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**EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS
BETWEEN NEW ZEALAND AND EAST ASIAN CHINESE HIGHER
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

A thesis
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ABSTRACT

This study examines how higher education leaders in different socio-cultural contexts are involved in the practice of distributed leadership in international partnerships. This study employs socio-cultural theorising to help explain the 22 New Zealand, Singaporean, Chinese and Taiwanese higher education leaders' multiple experiences, perceptions and practices in international partnerships. In this study, socio-cultural theorising entails a view of constructivist epistemology and the ontology of constructive realism. Grounded theory methodology and Wallner's strangifications were employed to acquire, analyse, interpret and compare qualitative data across different contexts in this study. Semi-structured interviewing and document collection were the methods used for data generation.

The findings suggest that distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships should move beyond simply arranging formal leadership roles, responsibilities, and resources. Distributed leadership in such cross-cultural contexts should be conceived as an inclusive approach to multiple leadership practices. Five interrelated key elements of distributed leadership emerged. They are formal arrangements, enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context, sustainability and learning. All the key elements entailed certain levels and aspects of learning. Learning and distributed leadership practices are closely intertwined and informing each other.

A conceptual framework for the learning and practice of distributed leadership in international partnership is proposed to theorise the relationship between three sources of learning of distributed leadership, and multiple

distributed leadership practices. The three sources of learning identified in this study are understandings of the context (in actuality), prior knowledge (in lifeworlds), and knowledge of leadership capital, issues and factors (in microworlds). This study provides wider implications for education practitioners in other contexts to explore in international partnerships how social, cultural and economic forms leadership capital can be successfully distributed, exchanged and sustained, and how higher education leaders at all levels can actively participate and learn in international partnerships. Recommendations for researchers to conduct cross-cultural studies are provided.

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of Chapter One is to provide the rationale for and background to this research project on “Distributed leadership for international partnerships between New Zealand and East Asian Chinese higher education institutions (HEIs)”. Hence, this chapter firstly provides an overview of the nature, reasons and context for international partnerships between Western and East Asian HEIs. The second part of this chapter presents the rationale for this study. This chapter is then followed by a discussion on the research objectives and questions. Finally, this chapter outlines the overall structure of the thesis.

Overview of the Nature, Reasons and Context for International Higher Education Partnerships

Over the past two decades, higher education in many developing and developed countries has undergone significant policy development and a series of economic, technological, socio-cultural and political transformations (Daly & Barker, 2005; UNESCO, 2003; World Trade Organization, 2005). These changes and developments have encouraged greater international academic exchanges and co-operation among HEIs worldwide. In this study, the term ‘international partnership’ is used to refer to a variety of academic exchanges and cooperative activities and programmes that are enacted by HEIs in different contexts, such as in East Asia and New Zealand.

The first part of this section identifies the nature of international partnerships at the institutional level with reference to Knight’s (2004) six

categories of internationalisation approaches and other relevant literature. The second part clarifies and defines some of the major reasons for international partnerships, including: a) globalisation and internationalisation, b) entrepreneurship in higher education, and c) support from international agencies. The third part introduces the context of the research on educational leadership for international partnerships between HEIs in New Zealand and some East Asian societies such as Singapore, Taiwan and China.

The Nature of International Partnerships

As Altbach and Knight (2007) noted, the nature of international partnerships are the proactive responses to globalisation in the broader higher education reform context. They are facilitated through higher education policies and practices at the international, regional, national, sector, institutional, and individual levels. The literature has provided discussion on individual international activities or programmes which have been undertaken by higher education practitioners at the personal and institutional levels (Edwards, 2007; McGowan & Potter, 2008; Tedrow & Mabokela, 2007). Some literature has favoured analysis of internationalisation policy and governance at the national, sector, or regional level (Mok, 2007a; Song & Tai, 2007; Wende, 2007). As this study emphasises individual higher education leaders' practices in their institutions, this study adapts Knight's (2004) six categories of approaches to internationalisation at the institutional level and other relevant literature to clarify the varieties of international partnerships.

Knight (2004) categorised international partnerships at the institutional level in terms of six dimensions. They are activity approach, outcomes approach, rationales approach, process approach, at-home approach, and cross-border approach (Knight, 2004, pp. 19-21). These approaches are defined below.

Activity Approach

The activity approach to international partnerships focuses on specific activities, programmes, projects, or developments. The activity approach was prominent in the 1970s and early 1980s, and primarily involved mobilising international students to pursue higher education in an overseas country. More recently, diverse forms of international partnerships have emerged, including curriculum and academic programmes, students or faculty exchanges, institutional linkages and networks, development projects, and branch campuses (Knight, 2004, 2008). The activity approach mainly involves individuals (such as students, professors, scholars, researchers, experts, and consultants) engaging in internationalisation activities. Activities are seen as an outcome, and not as a means to achieving the HEI's goals for internationalisation such as enhancing institutional competitiveness, and developing an international atmosphere. Chinese scholar Liu's (劉樹道, 2005) definition of HEI internationalisation was based on the perspectives of the activity approach. Liu stated that internationalising HEIs should involve activities such as recruiting lecturers from diverse cultural backgrounds; recruiting students internationally; obtaining a portion of degree credits from overseas HEIs; and adequately facilitating international inter-institutional academic exchanges and interactions.

Outcomes Approach

The outcomes approach to international partnerships, previously called the competency approach (Knight, 1999), emphasises the generation and transfer of knowledge, skills, interests, values and attitudes of the overall human resources of the HEI. Knight (2004) further highlighted that the outcome approach has a strong focus on accountability and results. Thus, implementing internationalised curricula, activities, and programmes is not an end in itself but a means to maximise desired outcomes, such as increasing student competencies, enhancing institutional profiles, and attracting more international agreements and partners or projects.

An example is the effort of many Chinese HEIs to enhance the English language capacity of their graduates through including the national College English Test (CET) Band 4 and Band 6 in the graduation requirements. The CET has come into effect since China's open door policy began in 1987, and has been promoted as one of the major approaches to increase higher education students' English language competencies by promoting study abroad, enhancing international academic exchanges and co-operation, and increasing international employment (CET, n.d.). The outcomes of integrating the CET into the graduation requirements are enhanced student English competencies and international employment competencies.

Rationales Approach

The rationales approach to international partnerships emphasises the inclusion of explicit statements or rationales in policy statements. Knight (2004) identified a

number of rationale for international partnerships both at the national level and the institutional level. At the national level, there are demands for human resource or brain power development, strategic alliances, commercial trade, nation building, and socio-cultural development through higher education internationalisation movements. At the institutional level, there are motivations for higher education internationalisation, such as international profile and reputation, student and staff development, income generation, strategic alliances, and research and knowledge production. Among the many drivers, Knight (2004) argued the primary rationale remains significant in directing internationalisation partnerships. The HEI's primary rationale is dependent upon its unique socio-cultural context. For example, Chinese HEIs' primary driver for nurturing international partnerships with Western HEIs may be building the capacity of personnel and students for greater international competitiveness (Mok, 2008; C. Tan & Ng, 2007); whereas New Zealand HEIs' primary rationale for establishing international partnerships with Chinese HEIs may be recruiting international students for full tuition fees (Codd, 2005; Curtis, 2008).

Process Approach

Knight (1999, 2004) stressed that the process approach to international partnerships is concerned with the sustainability of internationalisation policies, procedures, change process, and overall leadership at the institutional level. Hence, a variety of curricular, extracurricular and organisational activities, policies, and procedures are introduced and integrated into the daily operation of the HEI to promote the sustainability of the internationalisation process. The process

approach focuses on the long-term outcomes of internationalisation approaches, and is based on rationales of institutional developments. This approach illustrates a more far sighted vision than the outcomes and rationales approaches.

For example, a Taiwanese university sets a long-term plan for internationalisation. The plan involves the process of forming international linkages with HEIs worldwide, initiating student exchange and study abroad programmes with its bonding HEIs, as well as establishing an English-medium campus to develop the English capacity of students and to foster sustainable international academic exchanges and co-operation. These internationalisation initiatives include, for example, student exchanges and sister university bondings.

At-Home Approach

The at-home approach to international partnerships, previously called the ethos approach (Knight, 1999), relates more to the development of a culture or climate that promotes international and inter-cultural understandings, values and initiatives, with a focus on campus-based activities (Knight, 2004). According to Knight (2004), the at-home and process approaches both emphasise “the primary functions of a higher education institution including curricular, extracurricular, and organizational aspects” in relation to internationalisation (p. 20).

The literature suggests that the at-home approach is interrelated with the process approach. Different foci of internationalisation processes may result in different campus cultures. For example, if the HEI’s internationalisation process emphasises recruiting international students and meeting their related needs, a marketing campus culture would be promoted to sustain or expand sources of

international students (McGowan & Potter, 2008). If the internationalisation process was placed upon developing communities of learners in the HEI, it may help to nurture an institutional culture that encourages cooperative or collaborative forms of leadership (Haigh, 2008).

Cross-border Approach

The cross-border approach to international partnerships involves offering higher education services to students in another country through a mixture of delivery modes and administrative arrangements. This approach has been promoted as a result of global connectedness through enhanced information communication technologies (ICTs), strengthened international regulations for exchanges and trading of higher education services such as World Trade Organization (WTO), and greater market demands (Marginson, 2006; Marginson & Sawir, 2005; Mok & Yep, 2008; Stella, 2006). By delivery modes, Knight (2004) refers to face-to-face, distance and e-learning. In terms of administrative arrangements, the literature suggests that HEIs are concerned with delivering higher education services across national boundaries in three main ways: offshore programmes and campuses; collaborative or cooperative degree programmes; and joint degree programmes (Bennington & Xu, 2001; Chapman & Pyvis, 2006; Michael & Balraj, 2003).

Offshore programmes and campuses

An offshore programme is a degree programme that provides higher education services to international students who are located in a foreign country, rather than that of the higher education service provider (Bennington & Xu, 2001; Chapman &

Pyvis, 2006). An example is the provision of Australian degree programmes to students in Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia. Branch campuses are established by the degree-offering institution in a foreign country to serve the purpose of offering offshore degree programmes and can be called offshore campuses. HEIs have to meet the foreign country's regulatory and legislative requirements in order to establish an offshore campus.

Collaborative or cooperative degree programme

A collaborative or cooperative degree programme is delivered on a site that is approved by the degree granting HEI and its partner, rather than on an offshore campus. According to Michael and Balraj (2003), a collaborative or cooperative degree programme is delivered in co-operation between institutions, with at least one of the participating institutions being entitled to grant degrees, such as an undergraduate, postgraduate, or professional degree. The other cooperative non-degree granting HEIs can be a business, government body, and private tertiary education provider. For example, the master's degree programme being offered between a New Zealand university and a HEI in China, involves recruiting Chinese students, mobilising Chinese full-fee-paying students to New Zealand, implementing New Zealand curricular standards, and granting New Zealand degrees upon meeting graduation requirements.

Collaborative programmes can also be implemented without student mobility. Under franchise arrangements, a foreign degree-granting HEI can authorise a local provider, such as a business or private non-degree-granting institution, to "offer whole or part of a foreign educational programme (generally leading to a foreign

degree) under stipulated contractual conditions” (OECD, 2004, p. 23). For example, the business consultant corporation that I worked for in Taiwan was licensed by the Newport University in the United States (USA) to offer professional training courses towards MBA degrees.

Joint degree programmes

A joint degree programme specifically refers to an academic degree programme which is con-jointly offered by at least two higher education providers (Michael & Balraj, 2003) and can be dual degree programmes and twinning programmes. Students in dual degree programmes will be granted degrees from both of the participating HEIs. Twinning programmes are basically under franchise arrangements to allow students to spend certain periods of time in both HEIs towards their undergraduate or postgraduate degrees. Twinning programmes that lead to undergraduate degrees are often described as ‘2+2’ or ‘3+1’ programmes, meaning undergraduate students spending two years or three years at a HEI in their original country, and the rest years of their four year degree at another HEI in a foreign country.

Although HEIs’ internationalisation approaches can be categorised based on the six approaches, Knight (1999, 2004) argued that HEIs often adapt multiple approaches to internationalise their curriculum, personnel, cultural, and organisational processes. For example, Sanderson pointed out that HEIs in Singapore have actively engaged in internationalisation through the coordination of approaches, including:

...cross-border movements of ideas, institutions, teachers and students,... 'promotion and marketing of courses', 'onshore international student programs', 'study abroad and exchange programs', and 'development of links with institutions abroad', as well as a myriad of administrative and management processes behind each of the above.

(Sanderson, 2002, pp. 88-89)

International partnerships between Western and East Asian HEIs can be seen as integrating a mixture of internationalisation approaches based on the HEI's unique contexts. No matter what approaches are employed, Western and East Asian international higher education partnerships have played a significant role in meeting the survival needs of HEIs. The following section explores the main reasons that drive international partnerships between Western and East Asian HEIs.

The Reasons for International Partnerships

The literature suggests three major reasons for integrating these approaches to the governance and leadership of today's Western and East Asian HEIs. They are globalisation and internationalisation, entrepreneurship, and support from international agencies.

Globalisation and Internationalisation

The main reasons for international higher education partnerships are globalisation and internationalisation. Globalisation and internationalisation are seen as different but dynamically interrelated concepts in the literature.

Scholars in Western and Asian higher education have used the term ‘globalisation’ to refer to economic, technological, socio-cultural and political change processes which foster growing interconnectedness and interdependency among different countries and people worldwide (Marginson, 2006; Mok, 2007b; Mok & Lee, 2000). In particular, scholars believe that globalisation has encouraged the interdependence and flow of financial and human resources, knowledge, values and perspectives across spatial and temporal boundaries (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Giddens, 1994, 2000; Knight, 1999, 2004). Increasingly blurred or softened boundaries have helped HEIs to exchange values, knowledge and resources beyond institutional and cultural differences.

Western and Asian authors of higher education have suggested that internationalisation can be considered as proactive and responsive international strategies and processes to enact globalisation at the institutional, sector, or national level (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Beerkens & Derwende, 2007; Enders, 2004; Song & Tai, 2007; Yang, 2005). The term ‘international’ is used in this study to portray the relational networks between and among HEIs in different “nations, cultures and countries” (Knight, 2004, p. 11). Following Knight’s (2004) perspectives, internationalisation places an emphasis on the diversity of cultures.

Globalisation and its related socio-cultural, economic, political influences are rooted in the world higher education system; whereas international approaches, processes, outcomes, rationales, ethos, and modes of delivery are integral to the daily operation of the HEI in response to the trend of globalisation (Knight, 2004).

Globalisation in the 21st Century has urged HEIs to engage in proactive planning of institutional policy, regulations, structures, and operational systems for

internationalisation. However, British sociologist Giddens (1994) cautioned that, under a mixture of influences, globalisation has become “a complex nature of processes, which often act in contradictory ways, producing conflicts, disjunctures and new forms of stratification”(p. 5). To apply Giddens’s perspectives to higher education, it appears that higher education systems worldwide consist of a mosaic of similar as well as contradictory, conflicting, and inconsistent roles, responsibilities, agenda, ideologies, and practices. The world higher education system consists of hierarchies, centres and peripheries. In particular, globalisation has produced threats to the localisation of Asian HEIs. International higher education partnerships are rooted within a complex world higher education system. Specifically, Altbach’s notion of centres and peripheries, and the metaphor of twisted roots are helpful for explaining the reasons for international higher education partnerships (Altbach, 2004b, 2007; Altbach & Knight, 2007). Altbach (1998) described the mainstream Western HEIs as the centres, and the rest as peripheries such as Asian HEIs. The metaphor of twisted roots refers to the higher education system being influenced by both “the foreign origin of the academic model and the challenges of indigenization of the universities as part of the development process” (Altbach, 1998, p. 37).

Entrepreneurship in Higher Education

Another reason for international partnerships in HEIs is entrepreneurship. According to Austrian economist Schumpeter’s (2000) definition, entrepreneurship refers to the practice of undertaking innovative and creative approaches to maximise current resources and overcome limitations to enhance profit and

performance. Drucker (2007)) extended the scope of entrepreneurship to contexts outside the field of business, and suggested entrepreneurship is the collection of a variety of important competencies which include for example, communication and marketing skills; willingness to change and innovate; and abilities to analyse opportunities, initiate plans, set goals, and realise targets. The definitions offered by Schumpeter and Drucker are used in this study to conceptualise international higher education partnerships as entrepreneurial practices.

HEIs have become entrepreneurial in response to the neo-liberal free-market economic policies in many Western and East Asian countries, such as the United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan. Neo-liberal reforms have resulted in HEIs' decreased public funding and increasing their roles as marketers and entrepreneurs. Within such a reform context, HEIs are required to be accountable for seeking profits, raising tuition fees, allocating resources, meeting market demands, and surviving competitive market forces through higher education leadership, management, governance and policy-making (Codd, 2005; Curtis, 2008; Pick, 2006; Yokoyama, 2006). In particular, the entrepreneurial character of higher education becomes more evident where there are limited resources and extended competition (Chou, 2008; Gopinathan, 2007).

In the USA, for example, Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) adapted the term 'academic capitalism' to portray the increasing demands for private sourcing of research funding, and marketing of higher education services. In Australia, Saffu (2000) drew attention to the changing focus of Australian higher education where academic goals might not be valued as much as generating revenue through

strategic alliances among HEIs. Moreover, Marginson and Considine (2000) used the term 'enterprise university' to highlight the entrepreneurial and business-like nature of Australian HEIs. On 3rd November 2007, Marginson, in Beijing Forum, commented that one of the challenges faced by today's HEIs was to transform HEIs into suppliers of higher education knowledge, which is required for social and economic development in a society (蔡融融, 2007). Marginson's comment highlighted the commodification of higher education services within a climate of entrepreneurship.

Similar to Australian HEIs, New Zealand HEIs have been urged by neo-liberal economic reform movements to follow market mechanisms, such as placing strategic priorities on competition among higher education service providers, implementing new performance-based research funding systems, increasing domestic student fees, sourcing international students, and adapting corporate models of higher education governance (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2004; Hope & Stephenson, 2005; Middleton, 2004). HEIs in developing economies in East Asia, especially China, carry the leadership role of preparing competitive human power for knowledge-based economies (Mok, 2008; C. Tan & Ng, 2007; Vidovich, Yang, & Currie, 2007; Yonezawa, 2007).

According to the literature, a knowledge-based economy differs from the traditional industrial economy in terms of the high level of dependency on information and knowledge, and the demand for creating, promoting, and protecting intellectual property rights in a global economy (Olssen & Peters, 2005; Peters, 2006). Higher education is highly valued as a means to economic globalisation in knowledge economies. Governments in East-Asia, including

Singapore, China and Taiwan, have argued that moving their HEIs into the centres of knowledge networks would reinforce the nation's global competitiveness and knowledge-based economies (Chou & Ho, 2007; Sanderson, 2007; J. Tan, 2004). Although the Chinese government's open door policy since the 1980s has resulted in significant economic development, China's human power development is incompatible with its rapid economic growth (温家宝, 2008). As the OECD (2007) pointed out, China has suffered from the lack of innovative technologies, intellectual property rights, and creative human power. These limitations can be attributed to the quality of China's higher education. In order to bridge the gap of human capital, Zhu (朱志成, 2004) suggested building the capacity of higher education and introducing advanced knowledge and resources through international exchanges and co-operation between Chinese and Western HEIs.

