

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The internationalization theory of higher education provides a crucial theoretical foundation for China to introduce advanced foreign educational philosophies, teaching methods, and management models, especially in the formation of Chinese Foreign Cooperation in Running School Program hereinafter referred to as CFCRSP. According to Altbach and Knight (2007), internationalization is not only a strategic choice for educational institutions but also a vital component of national development. In its internationalization process, China actively absorbs and integrates international educational resources to enhance the quality and competitiveness of its higher education.

Firstly, China's educational internationalization strategy emphasizes cooperation with foreign higher education institutions. This cooperation is not limited to academic exchanges but also includes curriculum development and the introduction of teaching methods. For example, the Chinese government encourages cooperation with over 180 countries and regions, establishing 2,385 Chinese-foreign cooperative education institutions and programs. These collaborations promote the sharing of educational resources and the transfer of technology (Atolagbe et al., 2023). This cooperative model not only helps introduce

advanced educational concepts and teaching methods but also provides a practical basis and theoretical support for the reform of Chinese higher education.

Secondly, the formation of CFCRSP is closely related to the Chinese government's policy orientation. Policy-driven internationalization enables Chinese higher education institutions to seek partners globally, learn from international experience, and improve educational quality (Fan, 2020). For instance, with the advancement of the "Belt and Road" Initiative, higher education cooperation between China and countries has deepened, and exchanges and cooperation in the field of education have provided new opportunities and challenges for the internationalization of Chinese higher education (Wu & Borhan, 2024). This policy orientation not only promotes the internationalization of education but also lays the foundation for the sustainable development of Chinese higher education.

Furthermore, internationalization theory also emphasizes the diversity and inclusiveness of education. Hudzik (2011) points out that internationalization should focus on the needs of students from different cultural backgrounds and promote intercultural exchange and understanding. In CFCRSP, students can not only receive a fusion of Chinese and Western education but also enhance their international perspective and competitiveness in a multicultural environment (G. Wang & and Gao, 2023). This diversity not only enriches the educational content but also provides broader space for students' personal development.

In summary, the internationalization theory of higher education provides a solid theoretical foundation for China to introduce advanced foreign educational philosophies, teaching methods, and management models. Through policy

guidance and international cooperation, China's higher education continues to develop in the context of globalization, forming CFCRSP, which not only improve the quality of education but also inject new vitality into the country's economic and social development.

The Chinese government has issued a series of policies to support CFCRSP, providing an important framework and guidance for the internationalization of higher education. In particular, policies such as the "Action Plan for the Internationalization of Higher Education" and the "Quality Assurance System for Chinese Foreign Cooperation Running School Program" clearly outline the strategic goals and implementation pathways for promoting educational internationalization at both the national and local government levels.

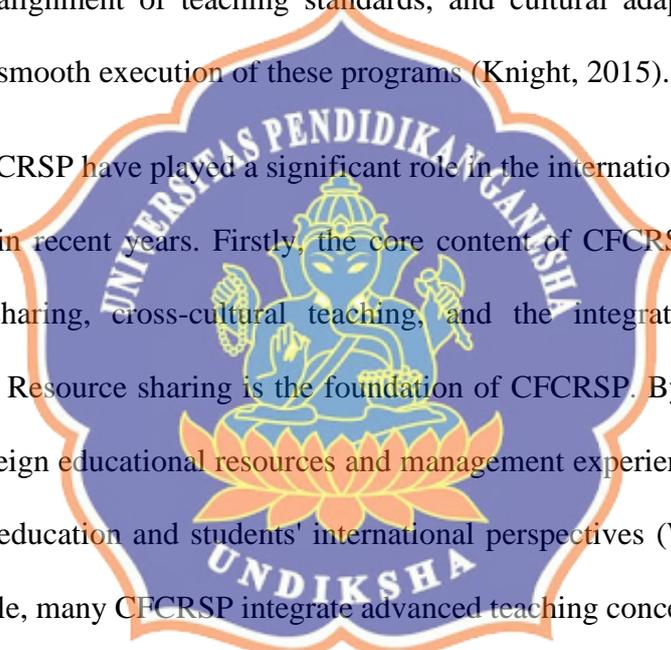
Firstly, the "Action Plan for the Internationalization of Higher Education" is a significant policy formulated at the national level to promote the internationalization of higher education. This plan emphasizes the necessity of internationalizing higher education, aiming to enhance the overall quality and international competitiveness of Chinese higher education by introducing high-quality educational resources from abroad. According to this plan, the government encourages universities to establish cooperative relationships with internationally renowned institutions and to engage in various forms of collaborative projects, such as joint training and academic exchanges. This policy direction not only facilitates the rapid development of CFCRSP, but also provides momentum for the reform and innovation of higher education in China.

