinese mainland, as investigated by Thung-Hong Lin: Lin observes growth in Taiwan's Gini coefficient, unemployment rate, and rate of poverty between the early 1990s and 2016 associated with growing trade and economic linkages with China.¹⁵ Lin further found that cross-strait mobility fell along class cleavages, giving capitalists, employers, the new middle class, and the more educated capacity to travel to the Mainland through their trade links to China.¹⁶ On one hand, Taiwanese with these pre-existing links to China pull students toward an education there. On the other, the desire to build networks in China for a better economic future draws Taiwanese students who want to break into Mainland industries to an education in China. Results from the student questionnaire and personal interview with Dr. Huang appear to corroborate the former hypothesis, as seven respondents indicated that they learned of graduate programs in mainland China from their Chinese friends. Additionally, Dr. Huang perceived that many graduate students in China have started careers in mainland-based companies, thus using their existing networks in the mainland to start graduate study.¹⁷ An equally popular

¹¹ Shelley Rigger, *Why Taiwan Matters*, (Plymouth, UK: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011), p. 130.

¹² Paul Bischoff, "China Overtakes Taiwan with Largest Number of Fastest-Growing Companies," *Tech in Asia*, December 6, 2013, accessed November 1, 2018, <https://www.techinasia.com/china-overtakes-taiwan-deloitte>.

¹³ Yi-wen Yu, Ko-Chia Yu, and Tse-Chun Lin, "Political Economy of Cross-Strait Relations: Is Beijing's Patronage Policy on Taiwanese Business Sustainable?" *Journal of Contemporary China* vol. 25, no. 99, 2016, p. 374.

¹⁴ Rigger, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

¹⁵ Thung-Hong Lin, "Cross-Strait Trade and Class Cleavages in Taiwan," in Gunter Schubert, ed., *Taiwan and the 'China Impact: Challenges and Opportunities*, (New York: Routledge, 2016), p. 174.

¹⁶ Thung-Hong Lin, *op. cit.*, 184.

¹⁷ Personal interview with Dr. Chun-liang Huang, Taipei, June 7, 2019.

source of information on mainland graduate programs was the Internet, with eight respondents reporting that they used internet sources learn about graduate schools in China (five respondents reported using both the internet and friends' recommendations). A few respondents also indicated that their careers had already started in mainland China when they decided to apply for graduate programs. This shows that the community of Taiwanese graduate students in mainland China perhaps overlaps with the well- studied business community.

Furthermore, insight from the interview with Dr. Huang indicated that the application process, especially for doctoral programs, differs between mainland China and Taiwan in that it requires pre-established connections in mainland China. While the application and enrollment process in Taiwan for doctoral programs includes test scores and an application to the specific graduate program, schools in mainland China require information such as an applicant's research plans and an existing relationship with a professor who will serve as the student's research supervisor or adviser.¹⁸ Taken together, the above evidence shows that graduate students in mainland China come from a pool of applicants with pre-existing academic networks there. This perhaps shows that cross-strait integration in advanced higher education may not be introducing more Taiwanese people to the mainland through graduate studies, rather these Taiwanese students come from already well-connected networks in the mainland.

Results from the questionnaire and interview with the STEM-field professor have shown that the science and technology fields are not currently popular disciplines in mainland China for Taiwanese students seeking a graduate degree. However, this does not indicate that these Taiwanese students are averse to the idea of working in mainland China. As per the interview with the STEM professor on the popularity of China for jobs:

Getting a master's in Taiwan is easier (two years in general) than going to China (three years), but my perception is that these graduates do think about jobs in the Mainland and will not resist the idea of working in China, because of the opportunity and chance for higher pay. It is the tussle between the pay, values and quality of life.

China's scientific endeavor is better now and appears to have surpassed Japan in terms of number of publications and total citation, because the government of China has invested in basic science and provides good incentives to scientists.¹⁹

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Personal interview with anonymous professor in STEM, Taipei, May 15, 2019.

While China as a study destination in the STEM fields lags behind the developed, western countries in terms of popularity among Taiwanese students, the prospect of working in China remains on the minds of young graduates. Furthermore, China's ongoing "Double First Class" project aims to strengthen approximately 100 disciplines at top universities over the course of the first half of the twenty-first century. The natural sciences dominate the list of disciplines to be strengthened, including engineering, medicine, science, and agriculture.²⁰ While these fields in China may not currently be popular for Taiwanese graduate students, the current momentum of development in the sciences in mainland China could change this trend. In this way, China's developments in science and technology for the economy are linked to its efforts to enhance the status of its higher education institutions and disciplines. As science and technology industries in China continue to develop compared to Taiwan's, advanced degree programs in those disciplines are developing in concert.

5.4.2. *Building Human Capital*

Questionnaire respondents frequently referenced the desire to enhance their own competitiveness and prospects for international mobility in their decision to apply for graduate programs and seek an advanced degree outside of Taiwan. This reasoning is reflected in many facets of modern life for Taiwanese students and professionals as the landscape of higher education and work has shifted over the last several decades. Dr. Huang credits this phenomenon to cultural factors, namely the Confucian tradition of bettering oneself through pursuing higher education.²¹ However, evidence is abundant that Taiwan's economic development has affected the growing number of graduate students in recent years. Dr. Huang's perception that "master's has become the new bachelor's" rings true in that while undergraduate studies have become more accessible to Taiwan's population, the quality of jobs available to graduates has lowered.