It is arguable that neo-liberalism is a Western phenomenon. However, East Asian higher education systems, such as in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore, have followed neo-liberal higher education reforms to expand their higher education through benchmarking, academic exchanges and co-operation, largely with HEIs in Western societies (Mok, 2007a; Mok & Yep, 2008). According to Tan (2004), both the National Singapore University and the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore have introduced a North American modular system for undergraduate studies, and have used Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology as their benchmarking. In addition, under the impact of neo-liberalism, HEIs in China have gradually moved from government-centred towards having more autonomy and flexibility through co-operation, resource allocation, and reconstruction of organisational systems. According to Qian and

Verhoeven:

Interdisciplinary co-operation and the synergization of resources are being promoted, and institutional autonomy is gradually increasing...the organizational structures of the universities have developed a new organizational structure that is more flexible and more open. This more adaptable structure is intended to meet the developmental demands of modern universities with close links being created between their work and regional economic and social development. (Qian & Verhoeven, 2004, p. 1)

Despite entrepreneurship and competition in higher education, the role of collaboration remains strong in the internationalisation process (Marginson, 2006; Marginson & Sawir, 2005). Along with the effects of market forces, international academic exchanges and co-operation have become one of the emergent strategies by HEIs to build organisational capacity, and to internationally seek new markets and new service delivery approaches. HEIs around the world have nurtured increased regional and international co-operation, inter-institutional linkages, connections, and alliances (Dixon, 2006; Postiglione, 2005). According to the literature, the main reasons for the development of cooperative practices across HEIs worldwide is the demand for building the capacity of human resources that are competent in taking up leadership positions in the home countries as well as in working in a competitive, knowledge-based, global economy (Abbott, 2006; Altbach & Knight, 2007; Codd, 2005; Mok & Yep, 2008).

In particular, international agencies provide considerable resources and support for both worldwide higher education partnerships (UNESCO, 2003) and have transformed higher education services into trade services (World Trade

Organization, 2005).

Support from International Agencies

A final drive for international partnerships in HEIs has been from international agencies. It is worth-noting that the role of international agencies in higher education internationalisation, according to Marginson (1997), is “not to impose extra-national rule on member nations, but to prepare common governmental strategies, designed to enhance national competitiveness in the face of global change, for nations...to implement voluntarily on their own behalf” (p. 59). International policies and agreements can be understood as supportive effort for internationalisation within the context of self-governance or state-governance of HEIs across participating member countries. In particular, international policies and agreements by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) further facilitate higher education partnerships across national and regional boundaries. The UNESCO has strongly promoted proactive social and entrepreneurial approaches to international higher education partnerships; whereas the WTO has endeavoured to provide grounds for trading of higher education services across national boundaries.

The UNESCO expected HEIs “to increase relevance and to better respond to social needs, and to assure quality and comparability of studies and qualifications within and between systems” through new forms and strategies of international partnerships and consortia of institutions (UNESCO, 2003, p. 4). With the UNESCO’s support, new forms and strategies of international higher education

partnerships have emerged “to increase relevance and to better respond to social needs, and to assure quality and comparability of studies and qualifications within and between systems” (UNESCO, 2003, p. 4). The WTO has been important in regulating the trade of educational services in the fast growing and diversified international higher education markets (Altbach, 2004a; Sauvé, 2002). Unlike trade in goods, trade in education services is less clearly defined. In order to promote trade in educational services, the General Agreements on Trade in Services (GATS) under the WTO identified four modes of supply, including cross border supply, consumption abroad, commercial presence, and movement of natural persons (World Trade Organization, 2005). These are the basic guidelines for establishing trade forms of international higher education partnerships.

According to the WTO (2005), cross-border-supply indicates that the educational service is supplied by a provider physically located in one country, to a consumer in another. An example would be a HEI in New Zealand providing educational programmes to a student in Canada through distance education, virtual education institutions, education software, and corporate training through information and communication technologies delivery. Secondly, consumption-abroad implies that a student travels to another country to enrol in an institution for a course of study or degree programme, and in the course of his or her study consumes educational, transport, and tourism services. Thirdly, commercial-presence allows a foreign educational institution to establish a presence in another country to provide educational services through the formation of offshore degree programmes and campuses, as discussed previously. Fourthly, movement-of-natural persons refers to the temporary movement of services

suppliers, such as a New Zealand professor of education visiting China for several months to give a series of lectures at the invitation of a local university. In addition, collaborative or cooperative degree programmes as well as joint degree programmes, as described previously, involve movement of students and higher education personnel.

The OECD (2002) also identifies that individual institutions' commitments to the four modes of supply vary from country to country, but they have incorporated a mixture of the four modes. Under the GATS regulations, higher education services have been transformed into a commodity. The notion of higher education as a commodity specifies the utilitarian, for-profit, and commercial nature of higher education services. Higher education services in today's education markets are products that can be sold, bought, and traded between international higher education providers and consumers (Knight, 2008; Naidoo, 2003).

Over the past decade in New Zealand, Australia, the USA, the UK, Canada, and other European countries, higher education has been considered as a fast growing export industry, involving offering higher education services to developing countries (Deloitte New Zealand, 2006; Knight, 2008; Lefrere, 2007; Sauvé, 2002). The export education industry has become one of the rising industries in New Zealand, primarily due to its economic contribution to New Zealand, including foreign exchange earnings, spending on non-education services, such as travel, accommodation, and home-stay costs (Abbott, 2006; Deloitte New Zealand, 2006; New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2001). Export education is defined by the New Zealand Ministry of Education (2001) as "a transaction across borders involving the provision of education services in exchange for financial

consideration” (p.11). Apart from the expansion of monetary rewards to New Zealand, the export education industry also contributes to capacity building of HEIs. At the institutional level, the industry is expected to contribute to four benefits. They are “increased income and increased capacity to invest in institutional development; enhancement of facilities, a range of programmes and staffing; enrichment of programmes and curriculum through the experiences and perspectives of international students; and increased staff competence in cross-cultural teaching” (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 14). In addition, the New Zealand Ministry of Education (2001) stated that the industry is expected to give rise to three areas, including access to programmes or perspectives in the curriculum that might otherwise not be available. These include exposure to different cultures and perspectives, building key competencies to succeed in a cross-cultural and international context, and developing relationships that may be of future value.

This section has highlighted the importance of the need for both internationalisation and localisation of HEIs, the call for entrepreneurship in higher education, and the burgeoning of trade forms of higher education services in Western countries with East-Asian HEI partnerships. However, the specific educational leadership approaches that are required to facilitate Western with East Asian international higher education partnerships remain under-represented in the literature.

The Need for Educational Leadership in Western Countries with East Asian Higher Education Partnerships

This study presents the importance of educational leadership in Western with East Asian international higher education partnerships as a way to shift the overemphasis on the entrepreneurial, market-oriented and trade dimensions of international partnerships. Komlavi Seddoh, the Director of Division of Higher Education, the UNESCO, not only addressed the pragmatic role of higher education partnerships in capacity building of human resources, but also the role in promoting human rights, peace and social justice. He commented:

Partnerships must be pursued and reinforced and synergies developed whenever possible so as to collectively contribute to strengthening the role of higher education in present-day society as a key factor for cultural, social, economic and political development, as an endogenous capacity-builder, as a promoter of human rights, sustainable development, democracy, peace and justice. (Seddoh, 2003, p. 2)

However, the literature on higher education partnerships has been mainly concerned with political-economic issues in relation to the steering of higher education systems at a macro level, covering topics such as higher education markets, governance, finance, quality, and the overall capacity of the nation (Law, 2004; Marginson & Wende, 2007; Ngok & Kwong, 2003). Little has been researched on the socio-cultural issues.

In the export education industry, Asia ranked number one in providing full fee-paying international students to New Zealand HEIs. China, Singapore, and Taiwan are New Zealand's major export education markets. Nevertheless, bilateral

or mutual exchanges have not been extensively nurtured between New Zealand and these East Asian HEIs. Reports by the New Zealand Ministry of Education have largely centred on the economic benefits of recruiting East Asian students; little was covered in these ministerial reports in relation to approaches to engaging leadership, nurturing inter-institutional relationships, and developing key stakeholders' professionalism as they relate to socio-cultural issues (Deloitte New Zealand, 2006; New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2001).

Instead, the increasingly important entrepreneurial, market-oriented, and trade dimensions in international higher education partnerships have been promoted. Marginson critiqued that promoting trade in education services may risk the central task of education - that is enabling the growth of students' experiences and competencies (蔡融融, 2007). Economic motives remained dominant for international partnerships between Western and East Asian HEIs. Economic drives have led HEIs to greater entrepreneurial practices, commodification of higher education services, and demands for knowledge-based economies. As a result, the economic implications of international partnerships between Western and East Asian HEIs are over emphasised in the literature.

There is a growing need for more research and discussion on the nature of and educational leadership for the development of international higher education partnerships for inter-cultural and socio-cultural leadership competencies. The literature has identified a need for the socio-cultural strand of international higher education partnerships, with a focus on the leadership, structural features, social consequences, and practices at the institutional level (Adomssent, Godemann, & Michelsen, 2007; Tedrow & Mabokela, 2007).

In addition, there has been discussion on higher education leaders' leadership roles in international higher education partnerships. According to Slaughter and colleagues, collaboration among higher education leaders across boundaries helps to create new clusters of knowledge, respond to greater entrepreneurial demands, address conflicting faculty and administrative values, and consolidate diversified institutional and government resources and funding (Slaughter & Leslie, 1999; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Studies of educational leadership have advised education practitioners, including those who are not involved in formal leadership roles or titles, to exercise leadership within individual institutions and thus collectively influence the institution in one or more dimensions (Gronn, 2006; Guy, 2006; Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, & Hopkins, 2007). This kind of leadership predominantly entails notions of distributed leadership, empowerment and agency, and encourages educational leaders, not solely identifiable by titles, to undertake leadership roles and responsibilities (Fullan, 2002a; Robertson & Strachan, 2001).

The literature suggests distributed leadership as a promising style of leadership for effective educational development (Gronn, 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2008; Harris, 2008). Distributed leadership is not a new type of leadership. Instead, Gronn (2006) argued that distributed leadership is a different approach to "thinking about and representing (in discourse) the phenomenon of leadership" (p. 4). 'Distributed', as an adjective, is used in this study to describe how people in networked work relationships collectively engage in leadership action that fosters a sustainable leadership culture based on trust, commitment and professional knowledge rather than titles or positions (Hargreaves, 2007; Harris et al., 2007;

MacBeath, 2005; Spillane & Orlina, 2005). As Harris (2003) claimed, distributed leadership is possible “if certain prevailing conditions are in place” (p. 319).

Although higher education appears to have embraced notions of distributed leadership, distributed leadership remains less clearly defined (Petrov, Bolden, & Gosling, 2006; Woods, Bennett, Harvey, & Wise, 2004). In addition, a mosaic of leadership concepts, that are associated with distributed leadership, has complicated the task of defining distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships. Advocates have identified a variety of characteristics of distributed leadership in association with a range of education practices. Included characteristics are, for example, formal and informal forms of leadership, democratic leadership, shared leadership, collegiality, socio-cultural networks of interacting individuals, leadership as an emergent property, and leadership according to knowledge or expertise, openness to boundaries, leadership for sustainable development, empowerment and agency (Gronn, 2006; Harris et al., 2007; Hartley, 2007; MacBeath, 2005). However, the literature seems to be inadequate in explaining what distributed leadership means to higher education leaders in international partnerships between Western and East Asian HEIs, what is or shall be distributed, the processes involved in such practices, and the necessary conditions for preparing distributed leadership (Gosling, Petrov, & Bolden, 2007; Petrov et al., 2006).

Hence, the focus of this study is to explore the issues and factors that may impact on the distribution of educational leadership for international partnerships between New Zealand and some East Asian HEIs. This study addressed the call for an emphasis on the ethic of care (李振全, 2004) and for “building middle level or

domain-specific theories of leadership” (J. Chapman, Leithwood, Corson, Hallinger, & Hart, 1996, p. 1). Having discussed the demand for research on educational leadership for international higher education partnerships, the following section introduces the context of the study.

Context of the Study

This study explored context-specific leadership practices in international partnerships through international comparisons among HEIs and higher education practitioners in New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and China.

New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and China represent various positions along the economic and political spectrum. In terms of overall national competitiveness, IMD's¹ (2006) renowned and comprehensive annual World Competitiveness Yearbook 2006 reported Singapore as third, Taiwan 18th, China 19th and New Zealand 22nd among 61 major world economies. In 2008, these economies' global competitiveness rankings were Singapore 2nd, Taiwan 13th, China 17th, and New Zealand 18th among 55 major world economies (IMD, 2008). The data showed Singapore's and China's improvement as well as New Zealand's and Taiwan's drop in global competitiveness over the past two years. In addition, New Zealand has established leadership roles and close linkages with Singapore, Taiwan and

¹ IMD is an independent not-for-profit foundation located in Lausanne, Switzerland. For over 50 years it has trained managers of leading international companies. IMD helps executives and companies find new and innovative ways in which to sustain global competitiveness. IMD's World Competitiveness Center has been a pioneer in competitiveness since 1989.

China in terms of foreign trade (New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2008), including education services.

Despite the variation in national competitiveness, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and China share some significant features in relation to international higher education partnerships. As discussed previously in this chapter, neo-liberal higher education reforms, to a varying degree, have impacted on the governance and leadership of HEIs in the East Asian societies. In addition, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and China are WTO members, and have made commitments to providing educational services. New Zealand and Singapore became WTO members when the WTO was created on 1 January 1995. China became a member of WTO on 11 December 2001. Taiwan (known as Chinese Taipei in the WTO) became the 144th member of the WTO on 1 January 2002. Among the five economies, China and Taiwan are non-OECD countries, but they have been two of the major “‘importers’ of educational services who send students abroad most frequently” (OECD, 2002, p. 2). This implies that they are obliged to some or all of the GATS obligations and rules under the WTO. However, the GATS allows each country to determine limitations on market access for each committed sector and mode of supply (OECD, 2002, p. 5). To a varying degree, the above economies made commitments to trade in higher education services.

Since the 1980s, Western scholars in the field of comparative education have had an increasing interest in studying reform policies and educational changes in the Asia-Pacific region, for example Altbach (1981, 1998, 2004b, 2007; 2004), Postiglione (2005, 2007), Walker and Dimmock (2000a, 2000b, 2002) and Welch (1997, 2007). International agents and writers have endeavoured to stress the

importance of nurturing international awareness, understandings, and linkages among and within HEIs in the same region. New Zealand and East Asia are situated in the Asia-Pacific region. This study is interested in exploring the partnership practice between HEIs in New Zealand and these East Asian societies.

Higher education systems in East Asia have encompassed similar trends and diverse agendas in reform policies along with globalisation and internationalisation. Singapore, Taiwan, and China are undergoing major higher education reforms and integrating market-centred policies into state-centred approaches to higher education governance (Mok, 2007a; Mok & Tan, 2004; Mok & Yep, 2008). According to Mok and Welch (2003), governments of many East Asian countries play a significant role in promoting the value of education, encouraging life-long learning, and fostering comprehensive educational reforms with the aim of enhancing these countries' regional and international competitiveness.

Furthermore, Robertson and Webber suggested that international learning and comparisons of practice helps to effectively address differences, broaden leadership perspectives, facilitate inter-cultural understandings, and enrich leadership practices (Robertson & Webber, 2002; Webber & Robertson, 2003, 2004). Comparing and contrasting the international partnership practice between New Zealand and East Asian HEIs through this study contributes towards achieving these goals. Hence, this study develops a better understanding of the current practice of international partnerships with reference to the New Zealand, China, Singapore, Taiwan contexts, and argues that learning by higher education leaders across boundaries of difference and using differentiated approaches is required if a shared understanding is to be co-constructed in partnerships between

Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs.

The following section provides an account of my personal interests in this research area.

Personal Involvement

The research interest is based on my past few years of involvement in and experiences of active international higher education partnerships. My different roles in international partnership programmes in both Taiwan and New Zealand drew my attention to the potential issues of educational leadership in international partnerships. My roles included Co-ordinator of the Newport University MBA programme in Taiwan; student in the partnership programme established by the University of Waikato in New Zealand and the University of Calgary in Canada during my Master's study; and teaching assistant for many Chinese students in a collaborative partnership programme. In these different roles, I have experienced enormous personal "emotional labour" (Sachs & Blackmore, 1998, p. 244) in sustaining partnerships and dealing with conflicts between my personal beliefs, programme demands, institutional expectations, and different cultures. In addition, my beliefs and perceptions of international competition and co-operation in higher education have changed. I strongly felt the necessity to engage in the process of re-examining and re-shaping my assumptions about higher education internationalisation, partnerships, co-operation, cultures, power, sustainability, reciprocity, professional development and educational leadership in international higher education partnerships. These experiences have led to a commitment to study issues and key factors of educational leadership for the sustainability of

international partnerships.

Based on the rationale for the study, the following section presents the research objectives.

Research Objectives

This research project served six theoretical and practical objectives. The first objective of this study was to explore key factors and issues that may impact on the distributed leadership for international partnerships between the Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs, using New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and China as examples.

The second objective of this research was to explore higher education leaders' perceptions of their leadership roles, and how these perceptions may impact on their practices in international partnerships.

The third objective of this study was to understand East Asian higher education leaders' perceptions of international partnerships with New Zealand HEIs and *vice versa*.

The fourth objective of this study was to address the significance of culture, its dynamic nature, and its impact on international partnerships in the act of exchange, co-operation, relationship building, and power and resource distribution in New Zealand and East Asian contexts.

The fifth objective of this study was to inquire into the international partnership strategies (if any), used by some HEIs in New Zealand, China, Singapore and Taiwan.

The fifth objective of this study was to illustrate a conceptual framework that theorises the knowledge that is required for leadership in international partnership networks.

The sixth objective of this research project was to encourage higher education leaders' reflection, discussion, critique and critical thinking about international partnerships.

Organisation of the Thesis

The research question is: What are the key factors and issues that influence the distributed leadership for international partnerships between Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs? It highlights how higher education leaders make meaning and understandings about international partnerships between West and East, how they perceive their own leadership roles in relation to international partnerships, and how factors impact on the sustainability of such international partnerships. The following outline gives an overview of the thesis.

Chapter Two: Distributed Leadership for International Partnerships

This chapter identifies distributed leadership as a possible suitable form of leadership within the context of international higher education partnerships. Due to the thin literature on distributed leadership in higher education, this chapter defines and clarifies distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships. Theoretical perspectives related to the kinds of leadership that are distributed within the partnership networks are drawn upon. Distributed leadership in international partnerships is theorised, based on the discussion on formal

arrangements, enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context, sustainability and learning.