Secondly, the "Quality Assurance System for CFCRSP " provides a quality assurance mechanism for the implementation of cooperative education projects. This system specifies the standards and requirements for CFCRSP, ensuring that these projects meet certain levels in terms of educational quality, teaching management, and student services. By establishing a sound quality assessment mechanism, local governments and educational authorities can effectively supervise and manage CFCRSP, ensuring the continuous improvement of educational quality. The implementation of this system helps to enhance public trust in CFCRSP and attracts more students to participate.

Additionally, local governments have also played an active role in supporting CFCRSP. For example, the Shanghai Municipal Government, in its "Comprehensive Education Reform Plan (2014-2020)," explicitly stated the need to strengthen cooperation with international higher education institutions and promote the sharing and exchange of educational resources. Local governments encourage universities to engage in international cooperation by formulating corresponding policies and measures, thereby enhancing the internationalization of education. This top-down policy support creates a favorable environment for the smooth development of CFCRSP.

As the global education market opens up and integrates, the Chinese government actively promotes the development of CFCRSP. According to the Regulations on CFCRSP and its implementation measures, the approval and evaluation procedures for CFCRSP are becoming increasingly strict. The 3+0 model, as an innovative educational approach, allows students to complete their courses domestically while enjoying international educational resources and

obtaining degrees from foreign institutions. This model provides more diverse development opportunities for vocational college students and injects new vitality into domestic vocational education. However, despite achieving certain results in practice, the 3+0 model still faces numerous challenges during implementation. First, the educational quality of some cooperative programs is difficult to ensure, with limited academic progress and international competitiveness (Marginson, 2018). Second, issues such as the integration of domestic and international curricula, alignment of teaching standards, and cultural adaptation continue to hinder the smooth execution of these programs (Knight, 2015).



CFCRSP have played a significant role in the internationalization of higher education in recent years. Firstly, the core content of CFCRSP mainly includes resource sharing, cross-cultural teaching, and the integration of curriculum objectives. Resource sharing is the foundation of CFCRSP. By introducing high-quality foreign educational resources and management experience, it enhances the quality of education and students' international perspectives (Wang et al., 2024). For example, many CFCRSP integrate advanced teaching concepts and curriculum design through cooperation with internationally renowned universities, promoting the effective utilization of educational resources (Ying & Wenjing, 2023). Cross-cultural teaching is an important component of CFCRSP. Students learn in a multicultural environment, which not only improves their language skills but also enhances their cross-cultural communication skills (Aifang et al., 2024)

Secondly, in terms of successful experiences, CFCRSP have achieved certain results in promoting student internationalization and improving the quality of education. Through cooperation with international universities, students can

obtain internationally recognized degrees and certificates, which provides them with more opportunities for career development (Y. Zhang, 2023). In addition, many programs have improved teaching quality and students' learning experience by introducing foreign teachers and international courses (Lu & Wang, 2023). For example, in some programs, foreign teachers not only teach professional courses but also participate in students' cross-cultural exchange activities, helping students better adapt to the international learning environment (Masuwai et al., 2017).

The CFCRSP has achieved some success in promoting the internationalization of higher education, demonstrating its core content and successful experiences in areas such as resource sharing and cross-cultural teaching. However, it also faces the following challenges: excessively high English language proficiency requirements, a shortage of faculty and insufficient internationalization, a mismatch between curriculum design and course objectives/market demand, unequal resource allocation, and imperfect collaborative management mechanisms. To address these bottlenecks, effective measures need to be taken in the future. Resolving these issues will be crucial to promoting the further development of the CFCRSP, improving its educational quality, and achieving sustainable development.

Given these complexities and challenges, the systematic evaluation of CFCRSP becomes not only necessary but indispensable. Evaluation serves as a critical mechanism to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of these cooperative programs, ensuring that they fulfill their intended goals and contribute meaningfully to the internationalization of Chinese higher education (Shackman, 2018). Without rigorous evaluation, it is difficult to identify strengths, weaknesses,

and areas requiring improvement which may lead to suboptimal outcomes and undermine the sustainability of CFCRSP.

With the acceleration of globalization, CFCRSP have become one of the important pathways for the internationalization of higher education in China. In 2023, a public vocational college in Jiangxi Province, with the approval of the provincial education authorities, established two CFCRSP, "3+0" programs, meaning students complete all three years of their vocational diploma studies domestically without the need to study abroad. However, one-third of the curriculum and faculty are introduced from a university in Malaysia. This model not only provides students with access to high-quality international educational resources but also reduces tuition fees and living expenses, allowing them to gain an international education experience within China.