In the transition from export-oriented industrialization to a service and knowledge-based economy, Taiwan's students and young professionals face more challenges today in achieving social and economic mobility as compared to previous generations. After several decades of high economic growth and successful economic planning, Taiwan's economy is now more susceptible to instability and shocks, which

²⁰ The Charlesworth Group, *op. cit.*

²¹ Personal interview with Dr. Chun-liang Huang, Taipei, June 7, 2019.

could affect Taiwan's social and economic relations with China and the rest of the world. Questionnaire respondents pointed to the need for international mobility and international competitiveness as reasons to apply for graduate programs outside of Taiwan. Considering socioeconomic conditions in Taiwan, the respondents' concerns are not unfounded as globalization makes what Mei-Ling Lin calls "boundaryless careers" an attractive—even necessary—option for young graduates²².

As explored in Chapter 4, concerns abound in the education sector that Taiwan's higher education system has over-expanded, which has intensified competition in the labor market for graduates. Today, Taiwan faces an oversupply of higher education institutions as its 157 junior colleges, colleges, and universities experience decreasing enrollment rates due to prolonged population decline.²³ The proportion of high school graduates entering university has remained stable at around 95 percent each year since 2008.²⁴ The universality of undergraduate education has led to growth in enrollment in graduate studies, such as Master-level and PhD programs, so that graduates can continue to differentiate themselves from their competitors.²⁵ Chih-Chun Wu's 2009 study found that most undergraduate students plan to attend graduate school, pointing to college credential inflation as students feel that a post-graduate degree will enhance their employability.²⁶ However, this could worsen the problem of mismatch between graduates' skills and the needs of Taiwan's labor market.

In recent years, it is no longer so clear whether a university education or an advanced degree will continue to insulate Taiwanese youth from economic hardship. This is reflected in the high youth unemployment rate compared to Taiwan's overall unemployment rate: compared to 1990 levels, the unemployment rate for young people has increased: the 2013 unemployment rate was 13.75 percent for 20-24-year-olds and 7.11 percent for 25-29-year-olds, which were three times 1990 rates. The earnings of university graduates, while still higher than their less-educated peers, have not increased in correspondence to GDP per capita in Taiwan; monthly income has actually decreased

²² Mei-ling Lin, "Political Economy of Work and Employability: Educational Challenges and Boundaryless Careers of Youth," *Humanities and Social Sciences*, vol. 5, no. 6, 2017, pp. 192-205.

²³ See Ministry of Education, Republic of China, *Education in Taiwan, 2018-2019*, (Taipei, Taiwan: Ministry of Education, 2018), p. 25; and Yu-Lan Huang, Dian-Fu Chang, and Chiung-Wen Liu, "Higher Education in Taiwan: An Analysis of Trends Using the Theory of Punctuated Equilibrium," *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2018, p. 171.

²⁴ Chia-Ming Hsueh, *op. cit.*

²⁵ Chan and Lin, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

²⁶ Yu-Shan Wu, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

for college graduates when taking inflation into account between 2004 and 2014.²⁷ Lin and Wang's 2005 study of overeducation in Taiwan's workforce found that by 1999, 35 percent of workers were overeducated, meaning that these workers had jobs requiring fewer skills than they gained in schooling.²⁸ On wage differences, they found a positive rate of return for adequately educated workers and a negative rate of return for undereducated workers; for overeducated workers, the rate of return was positive but small.²⁹ This shows that the sustained expansion of higher education has not been met with labor market conditions that can accept the growing supply of graduates expecting high-paying, knowledge-sector jobs. This forces young graduates to spend longer looking for a suitable job, lower their expectations of employment, or perhaps move elsewhere for better work opportunities.

Across the Taiwan Strait, China is positioned to become an attractive option for work and study for Taiwanese students. In addition to the favorable policies toward Taiwanese students that some questionnaire respondents indicated as reasons to migrate to China, respondents mentioned the thriving economic conditions and growing market as factors that made China more attractive than Taiwan or other countries for graduate study. Concerns that Taiwanese professionals, in choosing to work in mainland China, are contributing to "brain drain" on the island have Taiwanese nationalists worried about the relative economic strength of China compared to Taiwan and what that might mean for political relations.³⁰ These labor market conditions could be a possible push factor Taiwanese students' choice to look to mainland China for their higher education in the future. While academic investigation have yet to uncover the effects of talent migration from Taiwan to mainland China, the fact that all but one of survey respondents indicated that they plan to work in China in the future indicates that students' perception of this phenomenon is worthy of academic attention and further research.

5.4.3. *Desire for International Perspectives and Contacts*

Several questionnaire respondents listed the need for international perspectives (國際視野) as an important reason to look outside Taiwan for an advanced degree. This

²⁷ Yung-Fung Lin, "Effects of Decreasing External Incentives on Higher Education – Reflections from the Case of Taiwan," *Journal of Education and Work*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2016, pp. 40-42.

²⁸ Chun-Hung A. Lin and Chun-Hsuan Wang, "The Incidence and Wage Effects of Overeducation: the case of Taiwan," *Journal of Economic Development*, vol. 30, no. 1, 2005, pp. 33, 38.

²⁹ Chun-Hung A. Lin and Chun-Hsuan Wang, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

³⁰ Simon Denyer, *op. cit.*

is linked to the worldwide phenomenon of internationalization in higher education as students and institutions seek to embed themselves in global systems of competition. On this front, some respondents explicitly mentioned that Taiwan's higher education system is lacking in international outlooks and needs to be strengthened.