Chapter Three: Socio-cultural Theorising: Constructivist Epistemology and Constructive Realism

This chapter clarifies the epistemology and ontology which have underpinned the discussion on distributed leadership for international higher education partnerships. They are a constructivist epistemology and the ontology of constructive realism.

Chapter Four: Research Methodologies

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodologies used in this research project. Specifically, this chapter, firstly, explains approaches to maximise the trustworthiness of this qualitative, constructivist and comparative study. It then provides the rationale for using specific research methodologies for data analysis. They are grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2000, 2003; Glaser, 1978, 1992; Glaser & Holton, 2004; Glaser & Strauss, 1967, 1999; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998), and Wallner's strangifications (Wallner, 1995, 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 2000, 2004; Wallner & Jandl, 2006). The rationale for incorporating interviewing and documentation as data gathering methods is then presented. The last part of this chapter discusses approaches to participants in this study.

Chapter Five & Chapter Six: Research Findings

The research findings are reported in Chapter Five and Chapter Six. Chapter Five presents an overview of individual HEIs' formal arrangements of international partnerships, under the headings of a New Zealand university, China-NZ

partnership, Singapore-NZ partnerships and Taiwan-NZ partnerships. Chapter Six reports some of the major themes that emerged from the interviews and documents. These themes are interrelated and are discussed under the headings of enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context, sustainability, and learning.

Chapter Seven: Discussion

Chapter Seven presents a theoretical framework for conceptualising higher education leaders' learning of distributed leadership, reflection, and multiple distributed leadership practices in international partnerships.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

Chapter Eight draws conclusions, indicates limitations of this study, and provides implications for future research and leadership practices in related areas.

CHAPTER TWO DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP FOR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The main purpose of Chapter Two is to theorise distributed leadership in international partnerships between Western and East Asian HEIs. Due to a lack of literature on distributed leadership in higher education, this chapter draws upon the literature on distributed leadership in school settings and on higher education leadership. This chapter then identifies key elements of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships through linking the two sources of literature. It is essential for this study to consider: What are the key leadership elements that are embedded in the literature on distributed leadership in school settings and on higher education leadership? Are they relevant to the context of international higher education partnerships? What does distributed leadership mean to higher education leaders in international partnerships?

Using this process, this study identifies five key elements of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships. They are formal arrangements, enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context, sustainability and learning. These elements of distributed leadership are not proposed as sequential stages. Rather, they are interrelated and I argue that they are required for distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships.

Formal Arrangements

The literature on distributed leadership and on higher education leadership gives premise to the role of formal arrangements of leadership, and is referred to as top-down distribution of leadership roles, responsibilities, titles, and positions in

school and higher education settings (Gornitzka & Larsen, 2004; Gosling et al., 2007; Harris, 2004). In international higher education partnerships, formal arrangements in which roles and responsibilities are identified form the basis of inter-organisational co-operation (Beerkens, 2002; Beerkens & Derwende, 2007). These arrangements are influenced by individual institutional interests in terms of the scope, intensity and complexity of such exchanges and co-operation. It is suggested that successful partnership arrangements involve department or faculty-based cooperative activities and leadership (Heffernan & Poole, 2004, 2005; Stohl, 2007; Webber & Robertson, 2003). The leadership from the department or faculty level echoes the discussion on middle management.

This section of the literature review identifies formal arrangements as a key element of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships through the following three aspects: formal agreements, individual institutional interests, and middle management.

Formal Agreements

The formal basis of international higher education partnerships is the formal agreement. According to Bowen and Schwartz (2005), social institutions consist of linguistically-based institutional agreements or social rules. By linguistically-based institutional agreements, Bowen and Schwartz referred to using written, verbal and other languages to regulate the necessary elements. These agreements may be articulated in a glossary of terms, such as duty, responsibility, obligation, right, constitution, contract, custom, tradition, and collective choice. The structurally and formally delegated leadership responsibilities guide patterns of actions in decision

making situations, and allow a degree of security as to “what to believe or accept, what to do or perform, or what to prefer or prize” (Bowen & Schwartz, 2005, p. 11).

International higher education partnerships as a form of social bonding are established on the basis of linguistically-based institutional arrangements among international HEIs. Authors have categorised a variety of international inter-organisational agreements in terms of, for example, the participant diversity, individual institutional or collective motives for co-operation, scope in time and activities, the nature of integration, and the intensity of linkages (Beerkens, 2002; Beerkens & Derwende, 2007). For example, an agreement for student exchange would specify the discipline and year of targeted students, the duration of student exchange, and criteria for application and cross-credit (Doyle et al., 2008; Messer & Wolter, 2007). In particular, these formal international agreements guide key stakeholders’ patterns of actions and access to resources and power (Chan, 2004; Tedrow & Mabokela, 2007). Formal agreements identify specifically to whom, when, where, what, and to what extent resources, power and responsibilities are distributed in the international partnership network.

Hence, international higher education partnership agreements can be understood as the interplay of a wide range of formal arrangements that are required for distributing leadership between HEIs. In particular, formal agreements are influenced by the individual institutional interests.

Individual Institutional Interests

Another aspect of formal arrangements in distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships is that of individual institutional interests. By

individual institutional interests, this study refers to a number of self-interests that direct one HEI to enter into a cooperative relationship with another HEI to pursue an expected return on its inputs such as financial investments, human resources or knowledge (Heffernan & Poole, 2005; Johnson & Wilson, 2006; Tedrow & Mabokela, 2007). These self-interests, according to the literature, may range from capacity building, risk reduction, financial gains, resource or knowledge exchanges, overcoming trade or investment barriers, to expanding international markets (Abbott, 2006; Marginson, 2006; Marginson & Sawir, 2005).

In this sense, formally arranging international partnerships based on individual institutional interests is pragmatic in nature. Formally distributing leadership in international partnerships entails pragmatic considerations such as cost-benefit analysis of financial, human resources, or knowledge investments (Beerkens, 2002; Beerkens & Derwende, 2007; MacBeath, 2005). For example, a HEI may judge whether the outcome of collaborative research would outweigh the funds and resources that are invested.

There are also collective interests that guide the inter-organisational cooperative practices among HEIs. For example, between 1950 and 1980 New Zealand offered financial assistance to South and South-East Asian students to pursue higher learning through the Colombo Plan which focused on economic development and the raising living standards of countries in the Asian region (Smith, 2005). Partnership arrangements that are based on a collective interest are not so much derived from resource exchanges but on advocacy or aid (NZAID, 2007). However, as Zhou (2007) argued, international partnerships between Western and East Asian HEIs in the 21st Century have largely moved from aid to

trade partnerships, and have been primarily driven by individual institutional interests.

As mentioned above, international partnerships between HEIs are largely department- or faculty-based. The leadership from the department or faculty level is contained in the discussion on middle management in the leadership literature.

Middle Management

The third aspect of formal arrangements in distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships is middle management. Middle management emerges in the higher education context under the ideology of new managerialism. According to some literature, new managerialism in higher education is characterised by a greater accountability of service delivery to the public, and increased emphasis on performance management, bureaucratic rule-following procedures, management activities, financial targets, and market development (Deem, 2002; Deem & Brehony, 2005; Deem & Morley, 2006). Higher education leaders in the middle range of the hierarchical higher education management structure have been strategically selected and appointed to implement institutional policies and strategies. In particular, I argued in Chapter One that a growing area of these higher education leaders' work has been internationalisation strategies and entrepreneurship.

The term 'middle manager' in the literature on higher education has been largely used to refer to middle-level academic managers or manager-academics such as heads of departments, schools and deans of faculty. Middle-level academic managers carry out entrepreneurial and strong management leadership roles with

respect to teaching, research, financial and human resources management, and facilitation of institutional missions, objectives and strategies (Hancock & Hellowell, 2003; Hellowell & Hancock, 2001; Santiago, Carvalho, Amaral, & Meek, 2006).

The term ‘middle manager’ has also been used in Whitchurch’s (2004, 2006) discussion on professional administrative staff in middle management roles. Whitchurch (2006) pointed out that the boundaries between professional administrative staff, academic senior and middle managers, and other academic staff have become blurry because of their combination of both academic and professional backgrounds and work responsibilities. In particular, collaboration among a variety of administrative units and academic departments or faculties has become increasingly demanding due to the blurring of boundaries at least in the context of academic exchanges and co-operation in higher education (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Webber & Robertson, 2003). As such, academic and administrative middle managers within a HEI, or academic and administrative managers outside higher education campuses, such as in government bodies, may share accountability over a number of activities that they jointly coordinate.

Delegating leadership responsibilities to personnel in the middle ranks of the management hierarchy who can carry out international academic exchanges and cooperative activities can be interpreted as a top-down, formal leadership practice (Storey, 2004; Woods et al., 2004). Such formal delegation of leadership responsibilities, as MacBeath (2005) argued, is based upon pragmatic and strategic considerations, informed by knowledge of individual staff capacity and social capital, and judgement of how far individual capacity can be further developed.

Middle managers are at the operational base of higher education institutions, and are seen as change agents. They carry an institution's core values, reflect upon their competencies, and make significant contribution to strategic development (Clegg & McAuley, 2005; Huy, 2001; Santiago et al., 2006). Through their middle management roles, both academics and administrators can accumulate considerable professional benefits for themselves such as reputation, credibility, and professional networks through collaboration within and beyond their institutions (Webber & Robertson, 2003; Whitchurch, 2004, 2006). This echoes Huy's (2001) perspective on middle managers in business. Huy stated that each middle manager is at the centre of relational networks which are powerful when engaging necessary human and physical resources for change. Huy's argument implies the use of social capital in nurturing cooperative relationships in organisations. The term 'social capital' was introduced by Bourdieu to refer to networked relationships within and between social groups, which can be of help in terms of getting access to resources and distributing power (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). The notion of social capital will be further explained in Chapter Three.

The hierarchical structure of higher education management and segregated departments may have also become barriers to distributing leadership roles and collaborative work within HEIs. Among many structural barriers, Harris (2003) argued that the most significant barrier to distributed forms of leadership is the internal hierarchical, top-down, approach to leadership. Hellowell and Hancock echoed that the predominance of leadership distribution through hierarchical modes of managerial approaches in the UK higher education has strong impact on academic middle managers' perceptions of leadership – that is leadership only

comes from senior management levels (Hancock & Hellowell, 2003; Hellowell & Hancock, 2001). They also identified that higher education leaders at senior levels tend to act in ways that hinder collaborative practices. They recognised considerable resistance from academic middle managers, faculty, and support staff towards distributing management responsibilities, at least in the UK higher education, as opposed to other professions in the private sector. This and other structural factors may impact on the commitment level of higher education leaders at lower levels of the higher education management hierarchy, and hinder their willingness to take up managerial responsibilities in international higher education partnerships.

To sum up, the literature suggests that formal arrangements in distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships are concerned with formal agreements, individual institutional interests, and middle management. Formal agreements provide a foundation or safe ground for leadership practices in international higher education partnerships. Individual institutional interests further reflect the demands for entrepreneurship and trade of higher education services under the impact of globalisation and internationalisation, as discussed in Chapter One. Distributing leadership responsibilities to middle managers essentially empowers more higher education personnel within the hierarchical management structure to be involved in international partnerships. In particular, the entrepreneurial climate of higher education demands higher education practitioners, including faculty members who are not involved in formal management roles or titles, to undertake leadership opportunities and embark on innovative entrepreneurial activities within and beyond their HEIs (Altbach, 2006;

Sheridan, Brennan, Carnes, & Handelsman, 2006). Key stakeholders in higher education, such as government bodies, senior management, academic faculties, administrative staff, support teams, and community organisations, have been expected to work collaboratively and across boundaries. Distributing leadership roles to a wide range of key stakeholders in international academic exchanges and co-operation implies greater leadership opportunities in boundary-crossing networked relationships.

Enhanced Leadership Opportunities

The literature on school leadership suggests enhanced leadership opportunities as a key element of distributed leadership (Fullan, 2002a; Harris, 2008). The literature on international higher education partnerships also gives rise to the role of support personnel and administrators in partnership networks (Robertson & Webber, 2002; Webber & Robertson, 2003). As Marginson (2006) highlighted, both academic and non-academic higher education practitioners have the opportunity to take up leadership roles in internationalisation activities based on their merits, achievement and expertise.

Merit-based distribution of leadership roles is identified as a key element of distributed leadership in the school leadership literature (Harris & Muijs, 2005; MacBeath, 2005). Distributed leadership makes a significant departure from the leadership of senior management or executive leaders alone, for example the Vice Chancellor and the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Locke, 2001; Zipin & Brennan, 2003). As Fullan (2005) suggests, an organisation cannot thrive sustainably on the actions of the top leaders alone. Specifically, Muijs, Harris, Lumby, Morrison and Sood (2006)

pointed out that distributed leadership in HEIs is concerned with the involvement of personnel “at least in middle management, and in many cases at lower levels, in decision making and initiative taking” (p. 90) and, therefore, requires the leadership from many dimensions and levels. Distributed leadership as enhanced leadership opportunities represents the tendency for what Harris (2003) termed “a more democratic and collective form of leadership” (p. 317).

Distributing leadership opportunities in education settings requires those in formal leadership positions to empower others at lower levels of the management hierarchy to engage in leadership roles (Harris et al., 2007; Woods et al., 2004). Both academic and administrative personnel of HEIs, even without middle management authority, may make significant contribution to the functioning of international partnerships within and beyond their individual institutions, affiliated disciplines, and the wider community, through the exercise of social influence in social networks (Balkundi & Kilduff, 2006; Guy, 2006). Here, social influence can be understood as social capital (Bourdieu, 1985), which is described in Chapter Three.

However, Harris (2003) argued distributed leadership in schools does not suggest that “everyone is a leader, or should be” (p.317). Three factors are evident in the literature that impact on distributing leadership opportunities and whether practitioners make the decision to take up leadership opportunities. They are hybrid leadership, institutional cultures, and self-confidence and leadership perceptions.

Hybrid Leadership

The first factor of enhanced leadership opportunities in distributed leadership is hybrid leadership. A hybrid leadership perspective is prominent in explaining the distribution of leadership opportunities beyond the higher education management hierarchies in international partnerships. According to Gronn (2008), hybrid leadership is a form of leadership practices that embraces flexible conceptions of leadership and integrates “both hierarchical and heterarchical modes of ordering responsibilities and relations” (p. 150). The notion of hybrid leadership helps to portray processes which consolidate discrete social practices, and facilitate team-based, cross-level and multi-level distribution of leadership practices, structures and objectives (Day, Gronn, & Salas, 2006; Garcia-Canclini, 2001). As Day, Gronn and Salas (2006) suggested, the notion of hybrid leadership opens up the possibility for “better theories, models, tools, measures, and analytic approaches” to study leadership practices in education settings (p. 214).

The notion of hybrid leadership is paramount for this study to be able to understand how leadership opportunities develop, emerge, and mix with formal distribution of leadership. It provides a tool for interpreting how people with differences and conflicts may come to negotiate agreements (Garcia-Canclini, 2001) in international higher education partnerships. In particular, the notion of hybrid leadership helped this study to explore the “pluralities of emergent, informal and interdependent leaders” and the “overall density of leadership” (Day, Gronn, & Salas, 2006, p. 214). For example, I explored how leadership opportunities were distributed across different levels of the HEIs in this study, how academic and non-academic staff members were involved in the practice of

international partnerships, and how they worked in networks of relationships within and beyond their HEIs.

Furthermore, hybrid leadership provides a basis for institutional cultures that acknowledges “a plurality of cultures, knowledges, languages and their continuous interspersions” (May, 2001, p. 38), and are suitable for international partnerships. However, initiating a hybrid leadership culture within a HEI requires certain conditions. Day, Gronn and Salas (2006) indicated that hybrid leadership exists in team-based, self-led, or self-managed organisational cultures where “pluralities of emergent, informal and interdependent leaders” coexist with formally designated leaders (p. 214).

Institutional Cultures

The second factor of enhanced leadership opportunities in distributed leadership is that of institutional cultures. The cultures and institutional dispositions within individual HEIs contribute to practitioners' tendency to distributed leadership in international partnerships and their decision to take up leadership opportunities. This is because leadership dispositions can be distributed, developed, sustained and embedded within the culture of the institution (Hargreaves, 2007; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006). Institutions which display dispositions of distributed leadership can encourage members to work collaboratively, and distribute leadership roles based on knowledge rather than titles. The possible consequences of such collective practices are the development of networked or collective efforts, synergy, intelligence, energy and, therefore, enhanced leadership opportunities (MacBeath, 2005; Tuomi, 2007). Moreover, institutional cultures that

encourage distributed leadership in networked work relationships encourage wider involvement of education practitioners to make significant contributions to the institution (Harris et al., 2007; Muijs et al., 2006).

Self-Confidence and Leadership Perceptions

The third factor of enhanced leadership opportunities in distributed leadership is self-confidence and leadership perceptions which can impact on people's decisions to take up leadership opportunities.

Self-confidence in higher education leaders is a contributing factor to enhanced distribution of leadership opportunities. Authors have argued that unless people have confidence in their capabilities to produce anticipated changes, they have limited desire to take up leadership opportunities (Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003; Pillai & Willaims, 2004; Ross & Gray, 2006). Self confidence encompasses efficacy beliefs for taking up leadership roles. The notion of efficacy refers to "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). Confidence in one's abilities to lead is essential for higher education leaders to engage in distributed leadership practices. Furthermore, Ross and Gray (2006) proposed, when confidence or efficacy beliefs become shared by members in an educational institution, it provides the momentum for committing to the vision of the institution.

According to the literature, leadership perceptions impact on how people perceive themselves and how others perceive them as leaders (Balkundi & Kilduff, 2006; Guy, 2006; Neubert & Taggar, 2004). These leadership perceptions may impact on people's decisions to take up leadership opportunities. However, there

seems to be a lack of equivalent studies on the perceptions of leaders' own leadership capacity in the higher education context. In the higher education literature, Guy (2006) pointed out that there has been discussion on academic leaders as being perceived by higher education staff as effective teachers and educators. Although there has been growth in the leadership roles of administrators in higher education, the leadership roles of administrators seems to be under-representative in the literature (Whitchurch, 2004, 2006).

The findings of Ho's (2003) study on beginning teachers' perceptions of leadership helps us understand higher education leaders' perceptions of their own leadership roles and practices. The findings showed that the more positive educational practitioners' self-perceptions of their own leadership roles, the more they are willing to embark on leadership opportunities. Collaboration among key stakeholders was an important condition for nurturing positive perceptions of leadership and leadership practices, and for distributing leadership opportunities at the beginning level of the teacher career hierarchy (Ho, 2003). These findings suggest that nurturing positive perceptions of leadership and leadership practices would help educational leaders to distribute leadership opportunities across many perceived boundaries. However, the literature on international higher education partnerships has largely focused on leaders in formal senior and middle management positions. There is a lack of literature on the leadership of support persons, such as general staff in individual departments or faculties.