CFCRSP bring significant benefits to Fuzhou Vocational and Technical College. By introducing advanced foreign textbooks and teaching experience, the school can improve its educational standards and quality efficiency. At the same time, this model promotes the exchange and integration of Chinese and foreign educational philosophies, which helps to cultivate talents with an international perspective. For students, they not only obtain a vocational diploma from a domestic vocational college but also receive credit certificates or descriptive certificates (completion certificates) from foreign partner institutions, which provides them with more choices and advantages for future employment and enhances their international competitiveness.

The provision of adequate linguistic support and cross-cultural adaptation facilities is essential to ensure the meaningful participation and academic success of students from diverse backgrounds. In programs that operate within an international or bilingual academic environment, high English proficiency requirements and cultural differences may become significant barriers if not properly addressed. To support linguistic development, the program offers English enhancement courses, academic writing assistance, and language mentoring designed to help students meet academic standards. Access to bilingual staff and clear academic communication guidelines further assist students in navigating coursework, presentations, and research activities. These forms of support reduce language-related anxiety and improve students' confidence in academic engagement. In addition to linguistic assistance, the program facilitates cross-cultural adaptation through orientation sessions, intercultural communication workshops, and inclusive learning practices. Such initiatives aim to foster mutual understanding, reduce cultural misunderstandings, and create a supportive academic environment. Administrative services and mentoring systems also help students adjust socially and academically to new cultural contexts.

However, CFCRSP also face some challenges and problems. For example, the implementation of bilingual teaching requires addressing issues such as teacher quality and teaching methods. In addition, how to ensure the sustainable development of CFCRSP, and how to improve project management efficiency and quality assurance systems, are also important issues that need attention. Therefore, after two sessions of implementation of the "3+0" CFCRSP at this vocational college, it is necessary to evaluate its implementation. This will not only help to

summarize experiences and lessons learned but also provide a reference basis for the optimization of subsequent projects. Through in-depth analysis of the project implementation effect, the school's internationalization process can be further promoted, the quality of talent cultivation can be improved, and a win-win development for both the school and students can be achieved.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on literature analysis and preliminary research, the main problems facing CFCRSP can be summarized in detail as follows:

1. Policy Implementation Gaps

Despite comprehensive national and local policies supporting CFCRSP, there is a significant disconnect between policy intentions and actual practice. Bureaucratic obstacles and weak quality assurance mechanisms often reduce these policies to formalities, limiting their ability to drive meaningful educational improvements.

2. Resource Inequality and Faculty Development Issues

Resource allocation is uneven, with prestigious institutions receiving more support while many programs lack adequate infrastructure, especially for technical training. Additionally, there is a shortage of internationally experienced faculty, compounded by difficulties in recruiting foreign experts and providing sufficient international exposure for local teachers, which undermines teaching quality.

3. Cross-Cultural and Linguistic Challenges

High English proficiency requirements act as barriers for many students, and insufficient language support limits accessibility. Cultural differences further complicate student adaptation, with many programs lacking structured intercultural learning opportunities, thereby missing chances to enhance students' global competencies.

4. Stakeholder Misalignment and Communication Deficiencies

Divergent expectations among institutions, students, parents, and industry partners create misalignments that affect satisfaction and program relevance. Differences in teaching standards between Chinese and foreign partners, coupled with inadequate multi-stakeholder communication, impede collaboration and continuous program improvement.

1.3 Problem Limitation

This study focuses specifically on evaluating the implementation of the CFCRSP at Fuzhou Vocational and Technical College through the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model. While CFCRSP operates within a broad and complex national framework, this research is limited to examining the program's operational realities, resource allocation, faculty development, cross-cultural teaching challenges, and stakeholder interactions within this single institution.

The study does not extend to all Chinese vocational colleges or foreign partner institutions but concentrates on the unique context and challenges faced by

Fuzhou Vocational and Technical College. Additionally, the evaluation emphasizes program implementation and outcomes rather than broader policy formulation or international higher education trends. Furthermore, this research primarily relies on qualitative and quantitative data collected from institutional documents, faculty, students, and administrators directly involved in the program. It does not include longitudinal tracking of graduates' career trajectories or extensive comparative analysis with other international cooperation programs.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the CIPP evaluation model framework, and incorporating internationalization theory and the perspective of value co-creation, this study proposes four core research questions.