Compared to the questionnaire responses, the scholarly evidence of internationalization in Taiwan's higher education system paints a slightly different picture. Internationalization efforts at Taiwanese universities and in the Ministry of Education have been underway since the early 2000s with large-scale projects to enhance the quality and competitiveness of higher education.³¹ The recruitment of international students is seen as a method of boosting university enrollment rates as population decline shrinks the pool of Taiwanese students each year, along with other measures the Ministry of Education has undertaken to assist institutions in downsizing, merging, and retooling their purposes for the smaller population of students, as discussed in Chapter 4. Internationalization efforts at Taiwan's higher education institutions involve much more than simply the recruitment of international students and promotion of study abroad programs. For Taiwan, internationalization also involves reforming academic offerings to cover international topics, encouraging faculty to participate in international exchanges and research, building internationalized campus life experiences for students, and strategically building institutional and financial infrastructure to initiate, maintain, and evaluate internationalization processes.³²

On one hand, the perception of Taiwan's higher education system and institutions as less prestigious and less internationalized emerged as a factor that some questionnaire respondents reported as a reason to apply to graduate schools outside the island. On the other hand, Taiwan's higher education system and its individual institutions are still highly ranked internationally and has successfully recruited increasing number of international students in recent years. Scholarship initiatives such as the Taiwan Scholarship Program and the Ministry of Education Mandarin Enrichment Scholarship program have successfully attracted non-local students to Taiwan, with the foreign degree-seeking student population increasing from 3,935 in 2006 to 10,059 in 2011.³³ A

³¹ Joseph Meng-Chun Chin and Gregory S. Ching, "Trends and Indicators of Taiwan's Higher Education Internationalization," *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, vol 18, no 2, 2009, p. 186.

³² Joseph Meng-Chun Chin and Gregory S. Ching, *op. cit.*, 198.

³³ Dorothy I-ru Chen and William Yat Wai Lo, "Internationalization or Commodification? A case study of internationalization practices in Taiwan's higher education," *Asia Pacific Education Review*, vol. 14, no. 33, 2013, p. 35.

May 2019 report from *Taiwan News* indicated that the number of mainland Chinese students applying to and enrolling in Taiwan's graduate and doctoral programs reached an all-time high for the 2019-2020 school year at 1,440 students.³⁴ Taiwanese universities have also expressed enthusiasm in recruiting students from Southeast Asia, even before the start of the current DPP administration's New Southbound Policy.³⁵

Internationally, Taiwan's higher education system and institutions continue to rank very highly. The ROC government-sponsored organization Study in Taiwan highlights several international rankings on its international-facing website for student recruitment, including Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) data that ranked Taiwan 19th out of 75 countries for higher education system strength in 2018. QS ranked Taipei as 20th and Hsinchu as 73rd "Best Student Cities" out of 101 cities in that same year.³⁶ Across QS, Times Higher Education, and U.S. News and World Report data, National Taiwan University consistently ranked within the global top 200 universities for 2018.³⁷

While these data on student recruitment and international rankings highlight the strength of Taiwan's higher education system in the global education market, its rankings compared to mainland China show the mainland's current strength in higher education. China's higher education system ranked 8th in the world in the same QS report that ranked Taiwan as 19th in 2018.³⁸ China's top two universities (Tsinghua University and Peking University) consistently score higher than Taiwan's top schools in global rankings from QS, U.S. News and World Report, and Times Higher Education.³⁹ This shows that while Taiwan continues to perform well in the international market for higher education, efforts to internationalize and enhance the quality of higher education in mainland China have

³⁴ George Liao, "Chinese students applying for Taiwan's postgraduate programs reach new height," *Taiwan News*, May 27, 2019, accessed May 29, 2019, https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3711697?fbclid=IwAR1HdmgrILMy8JTfbycMnGmAGvJ95xz_oDHWD7M9z_xryYgujPfTcV15tzRY.

³⁵ Dorothy I-ru Chen and William Yat Wai Lo, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

³⁶ "Education at a Glance," Study in Taiwan, accessed May 29, 2019, <https://www.studyintaiwan.org/discover/education>.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ "QS Higher Education System Strength rankings 2018," Quacquarelli Symonds, accessed May 29, 2019, <https://www.topuniversities.com/system-strength-rankings/2018>.

³⁹ See: "Best Global Universities in China," U.S. News and World Report, accessed May 29, 2019, <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities/search?region=&country=china&subject=&name=>; "Best Global Universities in Taiwan," U.S. News and World Report, accessed May 29, 2019, <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities/search?country=taiwan&name=>; "World University Rankings 2019," Times Higher Education, accessed May 29, 2019, [https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2019/world-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/sort by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2019/world-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/sort%20by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats).

surpassed Taiwan. This links to the perception among questionnaire respondents that Taiwan's university system lacks strength and internationalization compared to mainland China's.

Moreover, institutional-level weaknesses in Taiwan show that more work is needed to achieve internationalization goals. Chen and Lo point to the understaffing and underfunding of international student offices at universities, an administrator and efficiency-led approach to internationalization rather than an academic or instructor-led approach, and deficiencies in English-language course offerings. They concluded that internationalization in Taiwan's universities is successful in recruiting international students to their campuses, student experiences must still be improved. For local students in Taiwanese universities, this translates to segregated academic and campus life experiences from their international peers at the same campuses.⁴⁰ Perhaps questionnaire respondents in this study refer to this reality of internationalization when mentioning Taiwan's insufficient internationalization in its higher education system.