So far, the literature suggests that distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships can be understood as formal leadership and as enhanced leadership opportunities.

Understanding the Context

The third key element of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships is understanding the context. The school leadership literature suggests that thorough and adequate understandings of, awareness of, and sensitivity to the context or specific situations is essential for sustainable development of a school (Davis & Davis, 2005; Dreikorn, 2004). In higher education, Gu (2003, 2005) also pointed out that understanding cultural nuances and developing key cultural competencies is essential for constantly and collectively working with education practitioners from different socio-cultural backgrounds.

Such understandings and sensitivity are particularly valuable in the study on international partnerships between Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs. Four aspects of understandings are paramount for promoting distributed leadership within the context of international higher education partnerships. They are inter-cultural understandings, understanding national cultures, understanding institutional leadership practices, and understanding potential power-relational issues.

Inter-cultural Understandings

The literature suggests that inter-cultural understandings is paramount to distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships (Gu, 2005; Webber & Robertson, 2004). In the sphere of international education, authors have addressed the risks of privileging mono-cultural and mainstream values, and failing to acknowledge the realities of developing economies such as those in East Asia

where Western values in Western-led educational interventions have been prevalent (Collard, 2007; Walker & Dimmock, 2002). It is important that higher education leaders from one context are open-minded, and that they accept the existence of other realities and engage in socio-culturally appropriate practices. While respecting cultural uniqueness, Kezar (2007) signalled the importance of higher education leaders acting as cultural agents, to deal with conflicting values, to build cultural consensus among faculty members, and to institutionalise change initiatives on higher education campuses.

Distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships is concerned with developing appropriate leadership competencies and practices based on understandings of contextual differences. A number of interchangeable terms such as cultural / inter-cultural / international sensitivity, awareness, or consciousness have been used to refer to these particular competencies (Lasonen, 2005; Poole, 2006; Zhou, Jindal-Snape, Topping, & Todman, 2008). Some authors suggest that inter-cultural awareness, sensitivity or consciousness is enhanced based on dialectical relationships that entail reflection, conversations, cultural observation, problem-posing, and exploration of differences as well as common issues between cultural groups (Lasonen, 2005; Poole, 2006; Zhou et al., 2008). According to Coulby (2006), inter-cultural awareness is demonstrated through comparing cultures, curricular systems, educational policies, without any relative judgment or assumptions of superiority. Hence, educational practitioners have the obligation to be socio-culturally competent in their leadership practices.

In particular, distributed leadership requires higher education practitioners to nurture inter-cultural understandings, particularly between mainstream and

subordinate groups. Based on their study of key power relational issues between the mainstream Pakeha (New Zealanders of European descent) and Maori (indigenous people) cultures in the New Zealand education system, Bishop and Glynn (1999) highlighted the importance of cultural awareness in educational policies and practices. They advocated that “the development of an expansive view of what constitutes educational policies and practices that addresses cultural diversity” resides in “the sense-making and knowledge-generating process of those cultures the system seeks to marginalise” (Bishop & Glynn, 1999, p. 13). They argued that this moral obligation should be carried out across education sectors, institutions, and classrooms.

Webber and Robertson (2004) recommended that higher education leaders in international settings firstly understand their own practices and possible prejudgements; secondly develop stronger international understandings of leadership practices; and, as a result, act competently. To enhance inter-cultural understandings, it is important to explore differences and commonalities of national cultures. As this study focuses on the practice of international higher education partnerships in New Zealand and East Asia, the cultures of these contexts are briefly explored.

Understanding National Cultures

The literature suggests the significance of understanding national cultures among cultural groups and societies (Scandura & Dorfman, 2004; Walumbwa, Lawler, & Avolio, 2007) within the context of international higher education. This is because conceptions of leadership, leaders, and effective leadership practices vary across

contexts. Collard (2007) pointed out that education practitioners in different contexts tend to employ different habitual approaches to their leadership practices. Hofstede's seminal work on cultural dimensions identified five national culture dimensions, including power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism or collectivism, masculinity or femininity, and short-term or long-term orientation (Hofstede, 1991, 2001; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). These dimensions have been widely used to analyse cultural differentials in practices in the literature on international business (Garrett, Buisson, & Yap, 2006; Zhu, Nel, & Bhat, 2006). Hofstede's studies involved New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and China. Hence, those five cultural dimensions provide a window through which to view the cultural differentials in leadership practices in international partnerships between East Asian and Western HEIs. It is noteworthy that the following discussion on East Asian and New Zealand cultures serves the purpose of providing general information on leadership practices at the national level; and that variation and exceptions exist in distributed leadership at institutional and individual level.

Authors who have used Hofstede's cultural dimensions as an analytical tool have found that leadership practices in East Asian Chinese societies, such as Taiwan, Singapore and China, is characterised by a high level of power distance, a high tendency to collectivism, and long-term orientation (Garrett et al., 2006; Zhu et al., 2006). Western societies such as New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States have been characterised as highly individualistic²

² Among 74 countries, the rankings of individualism are United States 1st, Australia 2nd, Great Britain 3rd, Canada (total) 4th, New Zealand 7th, China 56th-61st, Singapore 56th-61st, Taiwan 64th (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). The lower ranking means the more individualist-oriented; whereas higher ranking means the more collectivist-oriented.

(Hofstede, 1991, 2001; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). This implies that New Zealand higher education leaders' ways of working and thinking in terms of distributing leadership in international partnerships may be different from those of higher education leaders in East Asia. These differences are discussed further in the following sections. New Zealand has been identified as being an egalitarian society, which suggests a low power distance among people (Oettli, 2004). As long-term orientation is identified by Hofstede as being a unique character of Asian economies, New Zealand shows lower long-term orientation when compared within Asian countries (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

Leadership Practices in East Asian Chinese Societies

According to the literature, East Asian societies with strong Confucian influences on interpersonal relationships, such as Singapore, Taiwan and China, emphasise differential social order among persons situated in hierarchically structured social relationships or *guan xi* (關係) (Chang, 2004; Hui & Craen, 1997; Hwang, 1997-8; Wang, 2007). These societies are characterised by a higher level of power distance than in New Zealand³. Power distance measures the extent to which power is expected and desired to be unequally distributed between the less and more powerful members within an institution (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). These East

³ There is variation of the level of power distance of New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, and China. Among the 74 countries in Hofstede's study, China ranked 12-14, Singapore 19, Taiwan 43-44, and New Zealand 71 (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). A higher power distance rank implies lower power distance.

Asian societies are highly obedience-oriented and aspire to authorities of power in formal positions (Dalton & Ong, 2005). Thus, *guan xi* in Chinese societies is different from impersonal or broad relationships as suggested in Western relational rules, and is highly particularistic (Berrell, Wrathall, & Wright, 2001; Wang, 2007).

According to Hofstede, East Asian societies with a high tendency to collectivism emphasise group defined social norms and duty, promote group shared beliefs, views, needs and goals over the individual, and encourage group co-operation over individualistic expression (Hofstede, 1991, 2001; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). For example, societies with a strong Chinese culture heritage tend to do business on the basis of moral norms such as honour or credibility, not by a written agreement or contract (Zhang et al., 2004). Zhang et al. (2004) argued that honouring credibility rather than an agreement and a contract reflects a low level of awareness of laws and legal systems.

People in East-Asian societies use a high-context communication style, which is characterised by placing high value on implicit or non-verbal messages in communication (Kotabe et al., 2005; Zhu et al., 2006), for example averting the glance to show respect in Confucius culture. Using a high context communication style means Asian higher education leaders may embed important messages in the context, without explicitly speaking what these messages are. A high context communication style is characterised by circular reasoning and a unified whole, as Gudykunst (2004) noted.

Hence, the ways through which Asian higher education leaders communicate and act in international partnerships may be different. Zhu, Nel and Bhat (2006) found that people in East Asian societies incorporated more

interpersonal strategies for building relationships than their New Zealand and South African partners. As Hwang highlighted, interpersonal strategies such as face (*mein zu* 面子) and favour (*ren qing* 人情) have been predominant in Chinese *guan xi* networks (Hwang, 1987, 1997-8, 2000; 黃光國, 2005). Face and favour work as a form of power to influence others in obtaining desirable social resources, and are employed to maintain harmony in relationships.

According to Hwang's (1987) seminal work entitled *Face and favour: The Chinese power game*, Chinese and other similar East Asian societies follow rules different to those followed in the West, particularly norms of reciprocity. Reciprocity in Chinese societies operates by applying different relational rules such as the need rule, equity rule, rule of favour, and rule of face to different domains of *guan xi*. Hwang (1987) pointed out that face and favour are indigenous concepts in Chinese culture and they are extensively governed:

...by the hierarchically structured network of social relations (*guanxi*) in which people are embedded, by the public nature of obligations, and by the long time period over which obligations are incurred through a self-conscious manipulation of face and related symbols. (Hwang, 1987, p. 944)

Leung and Chan (2001) identified that, in Chinese relational settings, face connotes a set of social norms such as respect, pride, and dignity as a consequence of a person's social achievement and the practice of maintaining one's face and the face of others. On the other hand, favour ranges from simple to complex. Simple favour entails socially acceptable behaviours such as presenting small gifts, offering help and inviting business partners to dinner; complex favour involves misallocation of public or social welfare resources (Leung & Chan, 2001).

Leadership Practices in New Zealand

New Zealand is known as a bicultural country, where the dominant European New Zealand culture coexists with the traditional Maori culture. Compared to East Asian Chinese societies, New Zealand culture has been characterised by: a lower level of power distance, higher tendency to individualism, and a lower level of long-term orientation (Garrett et al., 2006; Zhu et al., 2006).

As discussed previously, a lower power distance means New Zealand society tends to be more egalitarian - everyone of equal status. The New Zealand participants in Hofstede's studies were mostly Pakeha and they tended to regard the individual as being most important in a social setting, value independence over dependence, reward individual achievement, and recognise individual uniqueness (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). It is arguable that such individualist orientation is not shared by Maori people in New Zealand (Oettli, 2004). In addition, Garrett, Buisson and Yap (2006) found that people in New Zealand tend to employ an explicit low-context communication style. This implies that New Zealand leaders communicate primarily through explicit coding that is clearly spoken in conversations (Kotabe et al., 2005). A low-context communication style is endorsed by Western thinking patterns. According to Wertsch (1991), Western thought is dominated by the narrative of abstract rationality, that is using linear reasoning to express thoughts.

In terms of relationship orientation, New Zealand business leaders may nurture relationships based on principles of doing business, such as focusing on competition, marketing relationships, and flexible roles and goals (Garrett et al.,

2006; Zhu et al., 2006). These principles are evident in international higher education partnerships. As discussed in Chapter One, neo-liberal free-market higher education policies in New Zealand have moved HEIs towards more entrepreneurial, profit-seeking, and corporate-like governance; and higher education services have been transformed into a commodity. Compared to East Asian societies with a focus on establishing long-term relationships, the mainstream Pakeha culture in New Zealand focuses more on informal communication strategies to promote public relations. There is also a strong sense of community in New Zealand cultures. In Zhu, Nel and Bhat's study, New Zealand businesses managers demonstrated a tendency to community and particularly "the tradition of conducting business via referrals or 'mates'" (Zhu et al., 2006, p. 327). They contributed this tendency to the small size of the New Zealand economy and population, and perhaps of the collective culture of the Pakeha immigrants, and of the indigenous Maori people.

Within New Zealand and East Asian Chinese societies, heterogeneity exists across societies, and national culture is contextualised and embedded in the complex historical and socio-cultural backgrounds of the society. Hence, understanding national cultures may help higher education leaders to understand different practices. The following section explores the variation in leadership practices at the institutional level.

Understanding Institutional Leadership Practices

Understanding the context also requires higher education leaders to understand the differences and commonalities in institutional leadership practices. According to

the literature, institutional habitus and the rules of practice are powerful in determining higher education leaders' institutional practices. Institutional habitus is concerned with the specific dispositions of an institution (Reay, David, & Ball, 2001; Thomas, 2002), such as staff and student relationships within the HEI, and an internationalisation orientation. The rules of practice refer to the rules which actors in a field of practice commonly follow to distribute resources and power (Bourdieu, 1992, 2000; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992)⁴. This implies that higher education leaders within a social structure may follow a set of socio-culturally and historically embedded structural rules and institutional habitus.

For example, HEIs in New Zealand are highly self-governed (Locke, 2001; Meyer, 2007); whereas HEIs in Singapore, Taiwan, and China exhibit a relatively state-centralised model of governance (Mok, 2002; C. Tan & Ng, 2007). Chinese HEIs have a higher level of political intervention under the governance of the Communist Party of China (He, Wang, & Yu, 2007; Yang, Vidovich, & Currie, 2007) when compared with HEIs in New Zealand, Taiwan and Singapore. Thus, apart from teaching and administrative positions, the communist Chinese higher education system designates senior management positions for government appointed officials to carry out and monitor government policies (Pan, 2007). Hence, differences in practice occur across contexts. This implies that higher education leaders may engage in international partnerships based on fundamentally different operation models, leadership approaches, management structures, and support systems. Mutual understandings of partner's institutional constitutions,

⁴ Institutional habitus and rules of practice will be detailed in Chapter Three.

structure, and operation systems are critical to foster enhanced coordination within international higher education partnerships.

The literature indicates that structural divisions between academics, academic disciplines, or departments within HEIs in the UK have predominantly encouraged independent practices in teaching and research (Burchell & Dyson, 2005; Kutner et al., 2006). Faculties may hold different perceptions about professional practices with respect to inter-disciplinary, international and other forms of collaboration (Holley & Dagg, 2006; Stohl, 2007). As such, structural divisions can discourage collaboration and a sense of community. For example, Cox (2004) reported that the growth of a sense of learning community and collaborative practices among faculty has been slow, at least in the context of higher education in the USA. Stohl (2007) argued that many of the structural barriers to practising in the field of international education are created and determined by the faculty themselves as to what counts as professional achievement.

According to Stohl, if the faculty does not value international academic collaboration, development work, services and research projects, international activities would be considered as detrimental to productivity and to performance evaluation. Stohl stated:

When the faculty member fails to meet these expectations, often the international is characterized as a drag on productivity or as a less-competitive environment substituted in place of excellence. Thus, it is not surprising that relatively few faculty members indicate that they participate in international education activities beyond attending international conferences. (Stohl, 2007, p. 368)

In New Zealand, McInnis, Peacock, and Catherwood (2006) reported that, professional achievement is determined largely by a national performance-based research funding system. They noted that the funding system has impacted on higher education leaders' increasing participation in international research. However, the performance-based research fund system in New Zealand focuses on the participation in internationalisation activities of individual academics. Whether the funding system has impacted on the collective practice of individual department, school, or faculty in internationalisation activities remains under explored.

As discussed in Chapter One, HEIs in Western and East Asian Chinese societies today demand intense international, inter-cultural and inter-disciplinary co-operation in research and teaching for sustainable development and capacity building (Barth, Godemann, Rieckmann, & Stoltenberg, 2007; Song & Tai, 2007; Summers, Childs, & Corney, 2005). It is critical to consider how higher education leaders' perceptions of internationalisation and co-operation may impact on their practices. Furthermore, understanding the context of international higher education partnerships demands higher education leaders develop an understanding of inherent power-relational issues. Such understandings are explored in the following section.

Understanding Power-Relational Issues

According to the literature, understanding power-relational issues appears to be vital for distributed leadership in educational administration (Day et al., 2006; Gronn, 2008). In particular, Bishop and Glynn (1999) highlighted that practising

in any educational settings is value driven and power inherent when dominant and subordinate groups are involved.

As discussed in Chapter One, international higher education partnerships also involve HEIs of different international ranking status and access to resources, and this may impact on power-relations among HEIs in the world higher education market. Hence, power-relational issues exist within and among HEIs, in a society as well as across societies (Altbach, 2007; Altbach & Knight, 2007; Zepke, 2007). For example, hierarchies among faculties exist within individual HEIs and thus higher education leaders hold differentiated power in decision-making, especially in deciding to whom, what and how resources are distributed (Bourdieu, 1988; Stohl, 2007). Chapter One described how the phenomenon of centres and peripheries has resulted in unequal distribution of resources in world higher education, indicating that higher education practitioners' awareness of power-relational issues is paramount in international partnerships.

Bishop and Glynn's (1999) model for evaluating power relations in education provided analytical lenses to explore power relation issues and the micro politics within an educational setting. At the macro level, Porter's (Porter, 2008; Porter & Kramer, 2006) competitive forces analysis in business assisted this study to understand power-relational issues among HEIs in the world higher education market.

Bishop and Glynn: Model for Evaluating Power Relations in Education

Bishop and Glynn's model for evaluating power relations in education is based on the power imbalances between the dominant Pakeha group and Maori in New

Zealand education settings. The model identifies five interrelated power-relation issues concerning subordinate groups' participation in the benefits of the education system or institution. The five areas of concern are initiation, benefits, representation, legitimation, and accountability in educational relations (Bishop & Glynn, 1999).

As distributed leadership is concerned with how leadership can be distributed beyond hierarchies of power, it is appropriate for this study to take into account the initiation, benefits, representation, legitimation and accountability of international partnerships. Applying these five concepts to the context of Western with East Asian Chinese HEI partnerships, I explored:

1. Whose interests and agenda are the academic exchanges and cooperative activities to promote? (initiation)
2. Who will directly gain from these international cooperative activities? (benefits)
3. Whose 'voice' is heard or promoted in the co-operation process? (representation))
4. Who holds authority to the arrangements of cooperative activities, processes and outputs? Whose realities and experiences are legitimate? (legitimation)
5. Who are higher education leaders accountable to? Who has control over the initiations and monitoring of cooperative activities? (accountability)

(Adapted from Bishop & Glynn, 1999, pp. 55-57)

In addition, Bishop and Glynn (1999) considered the three principles of the Treaty of Waitangi - partnership, participation and protection - as the foundation for relationships at all levels, including at national, institutional and classroom levels.

Partnership is concerned with how groups of people could work in co-operation; participation refers to the involvement of groups of people in educational activities; and protection focuses on how well subordinate groups can be protected in educational settings (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). The three principles help to refocus relations in education settings in New Zealand in ways that help to respect all parties. They suggested that these three principles are interconnected with five power and control related issues and that the model is not confined to the examination of relations between the Pakeha and Maori in the classroom settings in New Zealand.

Bishop and Glynn (1999) advocated that the model could be applied to other contexts as an evaluation method “to aid planning and to monitor progress towards power-sharing goals” (p. 54) and as an approach for “successfully addressing cultural diversity and inter-cultural interactions” (p.198). As this study researched relationships between Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs, this model is appropriate for addressing Western and East Asian Chinese higher education leaders’ diverse and power-inherent views, perspectives, and actions in international partnerships.