1. How is the evaluation of CFCRSP in Fuzhou vocational and technical college, viewed from the contextual component, based on evaluation by students, teachers, and administrator?
2. How is the evaluation of CFCRSP in Fuzhou vocational and technical college, viewed from the input, based on evaluation by students, teachers, and administrator?
3. How is the evaluation of CFCRSP in Fuzhou vocational and technical college, viewed from the process component, based on evaluation by students, teachers, and administrator?
4. How is the evaluation of CFCRSP in Fuzhou vocational and technical college, viewed from the product component, based on evaluation by students, teachers, and administrator?

5. How is the effectiveness of the implementation of CFCRSP in Fuzhou vocational and technical college, viewed from the CIPP, based on evaluation by students, teachers, and administrator?

1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the research questions, the objectives of the study are:

1. To evaluate the implementation of CFCRSP in Fuzhou vocational and technical college, viewed from the contextual component, based on evaluation by students, teachers, and administrator.
2. To evaluate is the implementation of CFCRSP in Fuzhou vocational and technical college, viewed from the input, based on evaluation by students, teachers, and administrator.
3. To evaluate the implementation of CFCRSP in Fuzhou vocational and technical college, viewed from the process component, based on evaluation by students, teachers, and administrator.
4. To evaluate the implementation of CFCRSP in Fuzhou vocational and technical college, viewed from the product component, based on evaluation by students, teachers, and administrator.
5. To examine the effectiveness of the implementation of CFCRSP in Fuzhou vocational and technical college, viewed from CIPP, based on evaluation by students, teachers, and administrator.

1.6 Research Significances

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This study makes important theoretical contributions by advancing the application of the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model within the unique setting of CFRSP. By integrating internationalization theory with program evaluation, it offers a deeper understanding of how evaluation frameworks can be adapted to complex, cross-border educational contexts, especially in vocational and technical education. Moreover, this research fills a notable gap in the literature by providing an empirical, contextually grounded analysis of CFRSP, which have been underexplored in academic discourse. It also enriches theoretical insights into the dynamic interplay between policy environments, resource allocation, faculty development, and cultural factors, shedding light on how these elements collectively influence program effectiveness and sustainability.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

1) For the Program

This study provides valuable insights that can directly inform the improvement of the CFRSP at Fuzhou Vocational and Technical College. By systematically evaluating aspects such as resource allocation, faculty capacity, curriculum design, and cross-cultural teaching practices, the research identifies specific strengths and weaknesses in program implementation. These findings enable institutional leaders to make evidence-based decisions aimed at enhancing educational quality, optimizing resource use, and improving student learning experiences, thereby supporting the sustainable development of the program.

2) For Future Research

This study establishes a foundational evaluation framework that can serve as a reference for future investigations into CFCRSP and other transnational educational initiatives. It encourages further research to explore long term outcomes, comparative analyses across institutions, and the application of alternative or complementary evaluation models. By identifying current gaps and challenges, the study opens pathways for scholars to deepen understanding and contribute to the ongoing enhancement of international cooperation in higher education.

1.7 Research Novelty

Research on the evaluation of CFCRSP remains limited. Only a few scholars have examined aspects such as the competitiveness and operational models of these programs. For example, (Guo & Wang, 2017) developed an evaluation system and method for assessing competitiveness using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP). Zheng (2022) constructed an evaluation model employing convolutional neural network deep learning techniques, concluding that CFCRSP could benefit from adopting international student learning models to enhance their own educational approaches and achieve outcomes comparable to studying abroad in China. Additionally, some researchers have focused on evaluating teaching quality in Sino foreign cooperative schools. Drawing on international perspectives from organizations such as OECD and UNESCO, as well as the American Baldrige AUQA Education Quality Award, Ma designed a project quality evaluation system specifically for CFCRSP initiatives (X. W. Sun, 2019). Overall, existing studies

tend to concentrate on competitiveness, operational modes, and teaching quality, with relatively few addressing teaching quality in depth.

Conducting further evaluations using the CIPP model is especially important because it provides a comprehensive and systematic framework for assessing educational programs. By examining the context, inputs, processes, and products, the CIPP model enables continuous monitoring and improvement across all dimensions of program implementation. Its holistic approach helps institutions identify strengths and weaknesses, align resources and strategies with goals, and respond effectively to evolving challenges and stakeholder needs. Applying the CIPP model regularly ensures that Chinese foreign cooperative education programs remain relevant, effective, and sustainable.

In short: Compared with prior studies that emphasize competitiveness indices, algorithmic evaluation, or generic quality models, this study contributes a policy-aligned, CFCRSP-tailored, mixed-methods CIPP evaluation in a higher-vocational “3+0” setting, with distinctive multi-stakeholder profiling and a broadened product lens that directly informs actionable improvement.