On the other hand, globalization and internationalization of higher education all over the world has driven students to seek international experiences. In this vein, the desire to encounter and work with mainland Chinese classmates, faculty, and institutions for the sake of making friends and experiencing different perspectives became a recurring theme among questionnaire respondents. These social and cultural reasons to study in mainland China connect back to the concept of linkage communities across the Taiwan Strait. Even if not politically powerful as a homogenous community, these people who form connections across the strait in education express an active desire to build connections with people on the other side for the sake of making friends, expanding one's horizons, and building goodwill across borders. These are factors not typically discussed in the academic literature on cross-strait economic ties among the *Taishang* businesspeople operating in mainland China. Even though current evidence points to a gap between socioeconomic integration and political spillover in the cross-strait relationship, the inclusion of cross-strait students in the conversation highlights the social reasons for cross-strait mobility that are perhaps downplayed in the purely economic conversations of business ties across the Taiwan Strait.

Overall, this chapter has introduced primary data to the discussion of cross-strait student mobility among Taiwanese graduate students. While small, the sample revealed

⁴⁰ Dorothy I-ru Chen and William Yat Wai Lo, *op cit.*, pp. 37-39.

several strong themes of push and pull factors affecting these students' decisions to pursue a graduate degree in mainland China. Each of these themes may be explained in depth through existing academic literature on cross-strait economic relations, Taiwan and China's efforts to internationalize higher education, trends in graduate employment, and the imperative to accumulate cross-border and international experiences. While economic competitiveness is a motivating factor for these Taiwanese graduate students, this chapter also found that personal motivations to meet and collaborate with people of different backgrounds and international points of view factored into student decisions with high frequency. These altruistic factors are significant because they are unique to the population of students, whose goals and rationales for staying in mainland China differ substantially from the population of Taiwanese businesspeople or tourists traveling to China.

In revisiting the two hypotheses posed in Chapter 1, we may find that the preceding chapters support the presumption that economic and academic drawbacks in Taiwan (including perceptions of comparatively weaker job markets and internationalization efforts) were on these students' minds in their decisions to pursue a graduate degree in China. These push factors in Taiwan were accompanied by economic and social advantages in mainland China that pulled these students toward an education in the PRC. Questionnaire responses corroborated existing academic evidence of economic difficulties in Taiwan and economic growth in China, especially for new graduates. However, in reality the picture of student mobility from Taiwan to China is much more complex, as the mobility of students back and forth across the Taiwan Strait illustrates the intersectionality of the cross-strait business community with the community of Taiwanese graduate students studying in mainland Chinese universities. Overall, the economic advantages to a career in mainland China versus Taiwan emerged as a pair of push-pull factors influencing students' decisions in the questionnaire.

Hypothesis 2 is also supported in that the questionnaire responses and interview results found few instances of political factors motivating student migration to China. Rather, existing economic connections in mainland China and the prospect of prosperous careers there drove student decision-making. However, questionnaire responses revealed that several students wanted opportunities to collaborate with peers and professors, gain new perspectives, and join social and academic networks in mainland China. In other words, many students in this study sought out an advanced degree in mainland China with an expressed purpose to participate in the creation of linkage communities across the

Taiwan Strait. These rationales are perhaps unique to the experience and expectations of students in higher education, who not only pursue an advanced degree for professional and economic opportunity but also for the opportunity to experience a variety of viewpoints and build connections with new peers and networks, actively contributing to the formation of linkage communities that understand and have a stake in the political and economic futures of both China and Taiwan.



Chapter 6. Conclusion

This study has attempted to show that in today's globalized economy in which higher education has become massified, marketized, and viewed as necessary for an individual's success, the cross-border movement of students has become a distinguishing feature of internationalizing education. The "cross-straitization" of higher education in the China-Taiwan dyad illustrates the not only competitive nature of contemporary higher education but also its cooperative nature through policy coordination and educational exchange.¹ The period of warm relations between Taiwan and China between 2008 and 2016 produced the legal groundwork for higher education exchanges across the Taiwan Strait. Even in the absence of such warm relations under today's administration on Taiwan, the cross-strait mobility of students offers a way to preserve integration and collaboration at the "low politics" level of people-to-people interaction. In their decisions to move to the Mainland for graduate studies, Taiwanese students consider a variety of push factors that make Taiwan's institutions less desirable and pull factors that make education in China more attractive. The present study has revealed that for the group of students surveyed, these push-pull factors are largely reciprocal and fall along the broad themes of economic opportunity, personal self-improvement, and the desire to build cross-border connections and experiences.

Considering the unique political situation of the China-Taiwan relationship, the exchange of students across the Taiwan Strait may be viewed through the lens of community building through the linkage community model, by which people on either side of a divided nation build communities that understand and engage with the other side. While the communities of businesspeople from Taiwan to China have been studied extensively to show that the *Taishang* businesspeople in China contribute to stable people-to-people relations without affecting the political relations of the PRC and ROC the cross-strait movement of students deserves attention. While individuals consider their future competitiveness in the job market as a reason to pursue graduate studies and migrate to China to fulfill their goals, these students also actively create linkages with their mainland peers through their studies in the pursuit of advancing understanding and cooperation across the Taiwan strait. Exchanges and cooperation through student-to-student contacts are significant because unlike the business sector, this study has shown

¹ Chuing Prudence Chou and Gregory S. Ching, "Cross-Straitization of Higher Education: Voices of the Mainland Chinese Students Studying in Taiwan," *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2015, p. 89.

that these students are motivated by factors outside the realm of economics in their decision to migrate to China. These non-economic factors include the opportunity to gain international perspectives, collaborate with diverse groups of colleagues and classmates, and build up social and professional networks for personal fulfillment. These conscious decisions to study in mainland China not only for economic advantage but also for social and personal fulfillment adds another dimension to the conversation of cross-strait integration by viewing students as conscious actors in building cross-strait cooperation rather than as agents acting out of economic self-interest alone. The factors revealed in the present study may be applied to the study of student mobility in other regions of the world as they experience economic, demographic, and social change that will affect the attractiveness of their higher education systems for international students.