Porter’s Competitive Forces Analysis

A second way of understanding power-relational issues is that of the five competitive forces analysis in Porter’s framework for developing and evaluating business strategies in highly competitive marketplaces (Porter, 2008; Porter & Kramer, 2006). Porter’s five competitive forces model involves: a) bargaining power of customers, b) bargaining power of suppliers, c) threat of new entrants, d)

threat of substitute products or services, and e) rivalry among existing competitors. Hence, a marketplace basically consists of five parties: customers, suppliers, new entrants, competitors, and substitute products or services. By bargaining power, Porter referred to the relative abilities of parties in a marketplace to exert influence over each other (Porter, 2008; Porter & Kramer, 2006). If all the parties are on an equal footing, their bargaining power would be equivalent. As all the parties are interrelated, any changes in each party's abilities would affect their power relations. Altogether, these five forces determine the competitive intensity and, therefore, attractiveness of a market.

Porter (2008) highlighted that awareness of the inherent forces that shape the market can help an organisation develop understandings of the structure of the market and its competitive position. Although competition is significant in international higher education markets, collaboration and co-operation through a variety of partnership opportunities is evident. The literature reviewed in Chapter One highlights that, on the one hand, East Asian Chinese HEIs can be perceived as the major customers of Western HEIs. On the other hand, Western HEIs can be understood as the primary suppliers of higher education services (Larsen, Momii, & Vincent-Lancrin, 2004). Porter's notions of competitive forces help to clarify the idea of HEIs carrying roles of suppliers and customers of higher education services. In terms of existing competitors in international partnerships, American HEIs can be understood as existing HEIs which have been dominant in recruiting East Asian students after World War II. New entrants may be Australian, New Zealand, and Singaporean HEIs that entered the field of international education relatively later than American HEIs. Substitute services may be offered by

suppliers other than the mainstream HEIs. For example, instead of establishing international partnerships with Western HEIs, East Asian HEIs may seek partners within the same region.

The literature suggests that higher education markets have become bigger and more diversified with old and new providers of higher education services independently, collaboratively or jointly supplying degree programmes (Marginson, 2008; Marginson & Sawir, 2005). HEIs in the world higher education markets may be partners in some internationalisation activities, but competitors in other circumstances.

To sum up, the literature reviewed suggested that understanding the context may help to enhance distributed leadership practices. Higher education leaders need to understand cultural, institutional and power-relational issues that are embedded within international partnerships. They are required to nurture inter-cultural understandings and understandings of national cultures, of institutional practices and of power relational issues. Understandings of the context of international higher education partnerships may assist higher education leaders to plan future leadership actions and to foster distributed leadership.

Sustainability

Having discussed distributed leadership in terms of formal arrangements, enhanced leadership opportunities and understanding the context, sustainability is now discussed as another key element of distributed leadership. However, the literature seems to offer limited discussion on what sustainability means in international higher education partnerships. The first part highlights the

importance of sustainability in school and higher education leadership. The second part deals with how sustainability is a key element of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships. The final part identifies some necessary conditions for sustainability in international higher education partnerships.

Sustainability in School and Higher Education Leadership

The importance of sustainability in school leadership is promoted by Fullan (2005; 2002), and Hargreaves and colleagues (Hargreaves, 2007; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004, 2006; Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006). They proposed focusing on sustainability in school leadership to counterbalance the largely unsustainable, short-term and narrow-scoped educational reform initiatives, activities, or targets. The literature suggests that sustainability in school leadership can be defined as the interplay between leadership, on-going learning and sustainable improvement (Hargreaves, 2007; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004, 2006). According to Hargreaves and Fink (2006), sustainability is paramount in school leadership as it “preserves and develops deep learning for all that spreads and lasts, in ways that do no harm to and indeed create positive benefit for others around us, now and in the future” (p. 17).

In higher education settings, sustainability has been largely promoted in ecological approaches and processes in HEIs operations (Rees, 2003; Wals & Jickling, 2002). More recently, a holistic perspective of sustainability in higher education has been promoted as one that stresses the role of sustainability for long term development of education systems, cultural heritage, as well as socially just practices (Adomssent et al., 2007; Morris, 2008; Sammalisto & Lindhqvist, 2008).

Moore (2005) advised that sustainability in higher education should be understood as a concept that “speaks to the reconciliation of social justice, ecological integrity, and the well-being of all living systems on the planet”; as a goal that is “to create an ecologically and socially just world within the means of nature without compromising future generations” (p. 78); and as a process or strategy of “moving toward a sustainable future” (p. 78). Hence, the recent discussion on sustainability in higher education supports aspects of distributed leadership, such as deep learning, alternative worldviews, long-term benefits, sustainable developments, and effective leadership to make these happen (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004, 2006).

What is Sustainability in International Higher Education Partnerships?

International higher education partnerships as an internationalisation strategy are essentially concerned with some important elements of sustainability in higher education such as socio-culturally competent leadership practices, boundary-breaking approaches, and sustainable internationalisation processes.

Socio-culturally competent leadership is concerned with the competencies of education practitioners in dealing with diverse cultural and social factors and issues in higher education (Barth et al., 2007; Ho, 2007). The literature on sustainability in higher education has suggested that sustainability initiatives in higher education have largely employed outreach or boundary-breaking approaches, such as forming networks and partnerships locally and internationally as well as promoting inter-disciplinary collaboration (Buchan, Spellerberg, & Blum, 2007; Morris, 2008; Scott & Gough, 2006). In this sense, sustainability fits within the discussion on international higher education partnerships, while it promotes and

enables the process of international, inter-institutional, and inter-disciplinary co-operation and learning. Seddoh (2003) pointed out the significance of international partnerships for collective and sustainable development in today's higher education.

There is a growing trend for HEIs to be accountable for the sustainability of the internationalisation processes through integrating an international dimension into higher education provision, teaching, learning, research and services (Barth et al., 2007; Mazzarol, Soutar, & Seng, 2003). According to Altbach and Knight (2007), sustainable internationalisation processes in HEIs move beyond simply planning individual international academic exchanges and cooperative activities or programmes to the integration of a variety of activities and processes.

Distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships is concerned with the breadth and length of sustainability (Hargreaves, 2007; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004, 2006; Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006). Hargreaves and colleagues argued that sustainability occurs within the culture of distributed leadership in communities of learners, students, teachers and managers as leaders.

The above three areas of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships, including formal arrangements, enhanced leadership opportunities, and understanding the context, involve formal partnership agreements over a fixed period, individual institutional interests for developmental and survival needs, empowering people for taking up middle management and other leadership opportunities, and socio-culturally competent leadership for diversity groups. Hence, distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships is concerned with the sustainability of leadership.

According to Hargreaves and colleagues, the notion of sustainability offers a lens to explore the impact of distributed leadership on educational institutions over a long period.

***Conditions Required for Sustainability in Distributed leadership in
International Higher Education Partnerships***

Certain conditions are required to affect sustainability in distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships. Two conditions are evident in the literature. They are trust and commitment.

Trust

According to the literature, establishing and fostering international trust has been regarded as one of the leadership strategies to cope with complexity in decision making and the dynamics of relationship building in international cooperative activities (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2007; Yamagishi, Kanazawa, Mashima, & Terai, 2005; Zhu et al., 2006). As international partnerships have their roots in cooperative relationships among higher education leaders, it is crucial to foster mutual trust as a strategy for sustainable leadership development. As Gu (2005) argued, reciprocity in international academic exchanges and co-operation can only occur on the grounds of equal standing. Authors have suggested a number of approaches to build mutual trust: for example, strengthening communication; fostering networked relationships; building a shared vision or common goal; developing understandings of each other's organisational structures; sharing different knowledge, practices, and values; and encouraging confidence between partner institutions in cooperative procedures (Heffernan & Poole, 2004, 2005;

Stella, 2006). These approaches are not disconnected, but interrelated and integral elements of leadership practices in nurturing cooperative relationships.

However, a lack of trust can hinder building sustainability in relationships between HEIs. According to Heffernan and Poole's (2004, 2005) study on partnerships between Australian and Asian HEIs, losing trust was found as the most significant factor contributing to relationship deterioration. Although Heffernan and Poole identified a number of context-specific issues that have hindered building mutual trust, they concluded that losing trust was fundamentally a result of mismatches. According to some literature, mismatches between partner institutions may come from variation in expectations of the partnership; in the capacity of individual HEIs in various societies; in approaches to trust across societies; and in power-relations that are inherent in the wider context (Johnson & Wilson, 2006; Stella, 2006).

In particular, this research is concerned with socio-culturally constructed leadership approaches to trust. Trust as a social capital is constructed differently across heterogeneous contexts where people are connected to other individuals and groups. How higher education leaders in different societies perceive and perform principles of trust in nurturing international cooperative relationships is connected to their cultural orientations (Carpenter, Danieri, & Takahashi, 2003, 2004). Chapter Three will further explain the notion of social capital, and explore cultural orientations of individuals and their social groups with reference to French scholar Bourdieu's seminal theoretical perspectives such as capital, fields, and habitus.

Commitment

Another important requirement for developing sustainability in distributed leadership is commitment. As sustainability is concerned with planning over a long period of time and leadership succession, commitment acts as a critical condition for enhancing sustainable leadership in educational activities (Hargreaves, 2007; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004, 2006; Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006). The continuous commitment of higher education personnel or stakeholders holds the key to sustainable international partnerships.

In particular, commitment of a shared vision is paramount. Commitment to a shared vision among key stakeholders is perceived as an effective strategy to foster sustainable international higher education partnerships (Heffernan & Poole, 2004, 2005). A diversity of stakeholders within and beyond individual higher education campuses collectively provide social networks for facilitating international partnerships. However, as mentioned earlier, the literature has been largely focused on the leaders and leadership of university personnel, rather than those of administrative departments, faculty or student associations, and government bodies.

Among diverse groups of stakeholders, coordinators of such activities and programmes act as the main driver for successful inter-institutional co-operation (Eldridge & Wilson, 2003; Stohl, 2007; Webber & Robertson, 2003). Coordinators are central to nurturing relationships and providing necessary conditions for such international practices. For example, Stohl (2007) reflected on his 15 years of experiences of directing many academic exchanges and cooperative activities at the

University of California, and discovered that almost every successful study abroad programme was based in particular departments with the efforts of one or two faculty members who had a direct relationship with him or had been provided with grant funds through him to facilitate internationalisation.

Webber and Robertson (2003) used the term “partnership champions” (p. 23) to refer to the most respected academic coordinators who are responsible for a university partnership. From the research findings of a collaborative study between their Canadian and New Zealand educational leadership centres, Webber and Robertson (2003) concluded that an institutional partnership would be difficult to nurture without the leadership of partnership champions at each higher education institution. According to Webber and Robertson (2003), partnership champions are usually senior academic staff; they are highly regarded as academically, professionally and administratively competent in realising international partnerships; they are influential in decision-making; and they demonstrate a long-term orientation towards collaborative initiatives.

However, a number of factors have a bearing upon key stakeholders’ commitment levels. Apart from a number of personal career decisions, work conditions that are embedded in the wider higher education environments may influence the commitment level of higher education leaders. According to Stohl (2007), increasingly demanding work conditions have prevented higher education leaders from distributing essential leadership resources such as time in the administration and management of internationalisation initiatives. The literature suggests that work conditions of higher education leaders constantly change and have become more demanding, and have resulted in commitment issues, including

increased entrepreneurial roles (see Chapter One) and workloads on higher education staff (Houston, Meyer, & Paewai, 2006; Whitchurch, 2004, 2006). Higher education leaders in the practice of international partnerships are constantly working with commitment issues arising from the work context. Thus, Stohl (Stohl, 2007) argued that it is crucial for higher education leaders to overcome contextual limitations, and consider how they could engage in internationalisation through committing administrative time and budgets to international activities, and essentially prioritising valuable resources. According to Heffernan and Poole (2004, 2005), a failure to identify leadership obligations and commit programme coordinators in international relations would lead to partnership deterioration.

The four dimensions of distributed leadership (formal arrangements, enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context and sustainability) have suggested the importance of achieving mutual agreements and developing shared understandings of what conditions, resources and personnel have to be involved to competently distribute leadership in international partnerships. To achieve mutual agreements and understandings requires learning.

Learning

This section discusses learning as another key element of distributed leadership. Nurturing the learning of self and others is a powerful aspect of distributed leadership in the workplace. This view is shared by scholars of educational leadership and business management (Bennis, 2000, 2003; Fullan, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2003, 2005; Harris, 2003, 2004; Harris et al., 2007; Harris & Muijs, 2005; Heffes, 2002; Senge, 2000, 2006). Learning as a key aspect of distributed

leadership in international higher education partnerships covers two major areas: a commitment to learning, and constructing shared understandings of distributed leadership.

A commitment to Learning

An important aspect of learning in international higher education partnerships is a commitment to learning. A commitment to learning is not only required for building the capacity of the institution at every level (Senge, 2006; Sidle, 2007), but is also important for on-going and collective improvement of practices within and across higher education contexts, as discussed previously. In addition, higher education leaders are encouraged to be lifelong learners (McGough, 2003; Taylor, Canfield, Brew, & Sachs, 2007).

Webber and Robertson (2003) pointed out that educational leaders in today's change contexts need to be lifelong learners because knowledge and skills have to be constantly renewed and developed. Education practitioners' knowledge and skills are mediated with ever changing leadership agenda and complex contexts, in particular globalisation and internationalisation. In addition, higher education leaders have the leadership obligation to lead on-going, collective and reflective learning.

This is because ongoing professional development of higher education personnel is an essential part of higher education improvement (Huston & Weaver, 2008; Klenowski, Askew, & Carnell, 2006). According to Senge (2006), an organisation would excel if people were committed to learning and building capacity at every level of the organisation. In addition, Wallner (2004) commented

that “[k]nowing without reflection is not knowledge” (para 8). Higher education leaders in international partnerships require reflection upon their experiences and a process to help transform experiences into professional knowledge.

Constructing a Shared Understanding

Constructing a shared understanding of international higher education partnerships is an essential part of learning in distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships. Higher education leaders have to make sense of their partners, of context-specific practices, and of networked inter-organisational relationships. In particular, Vlaar et al. (2006) suggested four systematic approaches to facilitate inter-organisational sense-making through formalisation. These four approaches are “(1) focusing participants’ attention; (2) provoking articulation, deliberation and reflection; (3) instigating and maintaining interaction; and (4) reducing judgement errors and individual biases, and diminishing the incompleteness and inconsistency of cognitive representations” (Vlaar et al., 2006, p. 1617).

Focusing participants’ attention is consistent with the discussion on understanding individual institutional interests in formal distribution of leadership (Beerkens, 2002; Beerkens & Derwende, 2007). It is concerned with understanding institutional self-interests in initiating international partnerships. Provoking articulation, deliberation and reflection echoes the discussion on reflection and learning in networked relationships in higher education (Barlow & Antoniou, 2007; Huston & Weaver, 2008; Savin-Baden & Major, 2007).

Instigating and maintaining interaction is parallel to the discussion on arranging formal leadership roles and opening up leadership opportunities for higher education leaders to participate in international partnerships (Ho, 2006a; Tedrow & Mabokela, 2007). Minimising judgment errors and bias echoes the discussion on sources of prejudgments and using contextualised leadership to enhance inter-cultural, inter-institutional and interpersonal understandings (Davis & Davis, 2005; Dreikorn, 2004; Gadamer, 1975).

However, making sense of workplace practices may be influenced by intentionality or incentives to learn (Ardichvili, Page, & Wentling, 2003; P. Knight, Tait, & Yorke, 2006). According to Knight et al. (2006), unlearning and stopping to learn may possibly arise as individuals gain familiarity with certain situations. Likewise, higher education leaders in international partnerships may lack intentions for learning if they assume familiarity with the work they do. Eraut (2006, 2007) cautioned that workplace learning may not occur due to a low level of awareness of one's practices leading to a low level of motivation for learning.

Constructing a shared meaning and understanding of distributed leadership is achieved collectively among higher education leaders within and beyond their HEIs. Making shared meaning helps to develop a shared vision and shared practice within a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1999; Wenger, 2000; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). There has been some agreement among scholars that communities of practice act as a powerful networked social system for developing shared meaning and sustainable collaborative cultures in distributed leadership (Hargreaves, 2007; Sergiovanni, 2004; Spillane & Orlina, 2005). Communities of practice may serve as what Bennis suggested, in an interview with

Heffes (2002), the “embedded, enabling systems” for workplace leadership learning and development (p. 19). Developing shared meaning and understandings of practice is embedded in networked and collaborative workplace relationships (Boud & Middleton, 2003). Authors such as Copland (2003), Huston and Weaver (2008), Robertson (2005), and Silins (2004) have suggested the effectiveness of learning through networked social interactions is dependent upon a distributed form of leadership.

In the context of internationalisation, higher education leaders are working across boundaries of structures, systems, values, and beliefs (Enders, 2004; Yang, 2004). In particular, Leithwood et al. (2004) advised that networked and collaborative professional learning holds the potential for large-scale organisational change and expanded organisational capacity. Such reflective leadership practice was based on networked social interactions and a distributed form of leadership.

Learning by higher education leaders, as an aspect of distributed leadership involves not only understanding the conditions for distributed leadership, but also understanding how such leadership might be successfully carried out. The process of continually negotiating higher education leaders’ understandings of distributing leadership within the context helps to develop their practices (Wertsch, 1991, 1998; Wertsch, Río, & Alvarez, 1995). In particular, contextualised leadership as a part of distributed leadership is concerned with developing in-depth understandings of the socio-cultural roots of practice in different contexts. It is also concerned with power-relational issues in the world higher education system. As discussed previously, higher education leaders in international partnerships

require inter-cultural understandings, and understandings of national cultures and power-relational issues.

Theorising Distributed Leadership in International Higher Education Partnerships

The key question that guides this literature review is, “How can the literature on distributed leadership in school settings, and the literature on higher education leadership be linked to build a theory of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships?” The literature on international higher education partnerships largely focused on formal distribution of leadership positions, roles or responsibilities within and between HEIs. Little was addressed in terms of enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context, sustainability, and learning. Based on the literature review, this chapter theorises and suggests five essential elements of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships. They are formal arrangements, enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context, sustainability, and learning. These five elements are relevant to the practice of international higher education partnerships, and are interconnected to determine higher education leaders’ socio-cultural competences in such practice.

With these five essential conditions of distributed leadership, higher education leaders in international partnerships could address the formal delegation of leadership, the availability of human resources, the thinking and acting of higher education leaders, and the importance of learning. Hence, this study argues that formal distribution of leadership is one of the key elements of distributed

leadership, but not equivalent to distributed leadership.