This research has several implications for Taiwan's economic and policy decisionmakers regarding the strength of its higher education system and opportunities for graduates. At the same time, the current state of cross-strait mobility may change as economic and political trends related to China may change in the coming years. Finally, this chapter outlines directions for future research based on the findings of this study.

6.1. Implications for Taiwan

Taiwan's economy, while highly developed, has become increasingly reliant on the growing Mainland Chinese economy. While little academic evidence is currently available proving the presence of "brain drain" from Taiwan to China, a real concern exists among Taiwan's pan-green camps that excessive reliance on China's economy will weaken Taiwan's political position and de facto sovereignty. While many studies have shown that Taiwanese businesspeople have not been susceptible to PRC economic coercion, the population of Taiwanese students in mainland China provides a relatively newer population to investigate in terms of recent policy changes that make cross-strait student mobility possible. Therefore, one implication of this study for Taiwan's economic future is the established concern that talented individuals are attracted to China for better economic opportunity. Findings from the present study indeed point to career paths, job opportunities, and future competitiveness as factors these students consider when choosing whether and where to pursue a graduate degree, especially for those students whose careers had already started in mainland China.

If competition arises between Taiwan and China's higher education systems in recruiting and retaining students, Taiwan may benefit from promoting innovation and entrepreneurship curricula. Taiwan's edge in innovative thinking emerged in the student questionnaire as an advantage Taiwan's higher education system and economy have over mainland China. Continuing to promote innovative thinking could become a safeguard in Taiwanese educational policy that can not only encourage students to stay in Taiwan, but also address Taiwan's economic struggles related to graduate employment and transitioning to a knowledge-based economy.

Through the lens of the linkage community framework, a third implication of this research for Taiwan is the potential for cross-strait integration among Taiwanese and Chinese students in the Mainland. While this exploratory, qualitative study is not applicable to the entire population of Taiwanese students in mainland China, it has scratched the surface of research that should continue to uncover how cross-strait integration occurs among students. Because evidence here shows that Taiwanese students choose to study in mainland China at least partially to collaborate with local talents, make new friends, and gain an international perspective, the political perspectives of students with cross-strait experiences matter in the discussion of cross-strait integration. Like the *Taishang* business community in China, Taiwanese students are attracted to the Mainland's economic influence and rapid growth. However, the active desire to surround oneself with international perspectives and talents and learn from local peers present a set of motivations unique to student populations.

6.2. Potential Changes in China

This study has attempted to provide a snapshot of one aspect of educational exchange between Taiwan and China. However, the current state of cross-strait education exchange remains dynamic and could change in coming years, especially as trade relations change between China and the United States. While China's growing economy has made study there popular for Taiwanese students seeking post-graduate employment and opportunity, changes in China's domestic economy and in the larger geopolitical picture could change the nature of cross-strait educational exchange. The ongoing "trade war" between China and the United States has opened conversations and revealed conflicting opinions on the future of the current economic world order and the

international configuration of neoliberal trade.² As American tariffs on goods manufactured in China raise costs for international companies, some of these corporations are starting to move manufacturing operations elsewhere: Singapore's Economic Development Board views the trade war as beneficial for foreign investment into Southeast Asia.³

Evidence also exists of Taiwanese companies considering withdrawal from China and relocating to other markets or returning to Taiwan; recently the computer manufacturer Acer announced that it is considering moving manufacturing operations outside of China, citing the trade war as a threat to the global market.⁴ Taiwanese experts point to Taiwan possibly benefiting from the trade war as Taiwanese companies relocate investments back to the island.⁵ These economic changes may in turn affect the flow of Taiwanese students to mainland China as market conditions create a different environment for cross-strait students. Due to these potential changes, economic reasons to study in China may wane as its trade relationships change over the course of the trade war.

While economic changes may make China less attractive over the coming years, the PRC's continued commitment to enhancing the status and quality of its higher education institutions will continue. Advances in scientific endeavors and building up the resources of STEM-related institutions and departments may in turn increase the quality of mainland higher education institutions vis-à-vis Taiwan's. Moreover, if political changes in the cross-strait relationship result in continued policies to attract Taiwanese students, the Mainland may become a more attractive option for Taiwanese students in coming years.

6.3. Prospects for Further Research

This study has created preliminary research that can be developed further in several directions. Firstly, research specifically on the cross-strait mobility of Taiwanese

² Naná de Graaf and Bastiaan van Apeldoorn, "US-China Relations and the Liberal World Order: contending elites, colliding visions?" *International Affairs*, vol. 94, no. 1, 2018, pp. 113-131.

³ Economic Development Board, Singapore, "U.S.-China Trade War Boosts Fast-Growing Southeast Asia," February 26, 2019, accessed June 4, 2019, <https://www.edb.gov.sg/en/news-and-events/insights/headquarters/us-china-trade-war-boosts-fast-growing-southeast-asia.html>.

⁴ Judy Lo, "Taiwan's Acer Considers Moving production out of China," *Taiwan News*, May 29, 2019, accessed June 5, 2019, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3712660>.

⁵ "U.S.-China trade war to push companies back to Taiwan: think tank," *Focus Taiwan*, May 11, 2019, accessed June 5, 2019, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aeco/201905110013.aspx>.

students will clarify and settle the debate on whether “brain drain” from Taiwan to China exists and to what extent it affects the Taiwanese economy. Secondly, push factors relating to the internationalization (or lack thereof) in Taiwan’s higher education system point to the need for a thorough assessment of Taiwan’s higher education internationalization policies and practices. Further research therefore should focus on the extent to which internationalization efforts at Taiwanese universities meet student expectations and how they may be improved. Finally, as more cohorts of Taiwanese students complete undergraduate and advanced degrees in China, further research on their employability after graduation will shed light on the comparative value of degrees from Taiwan and mainland China in the global labor markets.

In conclusion, this study has delineated the political and economic developments that make cross-strait student mobility possible. Marketization and massification of higher education have created a global environment in which institutions compete for resources and students, while developments in the cross-strait relationship have set the stage for people-to-people integration to occur among students. As China becomes a growing hub for international education, examining the flow of students from Taiwan to China provides an opportunity to view cross-strait integration within the context of the larger economic relations between the two sides. Results from the present study show that while economic considerations do play a part in the decision-making process of the students surveyed, an equally important factor is the opportunity to gain international perspectives from locals in Chinese universities. This shows that investigating student exchanges as a site of linkage community formation to promote understanding and collaboration at the “low politics” level across the Taiwan Strait, despite periods of tension in formal relations between Taiwan and China.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the growing literature in higher education and international higher education that focuses on student mobility in the Asia Pacific region, especially as it conceptualizes China as a growing destination for international and cross-border student exchange and movement. As global networks of higher education continue to develop and more countries enact internationalization policies in higher education, the discourse of student mobility from the Global South to the Global North must be reassessed as China emerges as a powerful economy with the largest higher education system in the world that both sends and receives international students. As the advanced economies in the Asia Pacific and those of the western world experience similar challenges to Taiwan, such as wage stagnation, graduate underemployment, and

population decline, examining student mobility will prove crucial to understanding and improving the future of higher education in these economies. This study has provided a starting point for further discourse on cross-border student mobility not only in the Asia Pacific but also around the globe.



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VI. Interviews

- Anonymous professor in STEM. Interviewed by Caroline Fried. Taipei. May 15, 2019.
- Huang, Chun-Liang (Secretary General, Chinese School of Future Education Society). Interviewed by Caroline Fried. Taipei. June 7, 2019.

Appendix

Appendix 1. Blank Questionnaire

臺灣往大陸的高等教育學生流動

謝謝您參加我的論文研究項目。我想問您關於申請中國大陸的研究所的原因。你能的答案全部都將匿名的，又您參與這項研究完全是自願的。您可以跳過或選擇不回答任何問題。用中文，英文填寫都可以。您若是對此問卷有疑問，請通過 crfried12@gmail.com 與我聯繫。

非常感謝您，

費凱琳

2017-2019 福佈萊特學生

政治大學英語亞太研究課程

Thank you for taking part in my thesis research. I would like to ask about your reasons for applying to graduate programs in Mainland China. All your answers will remain anonymous, and your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may skip or choose not to answer any question. Feel free to use Chinese or English to fill in this survey. If you have questions about this survey, please contact me at crfried12@gmail.com.

Many thanks,

Caroline Fried

2017-2019 Fulbright Student

National Chengchi University

International Master's Program in Asia Pacific Studies

1. 年齡 Age in Years: _____
2. 目前最高學歷（申請研究所的時候）—What is your highest education level achieved (as of when you applied to your current program)?
 - 大學（或同等學歷） Bachelor's (or equivalent)
 - 碩士 Master's
 - 博士 Doctorate
3. 請問您的最高學歷是在哪讀？ Where did you complete your highest level of education?
 - 臺灣 Taiwan
 - 中國大陸 Mainland China
 - 其他的地方： _____

4. 您申請研究所之前累積幾年的工作經驗? How much work experience did you have before applying for graduate programs?
 - 1 年以下 Less than 1 year
 - 1 至 3 年 Between 1 and 3 years
 - 3 至 5 年 Between 3 and 5 years
 - 5 年以上 Over 5 years

5. 您申請研究所的時候, 在哪個地方申請? Where did you apply for graduate school?
 - 在臺灣、中國大陸都申請 In Taiwan and Mainland China
 - 只在中國大陸 In Mainland China only
 - 其他的地方: _____

6. 請問您申請了什麼學位, 專業? What degree and field(s) did you apply for?
 - 碩士 Master's
 - 博士 Doctorate

 - 專業 Field of study: _____

7. 請問您目前去哪所大學? Which university do you attend now?

8. 請問您為什麼想要申請研究所? Why did you want to apply to graduate programs?

9. 請問您為什麼申請臺灣之外的研究所? Why did you want to apply for graduate programs outside Taiwan?

10. 依您的意見, 在臺灣之外讀書有什麼優點? In your opinion, what are the benefits of studying outside Taiwan?

11. 請問您如何瞭解大陸的研究所? How did you learn about graduate programs in Mainland China?

12. 依您的意見, 在大陸讀書而不是在臺灣讀研究所有何優點? What are the benefits of going to graduate school in Mainland China instead of in Taiwan?

13. 依您的意見, 在大陸讀書而不是在其他的國家讀研究所有何優點? What are the benefits of going to graduate school in Mainland China instead of in a different country?

14. 依您的意見, 在大陸讀書而不是在臺灣讀研究所有何缺點? What are the drawbacks of going to graduate school in Mainland China instead of in Taiwan?