Formal arrangements are concerned with formal distribution of leadership, including formal agreements, individual institutional interests, and middle management. Enhanced leadership opportunities deal with the breadth and depth of distributed leadership, and suggest enhancing self-confidence, nurturing institutional cultures, and empowering leaders based on knowledge not titles. Understanding the context helps to prepare the necessary leadership thinking for international partnership practice. Four areas of understandings are particularly valuable. They are inter-cultural understandings, understanding national cultures, understanding institutional leadership practices, and understanding power-relational issues. Sustainability helps to support distributed leadership over a long period of time in international partnerships. Sustainable leadership can be facilitated through promoting trust and making commitments to learning and a shared vision. Finally, nurturing the learning of self and others is seen as the foremost and most powerful aspect of distributed leadership in workplace. Leaders in international higher education partnerships need to learn about the necessary conditions for distributed leadership, as well as the approaches to successfully carry out distributed leadership. In particular, the literature review suggests an interactive relationship between learning and development of practice.

This theory of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships is built from the literature. The theory, however, seems to be simplified, and may overlook the complexity of actual leadership practice as experienced by New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders. To bridge the gap between theory and practice, this study explores what the theory looks like

in practice by using socio-cultural theorising. Chapter Three discusses epistemological and ontological underpinnings of the socio-cultural theorising of this study. In particular, Chapter Three explores how these underpinnings could assist this study to develop contextualised understandings of the practice of international partnerships between New Zealand and East Asian Chinese HEIs.

**CHAPTER THREE SOCIO-CULTURAL THEORISING:
CONSTRUCTIVIST EPISTEMOLOGY AND CONSTRUCTIVE
REALISM**

Introduction

The central message that emerges from the literature is that higher education leaders need to foster leadership and ongoing learning across cultural boundaries, and that such learning is a key part of distributed leadership for international partnerships. Learning is a requirement for understanding the socio-cultural dynamics of distributed leadership in international partnerships between Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs. Learning in international higher education partnerships can be viewed as the socio-cultural construction of knowledge and practice. This study employs socio-cultural theorising to explain the socio-culturally embedded influences on higher education leaders' distributed leadership practice in international partnerships.

In this study, socio-cultural theorising entails a view of constructivist epistemology and Wallner's perspectives of constructive realism (Wallner, 1998b; Wallner & Jandl, 2006). They underpin the theorising of distributed leadership for international partnerships (Chapter Two) and the research methodologies (Chapter Four).

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part theorises higher education leaders' knowledge construction, that is learning and understanding based on a constructivist epistemology. The second part acknowledges the

perspectives of Wallner's constructive realism, which acknowledges two types of reality in knowledge construction. Finally, this chapter presents the research questions.

Constructivist Epistemology

A constructivist epistemology incorporates three essential features: individual active construction of knowledge, the importance of prior knowledge, and knowledge construction as embedded social practice.

Individual Active Construction of Knowledge

The first essential feature of the constructivist epistemology is the active construction of knowledge by individuals. By active construction of knowledge, this study refers to individual higher education leaders' intentional construction of understandings (Cooperstein & Kocevar-Weidinger, 2004; Liu & Matthews, 2005; Puntambekar, 2004) of distributed leadership for international higher education partnerships. The word 'active' indicates a sense of agency on the part of the higher education leader to construct meanings and understandings (Billett & Pavlova, 2005; Smith, 2006; Wertsch, 1991, 1998; Wertsch et al., 1995). To illustrate, higher education practitioners may employ languages, texts and other communication tools to articulate their understandings of their practices, and to make sense of communication from another higher education leader. In being active, leaders are linking incoming information to existing knowledge, to construct new knowledge, that is, new for the leader. This linking is done through reflection and in interaction with others.

Authors have highlighted the importance for higher education leaders reflecting upon their practices, and thus better understanding how their practices can be enhanced and further developed (Barlow & Antoniou, 2007; Huston & Weaver, 2008; Savin-Baden & Major, 2007). Reflection serves as a powerful tool for conceptualising relationships between past, present and future practices. The literature on workplace and informal learning suggests that reflection upon and discussion on past episodes helps to evaluate current practices, and recognise and plan possible future improvement, and learning and career opportunities (Eraut, 2007; Gray, 2007; McMahon, Watson, & Patton, 2005). The process of reflecting upon past practices and emerging new practices can be understood as a learning process. Development of leadership practices for international partnerships requires such a learning process.

In addition, Wallner (2004) considered reflection as a critical element of constructing knowledge because it requires individuals to step out of a closed mindset or a belief system where their reasoning is embedded. Hence, higher education leaders' construction of leadership knowledge and practices for international partnership is an active, interactive learning and developmental process. It encompasses a sense of personal agency (Smith, 2006; Wertsch, 1991, 1998; Wertsch et al., 1995).

Importance of Prior or Existing Knowledge

The second feature of a constructivist epistemology is the importance of prior or existing knowledge. Bruner (1990) emphasised that new and incoming concepts are linked to existing knowledge in the process of learning and understanding. The

literature indicates that higher education practitioners' new professional knowledge and practices are constructed upon prior knowledge (Hardré, 2005; Major & Palmer, 2006). This prior knowledge includes early life, in-school, out-of-school, and work experiences, in areas of professional roles and responsibilities, higher education governance, structure and leadership, student learning, and pedagogy (Ramsden, 2003; Ramsden, Prosser, Trigwell, & Martin, 2007; Smith, 2005). Prior or existing knowledge, which is socio-culturally embedded, influences the learning of new knowledge, practices, and social relations (Bourdieu, 1992).

Some dimensions of prior knowledge that may impact on higher education leaders' leadership practices in international partnerships are discussed next.

Prejudgments

By definition, prejudice is a judgment reached without possessing full or adequate evidence or examination (Reber & Reber, 2001). Prejudgment is a neutral term that covers any negative or positive assumptions and biased views with reference to historical events. Gadamer (1975) categorised these historically oriented assumptions into two categories: pre-understanding and oppressive views of authority. Pre-understanding refers to perspectives, knowledge, goals, and understanding which people assume in decision-making. Oppressive views of authority may be outcomes of historical conditions, such as imperialism and colonialism. Pre-understanding and oppressive views of authority may be carried out in forms of prejudices or stereotypes.

According to Johnson (2000), prejudices are the theory of racial and other forms of inequality. As a form of prejudice, prejudices entail either a positive or

negative cultural attitude or emotional disposition, including preconceived beliefs, value judgments or opinions. As Abercrombie, Hill and Turner (2006) identified, such a cultural attitude is often irrational and denotes hostility that is directed against an individual, a group, a race, or their supposed characteristics. For example, Bishop and Glynn (1999) criticised Pakeha New Zealanders as having been monolingual and monocultural - implying their lack of incentive to learn languages other than English or other than practical use, and their perceptions of European cultures and languages as superior to other ones in New Zealand. Monolingualism and monoculturalism can be seen as the outcome of ethnocentrism. By ethnocentrism, Abercrombie, Hill and Turner (2006) referred to prejudicial views of a social group's attitudes, behaviour, and customs as being superior to others'.

Similar to individual prejudice, stereotypes are commonly held by a group. From a socio-cultural perspective, stereotypes can be understood as a collection of shared representations or impressions of the attributes, characteristics, circumstances, values and beliefs of the people who belong to a social group (McGarty, Yzerbyt, & Spears, 2002). Thus, stereotypes emerge based on assumptions that are commonly held by groups of people and may reflect widely shared ideologies.

For example, the literature suggests that higher education leaders in Australian universities commonly held stereotypical views of students from Asia as if they are a homogeneous group of people with similar cultural background and educational experiences (Chapman & Pyvis, 2006; Ramburuth & McCormick, 2001). In addition, as discussed in Chapter One, Asian and Western higher

education institutions are perceived as peripheries and centres respectively within the main stream knowledge networks. However, exceptions to the stereotype of Asian higher education institutions as peripheries and Western ones as centres can be easily identified in the literature, for example in Singapore. Singapore, as an Asian society, has a growing recognition as an international educational hub in the Asia region (Sidhu, 2005; Yonezawa, 2007). The New Zealand Ministry of Education (2001) has identified Singapore as an education centre in Asia “which competes successfully for postgraduate research students” (p. 19).

As prejudice and stereotypes are formed without processing sufficient knowledge and considering just grounds, prejudging may hinder the rationality and autonomy of people in decision making (Gadamer, 1976; Sankey, 2007). In particular, Gadamer (1975) pointed out that an agreement emerges as each party mediates their prejudgements and establishes a common framework of discussion between contexts of meaning. Taking international partnerships between New Zealand and East Asian Chinese higher education institutions as a focal point, this study is concerned with any possible prejudgments that may be used by higher education practitioners in their leadership practices.

Tradition

The second aspect of prior knowledge is tradition. Tradition is defined as a constellation of culturally specific practices, beliefs, concepts, institutions and artefacts that are passed on from generation to generation within a social group (Abercrombie et al., 2006; Bannerji, 2003). Thus, tradition can be conceptualised as collective knowledge which is integral to the life of individuals and groups of

people within a specific context. Tradition plays a greater or lesser role in differing societies and cultures. Tradition as collective knowledge is automatically used by higher education leaders when they construct understandings in new contexts. According to Gadamer (1975), “old and new are always combining into something of living value, without either being explicitly fore-grounded from the other” (p. 306). As such, tradition may work in a subtle way to influence individual higher education leaders’ development of leadership knowledge and practices in international partnerships.

Without recognising the impact of tradition on practice, higher education leaders may continue to uncritically use traditional practice. In so doing, conflicts and contradictions between higher education leaders’ traditional and new roles may occur, and thus hinder the implementation of educational initiatives. For example, Stohl (2007) pointed out that some higher education leaders and some disciplines do not have the tradition of international co-operation and may not value internationalisation as an important indicator in terms of performance appraisal. Hence, individual higher education institutions’ orientation towards international partnerships may impact on individual higher education practitioners’ internationalisation practices.

The critical task for tradition, according to Giddens (1994), is to become open and socially reflexive. Giddens’ perspective is parallel to Gadamer’s (1975) idea of “openness to the other” (p. 361). Openness to the other requires people’s engagement with the wider world. To understand leadership issues in international partnerships, higher education leaders today are moving across boundaries between structures, systems, values, and beliefs (Webber & Robertson, 2004). To do so,

higher education practitioners in international partnerships may need to be aware of the link between their context-embedded traditional practices and present practices, and the social, economic, political demands for change.

Habitus

The third aspect of prior knowledge is that of habitus. In this study, habitus refers to a durable yet fluid and dynamic system of dispositions which guide the norms and practices of particular social groups under the same conditions (Bourdieu, 1992; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Lizardo, 2004; May, 1999a; Montenegro, 2002). Disposition means the many tendencies to act in a certain manner under given circumstances. Hence, in this study, habitus acts as the overarching umbrella term of all the social and cultural dispositions. Habitus is used to denote the habitual tendency of individual or groups of higher education leaders to a particular perception, state, character, or action in New Zealand and East Asian higher education contexts (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). According to the literature, a higher education leader's present practices can be understood as constantly changing and building upon individual habitual tendencies, life history, past educational and work experiences, and prior knowledge (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Nash, 2003; Smith, 2005). The movement of habitus across new and unfamiliar contexts may result in new socialisation processes, and thus a blend of existing habitus with the new (May, 1999a). As Lizardo (2004) described, the changing nature of habitus implies that higher education leaders' knowledge construction is mediated by "actors, situated practice and durable institutions (fields)" (p. 376).

The specific dispositions of an institution are also important and are defined as institutional habitus (Reay, 1998; Reay et al., 2001; Thomas, 2002). The term ‘institutional habitus’ is drawn from Bourdieu’s notion of habitus and is used to articulate the impact of different social groups or classes within a higher education institution on individuals’ action. Individual habitus is mediated with institutional habitus at the workplace. By expanding Bourdieu’s emphasis on the habitus of the academics and faculties, Thomas (2002) suggested multiple foci of habitus, including “the academic and the social spheres within the field of higher education” (p. 438). Hence, the notion of institutional habitus moves beyond merely focusing on the culture of the institution, and presents a relatively inclusive approach for this study of higher education international partnerships to address potential “relational issues and priorities, which are deeply embedded, and sub-consciously informing practice” (Thomas, 2002, p. 413). Institutional habitus is less capable of change and less fluid than individual habitus. As Reay (1998) argued, the collective nature of institutional habitus makes institutional habitus difficult to change.

In this study, institutional habitus is used to explore the collective habitual practice of faculty members and other key stakeholders who are involved in higher education international partnerships. It helps to explain leaders’ collective tendency of applying certain values, collective actions and thinking patterns towards other groups of leaders, for example New Zealand higher education leaders’ collective views of East Asian leaders and *vice versa*.

To sum up, prejudgments, tradition and habitus as socio-culturally embedded prior knowledge are capable of influencing higher education leaders’ leadership knowledge and practices in international partnerships. As some forms of prior

knowledge may be biased, they may create difficulties in achieving mutual understandings, and may result in contradictions and conflicts of roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, individual knowledge is mediated by the actor, practice and context. Individual leaders' prior knowledge is constantly in negotiation with the wider institutional and societal contexts which guide their collective practice. Hence, higher education leaders' collective leadership practice is also socially embedded.

Knowledge Construction as Embedded in Social Practice

The third essential feature of a constructivist epistemology is the view that knowledge construction and learning are embedded in socio-cultural contexts, with a stronger social view, stating that learning and knowledge construction is a social practice (Hagstrom & Wertsch, 2004; Hatano & Wertsch, 2001; Wertsch, 1991). Wenger (2000) highlighted that social practice is essential for developing group identities, learning across boundaries, and collectively improving professional practices. In particular, if we view knowledge construction in international partnerships as a social practice, then it is power inherent. According to Inkpen and Tsang (2005), the partnership between providers and receivers of knowledge creates a differential power status, which determines each party's level of control and need for further co-operation. Their views echoed Foucault's (1980) concept of knowledge as power. Inkpen and Tsang (2005) concluded that learning has the potential to shift power-relations and the degree of knowledge dependency between partners.

To understand the impact of learning on distributing leadership in international partnerships in higher education, the concepts of capital, fields, and communities of practice are of importance. They are discussed under the topics of capital and social contexts (fields and communities of practice).

Capital

This study draws upon Bourdieu's notion of capital to refer to both economic and symbolic forms of capital, including cultural capital and social capital (Bourdieu, 1985). Economic, social, and cultural forms of capital embody interests and function, and are accumulated, devoted and exchanged to maintain group distinction and dominance within social structures (Barker, 2004; Bourdieu, 1984, 1996). International partnerships between Western and East Asian higher education institutions essentially involve the transfer of knowledge, expertise and skills, expanding social networks, charging tuition fees, and meeting individual institutional interests, as discussed in Chapter Two. Knowledge, expertise, skills, social networks, and tuition fees can be understood as forms of capital that are exchanged and acquired to meet individual higher education institutions' developmental needs. These multiple forms of capital interact with habitus and inevitably produce power relations in a social practice within a field of practice (Bourdieu, 1985). This section focuses on symbolic forms of capital, including cultural capital and social capital. They are discussed to develop an in-depth understanding of how power is inherent in the interactive relationship between higher education leaders.

Cultural capital

Cultural capital can be understood as various forms of cultural and linguistic competencies, such as knowledge, dispositions, skills, and cultural taste (Bourdieu, 1973, 1985; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) as well as language, credentials, reputation, prestige, honour, religion, science, and philosophy (Bourdieu, 1991). Cultural capital is a manifestation of power. In particular, Bourdieu (1991) noted that language, as a form of symbolic capital, is the “principal support of the dream of the absolute power” that is the power to produce “collectively recognized, and thus realized, representations of existence” (p. 42). In international higher education partnerships, it is possible that the language which is used by partners to facilitate mutual understandings and co-operation may be power inherent.

Higher education institutions will share cultural capital aspects as they consent to co-operation. However, power-sharing between international higher education partners is not straight forward. As discussed earlier, social groups may control certain resources and power to maintain their dominance in a social structure. Dominant groups may use languages that have originated within their contexts to secure their positions and privileges in education settings (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Morgan, 2007; Siegel, 2006). As discussed in Chapter One, the promotion of Western academic models (the origin of current higher education), theorising, epistemologies, and English language (forms of cultural capital) has allowed Western higher education institutions to maintain their dominance in the world higher education system. However, Haste (2001) argued that symbolic tools such as language and text not only facilitate but also constrain human actions. In the mainstream knowledge networks, the dominance of Western academic

standards have limited the opportunities for scholars and educational practitioners from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds to be recognised for their achievements (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2004).

Furthermore, individual societies emphasise a range of context-specific cultural capital. For example, as discussed in Chapter Two, cultural differences between New Zealand and East Asian Chinese societies, for example Singapore, Taiwan and China, have been significant in the areas of power distance, and collectivist or individualist orientation. Differences in linguistic and cultural backgrounds may not only impact on patterns and contents of discourses about leadership, but also may increase the complexity for reaching mutual understandings and benefits among key stakeholders in international higher education (Ridley, 2004; Stella, 2006; Stier, 2003, 2004).

Social capital

Another source of symbolic capital is social capital. In this study, social capital refers to an attribute of an individual or a social group that is used to benefit not only those who create it but also its group members (Inkpen & Tsang, 2005). Social capital is located within and derived from a relational context where relational bonds or networks of relationships are well-established (Bourdieu, 1985; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1995). Interpersonal conducts, such as the on-going effort of co-operation, networks, reciprocity, and trust, all constitute key aspects of social capital (Carpenter et al., 2003, 2004; McGonigal et al., 2007). Hence, social capital can be perceived as a concept for describing and characterising a range of relationships that people carry in a HEI. Similar to cultural capital, social capital

operates in the framework of exchange. According to McGonigal et al. (2007), social capital as a form of power can be “utilised, traded, exchanged, drawn upon, invested or cashed in” (p. 80). Using social capital to ensure the expected benefits or payoffs from these interpersonal endeavours is considered as one of the major tasks of relationship building (Hwang, 2000; Putnam, 1995, 2002).

However, reciprocity as an essential element of social capital is interpreted differently across contexts. For example, authors have argued that Chinese and other similar societies in East Asia, including Singapore and Taiwan, operate norms of reciprocity differently from those of the West (Hwang, 2000; Westwood, Chan, & Linstead, 2004). Westwood, Chan and Linstead (2004) identified that people in Western work relations generally engage in exchanges based on rational analysis of costs and benefits, with a focus on market-based and legally-operated exchanges. In their view, reciprocity in Western work relations is primarily conceived in individualist and functionalist terms. However, Komter (2007) indicated there are variations in the use of reciprocity in different Western as well as in non-Western contexts. Despite the many different and contextualised approaches to reciprocity in cooperative networks, some literature suggests that the core in nurturing work relationships is leadership - the ability of people to bridge gaps and form cooperative relationships across cultural boundaries (Chen & Tjosvold, 2005; Paldam, 2000).

Western and East Asian higher education institutions are located in different contexts and follow a set of socio-culturally embedded practices. In this study, the notions of field and community of practice help to understand the social context in which individual higher education leaders work and to explain how leadership can

be distributed across national cultures, and institutional and individual habitus.

Social Context: Field and Communities of Practice

The terms ‘field’ and ‘community of practice’ are often used interchangeably in the literature on higher education to refer to the social context where higher education practitioners work. However, the notions of field and community of practice have emerged from fundamentally dissimilar theorising. The focus of field is on social reproduction within a social structure; whereas the emphasis of communities of practice is to promote ongoing learning and improving practices through networked work-relationships. Nevertheless, this study argues that some arguments of field and community of practice are compatible in the discussion on distributed leadership for international partnerships in higher education. To further understand knowledge construction as embedded in the context, this section firstly defines the notions of field and community of practice and then explores their shared features, including learning as embedded in socio-cultural contexts and as social practice, learning the rules of practice, and learning across boundaries in international higher education partnerships.

Definition of field

According to Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), a field can be understood as “a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions” (p. 97). For example, higher education institutions in a society form a field of practice or power (Bourdieu, 1988; Deem & Lucas, 2007; Yao, 2005). Higher education as a field of power consists of differentiated institutions, disciplines and positions in

hierarchically structured relational networks. Higher education leaders mediate and reproduce fundamental principles of social classification, including habitus and forms of capital, based on the power-status of their institutions, disciplines and positions within the field of higher education (Bourdieu, 1985).

Building upon Bourdieu's notion of higher education as a field, Marginson (2008) further integrated the global dimension of higher education, which is characterised by cross-border or global flows of resources, and worldwide patterns of difference that hinder global flows. By global flows, Marginson (2008) referred to "flows of people (students, administrators, academic faculty); flows of media and messages, information and knowledge; flows of norms, ideas and policies; flows of technologies, finance capital and economic resources" (p. 304). In terms of differences, Marginson (2008) meant "lateral diversity in languages, pedagogies and scholarship, and in organisational systems and cultures; vertical diversity including competitive differentiation, hierarchy, inclusion, exclusion and unequal capacity" (p. 304). International partnerships between Western and East Asian higher education institutions are embedded within the field of global higher education relationships and networks. In higher education international partnerships, resources and power are dynamically and unevenly distributed, based upon a mosaic of linguistic, pedagogical, scholarly, organisational, cultural and capacity differences. These differences are sources of hierarchies and power. As discussed previously, hierarchies and power produce differential access to capital and may limit the skills and resources that individuals can bring to interactions (Bourdieu, 1996). Hence, power-sharing in international partnerships in higher education may not be an aim because some may wish to retain the power

and maintain differentiated access to capital. This may be an area of concern for distributing leadership capital in higher education international partnerships.

In the field of global higher education, Clegg (2003) identified several tensions between providers and consumers of higher education services, and between prestigious and less reputable higher education institutions. These tensions denote the hierarchies and power-relations among higher education institutions with different capacities. As discussed in Chapter One, international partnerships between Western and East Asian higher education institutions are largely centred around less-experienced Asian higher education institutions learning and acquiring advanced knowledge, skills and expertise from the West, where the notion of higher education originated (Altbach & Umakoshi, 2004; Tedrow & Mabokela, 2007). Through such learning, East Asian higher education institutions expect to enhance their capacity and raise their global profile in the mainstream higher education arena.

The field of global higher education operates on a set of global rules as well as context-specific social rules. According to Bourdieu, actors in a field of practice commonly follow shared social rules, or game rules, to distribute resources and power (Bourdieu, 1992, 2000; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). The notion of field helps this study to attend to the inherent rules that guide higher education leaders' patterns of thinking and acting. At the global level, higher education leaders in differentiated fields of higher education commonly use information and communication technologies, return travel, and follow internationally recognised social rules to facilitate global flows, as identified above.

Moreover, Bourdieu's (1988) notion of higher education as a field of practice stresses conflicting and contrasting interests or agenda among groups in higher education and overemphasises competitive social relations rather than co-operation. This is because power is seen as being inherent in any social relationship and as the tension between two or more actors (Foucault, 1980). It is this tension that gives rise to competition between international HEIs.

Definition of community of practice

A community of practice is defined as a social space where groups of practitioners with a shared domain of interest, develop identities, interact regularly through networked professional relationships, collectively learn and improve their practices (Wenger, 2000; Wenger et al., 2002). This definition suggests that members of a community of practice may develop socio-culturally embedded collective knowledge and practice, such as community identities, share commitments, common goals, and a repertoire of qualities (Fuller, Hodkinson, Hodkinson, & Unwin, 2005; Handley, Sturdy, Fincham, & Clark, 2006; Wenger, 1998). Communities of practice provide a social space for practitioners to collectively step outside their formal roles, to compare and contrast viewpoints and practices, to explore common issues, to accept different opinions, and to build shared understandings of how issues might be otherwise solved (Armistead & Pettigrew, 2004; Keppell, Au, Ada, & Chan, 2006; Wiessner & Sullivan, 2007). The literature suggests that the fundamental purpose of communities of practice is to improve the practice through ongoing learning in a professional field. This proposition denotes a collaborative view of relationships. However, as discussed previously, Foucault

(1980) argued that, if people are interacting, they are discursively constituting power, tension, and competition in their relationships. The relationships that are embedded in communities of practice may be both competitive and collaborative.

Lave and Wenger (1991) proposed that learning in communities of practice is a situated activity and is “an integral and inseparable aspect of social practice” (p.31). The central characteristic of situated learning is legitimate peripheral participation, a process through which newcomers master knowledge and skills in the socio-cultural practice of a community and gradually move toward full participation in this community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). According to Lave and Wenger (1991), the social relations of newcomers change through their direct involvement in activities and their understandings and skills that develop in the process. Involvement in a community of practice creates a potential curriculum for newcomers to learn and increase their legitimate access to the core activities of community (Lave & Wenger, 1991) as well as to acquire knowledge and power in relational networks (Foucault, 1980). Hence, the workplace provides learning opportunities for members to master professionalism, rules, organisational cultures, skills, competencies, and other attributes that are recognised as symbols of power in a particular area of practice, such as international partnerships in higher education.

Having briefly defined the terms ‘field’ and ‘community of practice’, this section then addresses three shared features of both terms: learning as embedded in socio-cultural contexts and as social practice, learning rules of practice, and learning across boundaries.

Learning as embedded in socio-cultural contexts and as social practice

Learning as embedded in socio-cultural contexts and as social practice is an important part of distributed leadership for higher education international partnerships, and can be theorised using the terms ‘field’ and ‘community of practice’. Both terms address the importance of social practice as learning, but the purposes of learning that both terms suggest are different. Field focuses on the role of the following in constructing knowledge: socio-culturally rooted knowledge and resources, specifically habitus and capital in learning, from generation to generation within the same class or group to maintain their distinction, status and power (Bourdieu, 1988). Whereas community of practice suggests active learning for ongoing improvement of practice, such as learning between junior and experienced community members, learning to participate, and learning across boundaries (Lave & Wenger, 1999; Wenger, 2000; Wenger et al., 2002). Communities of practice are social networks where the sharing of power is agreed. Social practice in the field of higher education, as described by Bourdieu, is more limited within a hierarchically structured higher education system. Social practice in community of practice is more open and extensive, and includes co-operation across disciplines, systems, institutions, departments, nations and other boundaries to achieve common goals. Hence, learning within fields of practice is hindered by vertical hierarchical power-relations; whereas learning in communities of practice may be seen as facilitated through horizontally and vertically expanded relational networks. The two views of relational building within the social practice that constitute learning co-exist in the world higher education.

Learning the rules of practice

Learning the rules of practice is another essential aspect of distributed leadership for international partnerships in higher education, and may be theorised using both the terms ‘field’ and ‘community of practice’. In this study, the rules of practice refer to the implicit, taken-for-granted, and contextualised regular principles that guide higher education leaders’ practices at the workplace.

In Bourdieu’s (1985) theory of practice, the ways actors in a field commonly adapt to distribute resources and establish relationships are influenced by socio-culturally and historically embedded habitus. Fields of higher education in different societies, such as in East Asian societies, maintain particular academic logic and activities of selection and control, and maintain positions and practices that reproduce and strengthen the structure of the field (Mok, 2007a; Yang et al., 2007; Yonezawa, 2007). The metaphor of ‘rules of the game’ is used by Bourdieu to understand the inherent artefacts, symbols and properties that guide professional practices (Bourdieu, 1992, 2000; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Drawing from Wittgenstein’s (1968) notion of language games, the rules of practice can only be experienced and understood by participants in the game. For example, in a card game, rules are used to govern the actions of opposing players, and to determine whether they are suitable for the game. Players may shape their understandings and interpretation of game rules, and strategically search for the fit between the game and their future actions. The artefacts and symbols that are highly recognised in a field can be perceived as carriers of power that define the types of resources and skills that higher education leaders can access and maintain. Higher education leaders, as agents in the field of international partnerships, inevitably involve

distributing different forms of resources, in Bourdieu's term 'capital', based on certain rules of practice.

Advocates of communities of practice also use metaphors to portray the rules of practice in the workplace. For example, legitimate peripheral participation as a metaphoric model was initially proposed by Lave and Wenger to explain the process for new comers to learn from the experienced, and to achieve full participation in the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991, 1999). Authors have identified the process of legitimate peripheral participation which involves less experienced higher education leaders developing identities, mastering competencies, understanding institutional habitus, accumulating experiences, and gradually moving towards full participation in their affiliated communities (Hardré, 2005; Jawitz, 2007; Reybold, 2003, 2008). Following the logic of legitimate peripheral participation, in the context of international partnerships, individual higher education institutions that are new to such practice may develop shared knowledge, competencies, experiences, and identities in order to negotiate how to participate within and across community barriers. Learning by higher education leaders involves constructing and reconstructing a repertoire of knowledge, understandings and meanings of social practice. The leader learns the operational as well as socio-cultural fundamentals in order to practise in higher education international partnerships.

Not only is learning of practice important, but also control, selection and the need for access to community of practice are critical elements in communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991, 1999). However, there is scant literature on the selection of personnel who are entitled to participate in international exchanges and

co-operation. Compared to the vast amount of literature on international partnerships that emphasises policy analysis and quantitative data on partnership and international student numbers, how inter-organisational learning is facilitated through leadership demands more attention (Tedrow & Mabokela, 2007; Webber & Robertson, 2003). Hence, this study particularly focuses on how higher education leaders could learn across boundaries through distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships.

Learning across boundaries

Learning across boundaries is an essential part of distributed leadership for higher education international partnerships and can be theorised using aspects of community of practice (Fuller et al., 2005; Laat, Lally, Simons, & Wenger, 2006; Wenger et al., 2002) and Marginson's (2008) views of the field of global higher education. As mentioned previously, community of practice suggests that learning occurs across boundaries of social hierarchies and power. This proposition seems to be in conflict with Bourdieu's views of field, which argues that learning is facilitated within a socio-cultural group to maintain the status and power of that group. Marginson's (2008) notion of field of global higher education extends Bourdieu's original concept of field and addresses world ' tendency to learn across national and cultural boundaries as they maintain and reproduce class distinctions.

In this study, the term 'learning across boundaries' refers to higher educational leaders' inter-cultural learning, which occurs beyond boundaries that are fundamentally imposed by cultures, roles, institutions, economies, and national borders (Robertson & Webber, 2002). Boundaries of communities emerge as an

outcome of differentiated collective practice of a social group. According to Wenger et. al. (2002), members in a community may develop “a shared perspectives on a domain, trust, a communal identity, longstanding relationships, an established practice” as well as a common goal, and a repertoire of professional qualities, competencies, skills, and knowledge. Members of a community develop the above shared qualities and understandings to make one community distinctive from another. However, the qualities and understandings that are specific to a community of practice may “create divisions and be a source of separation, fragmentation, disconnection, and misunderstanding” (Wenger, 2000, p. 233). Hence, Wenger pointed out the importance for members of a community to learn across boundaries, to move beyond the focus and history of the community, and to be open to others.

An important reason for learning across boundaries is that tensions between individual or community competencies and experiences may create discomfort, and so may create momentum for learning. According to Wenger,

If competence and experience are too close, if they always match, not much learning is likely to take place. There are no challenges; the community is losing its dynamism and the practice is in danger of becoming stale. Conversely, if experience and competence are too disconnected, if the distance is too great, not much learning is likely to take place either. (Wenger, 2000, p. 233)

Learning across boundaries may allow higher education practitioners in one society to negotiate their own competencies and experiences with those of another. If the higher education leader’s competencies and experiences are not too close or disconnected, they are likely to learn from differences in the practice. Hence,

boundaries act as social arena where “perspectives meet and new possibilities arise” (Wenger, 2000, p. 233). Learning across boundaries is parallel to Gadamer’s (1975) notion of fusion of horizons, which means linking our socially, culturally and historically embedded prior knowledge with our new experiences. If higher education leaders in international partnerships can learn across boundaries, they are likely to develop new perspectives, practices, and competencies.

While boundaries exist among higher education communities, the role of collaboration remains strong in the internationalisation processes. As Roberts (2005) stated, “there is certainly ... more talk of cooperation, collaboration, cultural identity, citizenship, inclusion and social development” in today’s education contexts (p. 44). Boundaries between higher education communities are in the process of diminishing and disappearing due to increased regional and international co-operation, inter-institutional linkages, connections, and alliances (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Knight, 2008). For example, Webber and Robertson’s studies on a collaborative master’s leadership programme between New Zealand and Canadian educational practitioners supported breaking boundaries (Robertson & Webber, 2002; Webber & Robertson, 2003, 2004). They highlighted that learning across boundaries has become increasingly paramount for leadership development in the era of internationalisation.

To sum up, constructivist epistemology holds promise for theorising in this research project. Constructivist epistemology is paramount in this study as it helps to understand higher education leaders’ active, contextualised, and social construction of knowledge, understandings and meanings of international

partnerships. It offers useful analytical lenses to explore higher education leaders' individual active construction of knowledge, the importance of prior knowledge, and knowledge construction in a social context.

Furthermore, learning across boundaries implies co-existence of different higher education practices that is embedded in different contexts. Instead of arguing which or whose practice is legitimate in international partnerships, this study seeks to theorise Western and East Asian Chinese higher education leaders' practices and understandings of distributed leadership for higher education international partnerships. Wallner's constructive realism is helpful in meeting this purpose.

Constructive Realism

This section argues the suitability of using constructive realism for theorising higher education leaders' learning and practice of distributed leadership in international partnerships. Constructive realism is discussed under the following headings: background, *wirklichkeit* (or actuality), lifeworlds (constructing life experiences), and microworlds (constructing disciplinary knowledge).

Background

Wallner's constructive realism emerged in the late 1980s. It expanded the constructivist view of knowing with a realist ontology. Wallner (1998b) argued that observation of what has been constructed in a particular discipline is required to facilitate understandings and to develop knowledge. Constructive realism offers a way to theorise knowing, understandings and learning in this research.

First, constructive realism suggests co-existence of two types of reality, which are equally valid: the reality that is embedded in the given world whether people understand it or not, and the reality that is constructed in the cognitive world that leads to knowledge (Wallner, 1995). These types of reality are seen as equally important and are foundations of all knowledge (Wallner, 1995, 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 2000, 2004; Wallner & Jandl, 2006). The first type of reality is the real world, which exists external to people. This reality that exists in the given world is ‘out there’ whether people notice it or not. It is not until people make sense and understand what is out there that they can develop knowledge in their cognitive world. This relates to the second type of reality, that is constructed reality (Wallner, 2004).

The second type of reality cannot be separated from the knower and his or her contexts. This type of reality underpins a socio-cultural constructivist epistemology, as discussed in the first part of this chapter. Wallner (2004) stressed the importance of linking new knowledge with prior knowledge in constructed reality. He explained that, for example, his understandings of Chinese cultures was developed through experiences with Chinese people, and through connecting European cultures with Chinese cultures. As constructed knowledge is interpreted differently based on individual prior knowledge, constructed knowledge is not a direct and absolute picture of the world. This implies that Western and East Asian Chinese higher education leaders will construct a similar yet different view of international partnerships. Constructive realism further suggests that no given world can exist independently of our perceptions of it (Wallner & Jandl, 2006). In the case of this study, although there are the rules of practice that exist in higher

education systems, higher education leaders may not understand those rules until they make sense of them and find shared meaning across boundaries of differences. Specifically, constructive realism involves two types of reality. They are ‘wirklichkeit’ in German language (or actuality in English language), and constructed reality, which comprises lifeworlds and microworlds. A further definition and explanation of actuality or wirklichkeit, lifeworlds, and microworlds will be provided later in this chapter.

Second, in constructive realism, individuals employ specific approaches to knowledge construction with respect to the two different types of reality. Constructive realism offers lenses to interpret higher education leaders’ different approaches to knowing and understanding, ranging from simply describing rules of practice to using intuition or rational thinking to construct knowledge in different realities (Wallner, 1995, 1997, 2004). For example, in higher education international partnerships, higher education leaders may have established an understanding of the neo-liberal reform policies that is characterised by entrepreneurial practice, trade in higher education services, greater demands for competition and co-operation, and market-oriented practice (Chapter One). Higher education leaders understand the rules of practice that exist in the wider higher education environment. Higher education leaders may intuitively use certain ways to greet people in international partnerships, such as hugging, shaking hands, and smiling, based on their early socialisation experiences within a socio-cultural group. This approach to understanding is described in Wallner’s notion of lifeworld. Higher education leaders may also rationally reflect on and analyse the strengths and weaknesses of their practice in international partnerships to inform

future practice, for example publishing a journal article about international partnerships. This approach to learning is identified by Wallner in microworlds. Notions of lifeworld and microworld will be discussed later in this chapter.

Third, constructive realism suggests both commonalities in practice as well as diversities in practice in all cultures (Wallner, 1995, 1997, 2004). Some human experiences are common across cultures, for example smiling. However, merely searching for commonality in all cultures may lead to misunderstanding because interpretation of the same practice differs across contexts (see discussion on constructivist epistemology in this chapter). For example, constantly filling a guest's plate with food is considered as politeness in Chinese culture, but this practice may be considered impolite in Western cultures (Huang, 2008). Thus, this study attempts to address the diversities in New Zealand and East Asian Chinese higher education leaders' knowledge construction through considering context-specific individual and institutional habitus, capital, and the rules of practice in the context of international partnerships.

Fourth, constructive realism proposes the strategy of strangification (Wallner, 1995, 1997, 2004), which a) offers implications for using multiple research methodologies to interpret data, and b) borrowing concepts and terminologies that are used in one discipline to interpret and understand a social phenomenon that is traditionally located in another discipline. This research project adapts strangification as a methodological tool (Chapter Four).

The following sections theorise higher education leaders' different approaches to understanding distributed leadership in international partnerships in the following types of reality: *wirklichkeit* (or actuality), lifeworlds, and

microworlds.