15. 請問您未來打算在中國大陸工作嗎? Do you plan to work in China in the future?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe



Appendix 2. Questionnaire Respondent Summary Data

Respondent Ages (in years)

Stem	Leaf
2	5 6 8
3	2 3 3 6 6 8
4	2
5	0

Age range: 25-50 years
Median age: 33 years

Universities represented

University	Frequency
Xiamen University	4
Peking University	2
Shanghai Jiaotong University	1
Shanghai Fudan University	1
Fujian Normal University	1
Nankai University	1

Fields and Levels of Study

Fields of Study	Level	Frequency
Education	Master's	2
	Doctorate	3
Business Management	Master's	1
	Doctorate	3
Finance	Doctorate	1
Engineering	Master's	1

Prior Work Experience at time of Application to Graduate Programs

Experience in years	Frequency
Less than 1	2
1 to 3	2
3 to 5	2
Over 5	4

Open-Ended Response Summaries

The following frequency tables summarize responses for each of the open-ended questionnaire items. Frequencies may total over 11 as some respondents mention more than one theme in their answers.

Why did you want to apply to graduate programs?

Response	Frequency
Enhance job market competitiveness	4
Enhance own abilities	3
Self-enrichment	3
Necessary for my field	1

Why did you want to apply to graduate programs outside Taiwan?

Response	Frequency
Gain international perspectives	4
Collaborate with mainland/international peers	3
Taiwan's academic/international offerings are insufficient	3
China's growing markets/influence/career opportunities	3

In your opinion, what are the benefits to studying outside Taiwan?

Response	Frequency
Improve international perspective	9
Collaborate/make friends across borders	2
Improve international competitiveness	2
Enhance own experience	2

How did you learn about graduate programs in Mainland China?

Response	Frequency
Friends' or colleagues' introduction	8
Internet	8
Associations/organizations for Taiwanese students	2

What are the benefits of going to graduate school in Mainland China instead of in Taiwan?

Response	Frequency
Beneficial to future career	5

Collaborate with local elites/build social networks	4
China's economic influence/rising status	3
China's preferential policies toward Taiwanese students	1

What are the benefits of going to graduate school in Mainland China instead of in a different country?

Response	Frequency
China's economic /career prospects	5
Language is more convenient	4
China is cheaper than the advanced countries	4
Preferential policies for Taiwanese students	1
Geographical proximity	1

What are the drawbacks of going to graduate school in Mainland China instead of in Taiwan?

Response	Frequency
Innovation is lacking in China	7
Entrepreneurship is lacking in China	2
Teaching models are lacking in China	1
Information access in China is more difficult	1
China's closed political system	1
Cost of living higher in China	1

Do you plan to work in China in the future?

Response	Frequency
Yes	10
No	1

Appendix 3. Interview Transcripts

Interview with Dr. Chun-liang Huang

Secretary General, Chinese School of Future Education Society (中華未來學校教育學會)

June 7, 2019

Taipei

黃博士：我這一次去幫你瞭解一下

費凱琳：好，謝謝

黃：我剛好沒有辦法找他沒那一邊的人，因為我發過去的時候因為他們課程大陸有一些博士班的課程他們有幾十臺灣生。他們很少是那種全職博士，差不多都是"part time"的。臺灣生都是 part time 的多。全職的少。所以我幫你填的，大部分都是全職的。所以與福建省來講的話有一個廈門大學，廈大。廈大裏面的博士生有 712 多個從博一到來念是這樣的。可是呢，大部分的，就是已經有工作的。所以他們少時候臺灣的博士生原則上就是一種叫做《代職》。這個呢，這個跟臺灣目前有很多的博士很象。

費：你剛剛跟我說在大陸的學費比較便宜，對不對？

黃：對，大陸學費比較便宜。他們的上課，老師的上課自主性很高。我去過廈大的博士班呢也有這樣的上課模式，就是臺灣學生一個十幾個同學也不見得是大陸所以他們很彈性，2 來時學費也便宜。因為學費便宜之外，他們有很多政策很有引對臺灣，其實，他們想在大陸想要國際化辦學。他們想也是教育來做所謂的影響力。他想例如說想臺灣同胞過去大陸念書他們有政策上的優惠。臺灣早期到美國念書有獎學金，雷是這樣子的概念。他學費已經夠便宜了，還有一些優惠几乎沒有話到什麼錢。

費：你感覺臺灣學生想去大陸念書是不是對臺灣有問題提？有關政治，經濟，等

黃：不是的。應該是說臺灣是一個島，她的感覺就很想新加坡。那，我們臺灣的真的經濟有一點像是依貿易全球經濟的概念。因為主要臺灣有好多學生到大陸有兩件事情。第一件事情呢，語言相同。第二個呢，中國的經濟崛起。其實兩岸無論有競爭，現在學生知道臺灣只有三百萬，市場十三億的市場。如果學生慢慢的用到大陸去念書，那加上了大陸經濟面的對 college 透露不遺餘力。你看過 QS，世界大學排名，他們錄 2011 年到 2019 年，中國的世界大學排名的量有很大的進步。他們現在滿多所進世界 500 大不少於臺灣的世界 500 大的數量。大陸的很多的學科臺灣比較沒有。現在大陸呢，向臺灣多的故事是什麼？是商業與經濟最多。這是第一個。然後呢就是文學藝術的。中文呢，文學，文化，這類的。因為中國文化，文學，是多的。所以商業，經濟是最多的。是跟大陸的國情非常像。大陸國情最好的，然後最優秀的學生，我不是到美國是怎麼樣，在臺灣呢，最優秀的學生全部考試醫生，可能美國是一樣。可是大陸，最優秀的學生不會去考醫學，他們會年兩類：第一來時經濟，可以賺錢的。另外一類呢是念法律政治。然後年理工科的最強他們也不會去做念醫學，他們會念航空科技。還有電腦，計算機。所以跟臺灣不太一樣。所以臺灣很多的學生到那邊念都是商業經濟的。

費：臺灣學生在大陸念書之後大部分想留在大陸嗎？

黃：臺灣學生，這是我瞭解，博士生他們不會避諱在哪裏工作，可是他們有事業，business，在大陸 work 跟 business 不太一樣。所以大部分的學生應該是這樣子。他的 business 在大陸，課設他們兩邊跑來跑去。【我的朋友】他是廈大博士生，可是呢他在臺灣有一個公司，是一個 cooperation，然後自那邊也有。所以他念博士在哪裏？他的 adviser 他的教授介紹很多 relationship，這樣的關係，所以他們的。然後念大陸的博士呢，對他們當地的人會有一個 reputation 聲望。他們會比較尊重設樣子。我也遇到外商跟我講說他會在大陸念的因為外商公司想要進入大陸市場，他們希望臺灣人過去大陸市場外商公司去做一個 bridge。臺灣有時候會當一個 bridge。所以曾經有句話就是《臺灣人比大陸人更瞭解全世界》。這是臺灣人也比這些外國人更瞭解大陸市場。所以他們做一個 bridge。

費：中國的研究所什麼時候開始成為臺灣申請著的熱門

黃：應該起始於馬英九那幾年。所以應該該從 2011-2012 年差不多。那時候兩岸很高。那時就開始大陸那時候開始從 2011 年從最有名的北京奧運之後他會開始大部覺醒。它在國際影響越來越大。所以今年臺灣有更多的跑過大陸去年 bachelor 學位。所以設施一個趨勢。

費：在你的意見，年輕的臺灣人為什麼想要年研究學位？

黃：設個是文化的問題。中國文化是《萬般皆下品，唯有讀書高》。這是儒家文化。這是我們華人的孔夫子的思想就是說。這個文化就是很大的因素。深受中國文化以前的國家現在有這樣學位的：日本，南韓，新加坡也是。說是跟博士變成人的基本最求目標。每個人都想念到博士。大學念完，不念碩士好像怪怪的。如果要去研究機構，沒有碩士好像怪怪的。每個人都會最求這個概念。這是文化。在我們固有的文化 DNA 裏面我們會最求博士。大陸更嚴重。臺灣是最近有慢慢的改變。因為還是受西方的強調天賦的發展。所以主要主要的原因還是在文化。而來呢是企業。它是強調經濟提下，希望很多的學生都有研究生，因為研究生培養問題解決的 skills 比較多。但是大學 4 年的階段訓練越來越弱化，比較沒有這方面的訓練。所以我們華人教育裏面出現很好玩的吊詭問題，就是大學高中化。所以 master 變成以前的 bachelor。主要是大學變多了什麼人都會進大學。所以對企業而言他的賽選條件。所以便是說，你有沒有經好的企業你進不了。也有人提一個 over-education 的問題。

費：我先問一下關於臺灣補習班的申請大陸研究所的服務。

黃：其實我就瞭解，臺灣的學生們其實不見得透過 cram school。其實透過很多的訊息。很多的 master 或 PhD 去大陸念通常都是大陸方，他們有自己的臺灣校友會，來宣傳的，所以他們會這樣子一個人找一個。那 cram school，他可能幫多的海外留學大陸的服務其中的是一塊而已。我聽到說申請還要透過補習班。因為大陸現在對臺灣的政策非常優惠的。臺灣人念北京大學，很簡單，大陸人要念北京大學很困難，他是一個 quota。

費：I've read in news but not in academic articles that the policies for Taiwanese students applying to schools in the mainland. I've heard that schools in the mainland have lowered their standards so that more Taiwanese students can come. Is that true?

黃：It's true, 這是說，臺灣的學生去大陸念書的標準真的很低。所以臺灣人非常容易過去的，因為他們大陸的 policy.

費：這樣的政策是 for undergrads 嗎還是也 for master's and PhD?

黃：Not Master's or PhD; only bachelor's degree 是這樣子。Master 以上沒有這樣子。因為很多的。



Interview with an Anonymous Professor in STEM

May 15, 2019

Taipei

CF: Why do young Taiwanese people want graduate degrees?

AP: In science fields, people generally prefer to quickly graduate with a master's degree because it's a passport for a good job. For them, it's realistic because the pay is better in the semiconductor and electronics industries in Taiwan. For a lot of graduate students in the sciences, the only goal is to get into TSMC [Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company] because it has the best pay. Having a master's from National Taiwan University, National Tsinghua University, or National Jiaotong University is seen as the way to get a high-paying job at TSMC. The graduate degree is an investment. Compared to maybe 10 years ago, people these days don't want to go for a PhD. Academic positions aren't easy to get right now, and you'd typically need to go overseas for experience in order to get a good position in Taiwan as a PhD. Because of that, people in Taiwan prefer to go for the master's degree and get a good job right away.

CF: Is it popular among your students to apply to graduate schools in China?

AP: In my experience, no. For the sciences, people still prefer to go to the [United] States, especially for PhD programs. A degree from the States is still seen as the most prestigious, provided that [students] can get a scholarship. That makes the US more attractive than China right now for graduate students. After that, they'll tend to come to my institution to find jobs as research assistants to start earning money and get research experience.

Getting a master's in Taiwan is easier than going to China, but my perception is that these graduates do think about jobs in the Mainland and will not resist the idea of working in China.

But science and technology in Taiwan isn't better than China; China's technology is better now and appears to have surpassed Japan in publications. In five to ten years it might overtake the US. They have good funding.