Wirklichkeit (or Actuality)

The German term ‘wirklichkeit’ expands notions of action, actuality and becoming effective, and is conceptually richer than reality, which is the commonly used English translation. Scharf stated:

Wirklichkeit contains the notion of wirken, of becoming effective, or of Wirkung, the effect. These two implications get lost when *Wirklichkeit* is rendered “reality”. Another connection of *Wirklichkeit* is action and actuality, i.e. the way in which someone or something acts as well as the result of that action. (Scharf, 1999, p. 319)

Thus, *wirklichkeit* emphasises the effectiveness of practice. Practice in *wirklichkeit* (or actuality) is guided by “the complex social rules, codes and behavioural regularities” (Ashe et al., 1999, p. vii) that are both observable and invisible. Actors in *wirklichkeit* construct their understandings of the world through their experiences with both observable and hidden social rules, codes, and behaviour regulations (Wallner, 1995, 1997, 1998a, 2004). Higher education leaders’ knowledge that develops within *wirklichkeit* functions as rules of practice (see the section of learning the rules of practice in this chapter). Applying the concept of *wirklichkeit* in higher education international partnerships helps us to understand a number of external factors and the rules of practice that impact on higher education leaders’ practice. However, the neo-liberal reform policies, market mechanisms, guidelines and regulations that are imposed by international agencies,

such as the UNESCO and the WTO, can also be understood as external factors that guide higher education leaders' practice in international partnerships (see Chapter One). These rules within the field of higher education may either be observable or tacit. Higher education leaders may be or may not be aware of these rules, but develop certain patterns of practice based on their understandings and interpretations of the rules.

The following section theorises higher education leaders' knowledge construction within lifeworlds and microworlds with reference to notions of prejudgments, individual and institutional habitus, capital, and contexts (fields and communities of practice), as discussed earlier in this chapter.

Lifeworlds: Constructing Life Experiences

According to Hwang (2000, 2003), a lifeworld is the social space where individuals a) observe the external world, b) try to avoid their own will and intention, and c) learn to interpret, organise, explain, structure, contemplate, and respond to daily life experiences, primarily within their social or cultural groups. They do this before they begin to develop disciplinary knowledge. Constructing lifeworlds requires using language to represent and describe things or phenomena as what they are, without involving personal opinion. According to Hwang (2003), the type of rationality employed in lifeworlds is intuition; and the worldviews, which lifeworlds entail, are developed based on individual life experiences. Intuition can be conceptualised as a holistic hunch corresponding to individual subjective judgement. According to some literature, intuition is generated by automatic cognitive processes based on prior knowledge and experiences, rather than

conscious reasoning (Downey, Papageorgiou, & Stough, 2006; Miller & Ireland, 2005).

The literature on educational leadership and business management supports the importance of intuition in professional practice. According to MacBeath (2005), intuition functions as the primary mechanism in the cultural form of distributed leadership in school settings. Intuition helps educational leaders make hunches and instant decisions as they distribute leadership in school settings. In addition, Miller and Ireland (2005) proposed that intuition may be advantageous for supporting decision-making, under situations of resource constraints, such as time and funds. Matzler, Bailom and Mooradian (2007) also suggested that intuition can be used as a leadership tool to accelerate decision-making in complex and changing situations.

If intuition is used to construct lifeworlds, and if intuition is based on prior experiences and knowledge, then prior or existing knowledge is used in the construction of lifeworlds by people, for example higher education leaders. This prior or existing knowledge is influenced by the social, cultural and historical knowledge in which it is embedded. For example, the knowledge of life that is constructed within socio-cultural groups can be hindered by prior knowledge such as prejudgments, habitus and tradition, as discussed previously in the section on constructive epistemology. Habitus can further influence the distribution of capital in lifeworlds. Among many types of cultural capital, constructivist realist scholar Hwang (2003) described language as the most important carrier of cultural heritage that is used to consistently construct, comprehend, analyse and record individual lifeworlds. Following Hwang's idea of lifeworld, cultural heritage is similar to Bourdieu's notion of habitus.

To illustrate, part of higher education leaders' understandings of international partnerships are acquired through life experiences within their own cultural groups, for example in New Zealand or East Asia. Higher education leaders may use a particular language and intuitive thinking approaches to construct their lifeworlds. In addition, people construct disciplinary knowledge within microworlds (Wallner, 1995). While lifeworld is a useful notion to link prior knowledge with an intuitive reaction to life experiences, the notion of microworld helps to describe systematically constructed knowledge that synthesises prior knowledge and rules of practice.

Microworlds: Constructing Disciplinary Knowledge

In constructive realism, microworlds are workplaces where individuals construct disciplinary knowledge, for example the sciences. Knowledge in microworlds is developed by each person through systematic thinking (Hwang, 2003). This approach to knowledge construction is evident in scholarly works. Scholars in higher education may incorporate systematic thinking to acquire knowledge on particular aspects of the world. This research on international partnerships in New Zealand and East Asia is constructing a microworld. To facilitate this, a systematic process of reviewing related literature, planning research methodologies, analysing data, and interpreting research findings was undertaken.

Knowledge construction in microworlds thus entails formal rationality, and is based on a technical mode of thinking - which is oriented by intentions and goals (Hwang, 2003). In particular, Hwang (2003) highlighted that the type of language used in technical thinking may entail "a compulsory and aggressive character that

demands the most gain and the least cost” (p. 244). Cost-effective analysis is thus evident in technical thinking in microworlds. However, IJsseling (1996) commented that purely university or academic work is almost impossible to achieve because of higher education leaders’ personal motives for constructing professional knowledge may not be purely academic. A number of pragmatic motives as well as historically and socio-culturally embedded prior knowledge such as tradition, prejudgments and individual habitus may hinder rational thinking, as described previously. These factors are taken into consideration when theorising higher education leaders’ development of professional knowledge and practice in international academic exchanges and co-operation.

Furthermore, constructive realism suggests the existence of multiple microworlds. This means that higher education leaders who engage in the practice of international partnerships may have established disciplinary knowledge of higher education and partnerships in the workplace (Boud & Middleton, 2003; Ellinger, 2005). They may also construct other disciplinary knowledge before they engage in international partnerships, for example literacy, science, and the arts. However, as discussed in Chapter One, international partnerships between Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs in the 21st Century have emerged as a new phenomenon, and encompass new meaning of higher education and international partnerships. This study argues that higher education leaders may lack systematic knowledge of international partnerships between Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs before they start to practise in such a field. Higher education leaders’ lack of systematic knowledge of international cooperative activities does not deny the influence of life experiences with international cooperative activities on the

construction of professional knowledge. An understanding of the factors that may impact on knowledge construction in lifeworlds and microworlds helps to draw the bigger picture of higher education leaders' constructed knowledge.

To sum up, Wallner's constructive realism as an ontology offers lenses for this study to understand higher education leaders' learning in different types of reality, including *wirklichkeit*, lifeworlds and microworlds. Wallner's constructive realism also helps me to understand higher education leaders' differentiated approaches to understanding. They are describing without making judgments, using intuition, and reflecting. The three different approaches to understanding collectively impact on higher education leaders' understandings and practice of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships.

Linking Learning and Practice

In this study, learning and practice are intertwined. The view of learning has been theorised based on a constructive epistemology and Wallner's constructive realism. A constructive epistemology helps to explain the individual active construction of knowledge, the importance of prior knowledge, social interactions for learning, learning the rules of practice, and learning across boundaries of differences. Wallner's constructive realism has provided lenses for this study to recognise higher education leaders' different practice that is rooted in their social contexts such as Western and East Asian higher education.

While there has been research on international higher education partnerships between Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs, little has been emphasised on distributed leadership for international higher education partnerships. This study is

concerned with the main research question: What are the key factors and issues that may impact on distributed leadership for international partnerships between Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs? New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and a province in China are the focus of this study.

The following questions serve as supplementary questions: Why are international partnerships in higher education of interest to New Zealand and East Asian Chinese HEIs? What are the major drivers for international partnerships between Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs in the 21st Century? How is distributed leadership practised by higher education leaders to nurture successful international partnerships?

Chapter Four presents the methodologies, data generation and analysis methods, and approaches to participants that were used in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Introduction

This research project sought to theorise distributed leadership for international partnerships as experienced by some New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders. The methodological approach used is detailed in this chapter.

In order to achieve research trustworthiness in this study, this research explored in-depth the meanings that higher education leaders had constructed with reference to their leadership experiences and practice in international partnerships. Grounded theory methodology and Wallner's strangifications served as powerful methodological approaches to acquire, analyse, interpret and compare qualitative data across different contexts in this study. Semi-structured interviewing and document collection were the methods used for data generation.

This chapter firstly defines qualitative research as socio-culturally constructed inquiry, and as a comparative inquiry in this study. The techniques for maximising the trustworthiness of this study are then identified. Secondly, this chapter provides the rationale for using grounded theory as the main methodology, and strangifications as a supporting methodological approach. The third part of this chapter outlines the research methods, including interviewing and document collection. Fourth, this chapter introduces the research participants. Finally, ethical considerations that were employed in this study are described.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research entails a wide spectrum of overlapping but sometimes contrasting philosophies, methodologies and theories. This study is only concerned with qualitative research that has its roots in a constructivist epistemology and the ontology of constructive realism. This section identifies three major characteristics of this qualitative research project: qualitative research as socio-culturally constructed inquiry; qualitative research as comparative inquiry; and quality qualitative research.

Qualitative Research as Socio-Culturally Constructed Inquiry

This qualitative research study focused on the complexity of meanings that were socio-culturally constructed by the research participants and me as the researcher. Denzin and Lincoln's (2005) accounts of qualitative research support this study's emphasis on the socio-culturally constructed nature of inquiry. They stated:

Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. Such researchers emphasize the value-laden nature of inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning.

(Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 10)

Hence, qualitative research has the potential to explore higher education leaders' socio-culturally constructed perceptions of leadership and practices in international partnerships through interactions between me and the research participants.

In addition, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) described qualitative research as a “situated activity” (p. 3). Qualitative research as socio-culturally constructed inquiry has the advantage of locating the researcher in natural social settings to discover how people make sense of their social worlds (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000; Maykut & Morehouse, 2001; Neuman, 2003). In this study, natural social settings refer to the New Zealand and East Asian Chinese higher education systems, and the work contexts of the individual higher education leaders. Spillance, Halverson and Diamond (2004) suggested that a socially connected work context is “the appropriate unit of analysis for studying practice” (p. 23); a position also supported by Conger and Toegel (2002) with reference to studying leadership practice.

It was appropriate for this research project to focus on both personal and institutional leadership practice in international partnerships in higher education. By employing qualitative research approaches, this research project explored how natural social settings, environments, cultures, and other factors have impacted on higher education practitioners’ leadership perceptions and practice (Frankel & Devers, 2000; Glaser, 1992). In this study, the research findings were grounded in the experiences of the New Zealand and East Asian participants. New theoretical aspects are grounded in the research data through using grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Holton, 2004; Glaser & Strauss, 1999). Grounded theory methodology further supports comparisons of data and is detailed later in this chapter.

This qualitative study incorporated a mosaic of interpretive approaches to record the participants’ worlds (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, 2000). I used field notes,

interviews, recordings, and memos to transform the participants' worlds into a series of representations. In particular, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argued that all research is interpretive, in this case, guided by my perceptions of the world and research designs. Researchers may hold personal views about certain actions, activities, experiences and practices. Attentiveness to possible bias and prejudgments was constantly addressed during the research process to maximise the research trustworthiness. Approaches to research trustworthiness are identified later in this chapter.

Qualitative Research as Comparative Inquiry

A second characteristic is that this qualitative study is comparative inquiry. This research project compared and contrasted the New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders' practice, perceptions and experiences across different contexts. In the field of comparative education, there is a growing interest in comparing Western and Asian educational practice (Walker & Dimmock, 2000a; Yao, 2005). However, comparative higher education studies, which have been carried out by Chinese scholars, largely fall into the category of policy analysis and literature review. For example, Pan and Luo's (2008) comparisons of American, European, East-Asian, and Latin American models of higher education massification have emphasised comparisons of financial models; Zhao et al.'s (2008) comparative inquiry of educational studies in China and the United States was a literature review on research methodology used by Chinese and American researchers. Although these studies presented comparisons of statistical or numerical data, little was discussed in terms of the socio-cultural impacts on educational practice. King

(2000) cautioned that comparative studies would be less valuable when they only provide documentary evidence. Rather, King argued that the significance of comparative investigation lies in the interpretation of interdependent factors, such as contexts, policy-making and opportunities for fulfilment. While comparing data collected during the course of this study, I paid attention to the individual HEI contexts and the wider socio-cultural and policy contexts.

Deeper level socio-cultural influences on higher education leaders' leadership perceptions and practice were addressed in this qualitative comparative study. This study moved beyond merely reviewing literature or second-hand data. It explored in-depth the common patterns and differences in perception and practice as experienced by the participants. It also sought to understand the impacts of contexts, socio-culturally embedded knowledge, and other inter-related factors on the participants' leadership perceptions and practice. Hayhoe (2007) reflected on her personal practice in comparative education, she urged comparative education researchers to engage in cultural agency, to facilitate enhanced understandings, and to anticipate future developments "through exploring deep-level cultural patterns" (p. 189).

However, cultural comparative studies may have some conceptual and methodological drawbacks. Cheng (2000) identified some drawbacks in relation to a lack of multiple perspectives, unclear definition of concepts and cultural terms in analysis, making simplistic and problematic assumptions of cultures, and over-attributing the impact of cultures on educational performance. In order to address these potential conceptual and methodological problems, this study regarded individual higher education leaders as individual cultural agents who

carried socio-culturally embedded leadership knowledge and practice. Their institutional and national cultures were also considered as heterogeneous, complex and multi-layered. In this study, each HEI was regarded as having unique institutional habitus and rules of practice under the umbrella of national culture. On the basis of the national culture, institutional habitus distinguishes one HEI from another. In addition, this study clarified and compared the meaning of different (or even the same) terms and concepts that were represented by the participants.

Another important characteristic of this qualitative research project was attentiveness to the research quality. The following section further explains how quality was facilitated during the course of this qualitative study.

Quality Qualitative Research

The quality of this qualitative study was maximised by considering some dimensions of trustworthiness. Following a constructivist epistemology, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified that trustworthiness subsumes some important constructs of research quality. In particular, this study addressed the research credibility, dependability, transferability, and authenticity.

Credibility

Credibility deals with how well data generation methods and processes address the research questions and objectives. Credibility is concerned with making a decision about “the focus of the study, selection of context, participants and approach to gathering data” (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004, p. 109).

Based on the research questions and objectives (Chapters One and Three), New Zealand was chosen as representative of Western societies; whereas Singapore, Taiwan and China were selected as representative of East Asian societies. Research participants were selected from higher education institutions within these societies. Before approaching the participants, I developed familiarity with the context of the participating higher education institutions. Interview questions (Appendix A) were developed based on the literature reviewed. Each interview was conducted based on a list of interview questions as guidelines for in-depth discussion. For example, I asked the New Zealand, Singaporean, Chinese and Taiwanese higher education leaders their perceptions of their own leadership roles in international partnerships, such as “How do you feel about your leadership roles in the partnership?” and “Can you tell me about your involvement in the decision-making of cooperative strategies in this partnership?”.

I incorporated the same interview probing techniques in all interviews, such as using open ended questions, and asking “Can you tell me more about...?” and “Can you explain to me what do you mean by...?”. My multi-cultural background, proficiency in both English and Mandarin, and understandings of New Zealand and East Asian higher education contexts allowed me to conduct the interviews myself across cultural and linguistic boundaries.

Triangulation was intensively used in this study to maximise research credibility. Triangulation uses a combination of research strategies and sources of information in a single study, and helps to establish links and present a comprehensive picture of data. In this study, triangulation was achieved by

methodological triangulation, theory triangulation, and data triangulation (Denzin, 1970).

First, to facilitate methodological triangulation, this study incorporated grounded theory and Wallner's strangifications as research methodologies, and interviewing and document collection as research methods (Table 1). Throughout the research process, I constantly collected documents from various sources, for example university websites, newsletters, strategic plans, and reports. Documents were compared and contrasted with interview data to enhance the completeness of findings.

Second, theory triangulation (Table 1) was achieved through using socio-cultural theorising, which incorporates distributed leadership elements, constructive epistemology, and the ontology of constructive realism. Grounded theory methodology also served the purpose of theory triangulation. Denzin (1970) regarded grounded theory methodology as an ideal research methodology to work with data "with multiple perspectives ... in mind" (p. 303).

Table 1 Triangulation

Triangulation	Approaches		
Methodological triangulation	Grounded theory methodology, Wallner's strangifications, interviews & document collection		
Theory triangulation	Distributed leadership perspectives, constructive epistemology, the ontology of constructive realism, & grounded theory		
Space triangulation	Interviewing 22 participants in higher education institutions in New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and China.		
Time triangulation	Phase one	Interviews: Generating information based on the guided interview questions	Documents were collected throughout the length of the research project
	Phase two	Interviews: Feeding back initial research findings and getting new insights	

Third, I sought data triangulation through space triangulation and time triangulation (Denzin, 1970). Space triangulation was facilitated through data generation from 22 higher education leaders in different contexts (New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and China). The interview responses were compared and contrasted. Time triangulation was facilitated through generating data during two research phases (Table 1). Phase-one of the data generation process focused on

eliciting the views of the participants based on the guided interview questions. Based on the interview data, I developed initial research findings. The main purpose of phase-two data generation was to provide the initial research findings to some of the participants to seek their feedback and input into this study. The second interviews allowed the participants to make sure if I had interpreted the interview data true to their original meaning. The interview data generated from phases one and two were then compared and contrasted.

Dependability

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggested that, if a qualitative study has dependability, the study is possible to be replicated following the same research processes while taking into account factors that may impact on the research outcomes. This is because in qualitative studies research participants and contexts are dynamic. Following the same research design and processes in the same context may not lead to the same research outcomes. Hence, this study considered possible research design, methodologies and methods based on their effectiveness, adaptability, and suitability for this particular study.

In this chapter, the methodological description for conducting this study is provided to ensure the replicability of the research design in the future, but not necessarily the same research outcomes. Drawing upon Shenton's (2004) comments on dependability, this study specifically provided accounts of the research design and its implication, the operational detail of data gathering, and reflection on the research process undertaken. The research process is explained later in this chapter.

Transferability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that researchers carry the responsibility to provide sufficient contextual information about a research project to help the reader make judgement of whether the research findings are transferable. To facilitate this, Chapter One provided dense description of the research background and the phenomenon under study, and Chapter Four and Five provided details of the demographic background of the participants and their higher education institutions.

Authenticity

Authenticity is concerned with whether the study represents the view of and protects the interests of those involved in the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). It is highly valued in small-scale qualitative research. Bishop and Glynn's (1999) five interrelated power-relation issues helped this study to address authenticity in interviewer-interviewee relationships. As discussed in Chapter Two, these five areas are initiation, benefits, representation, legitimation, and accountability. I carefully considered: Whose interests and agenda are the interviews to promote? Who will directly gain from the interviews? Whose 'voice' is heard or promoted in the interviews? Who hold authority to the arrangements of the interviews? Who is the interview accountable to?

For example, to enhance interviewer representation, the participants were encouraged to not only respond to interview questions, but also comment on areas

that were not included in the interview questions. The interview findings were fed back to the participants to allow them making changes.

The next section explains the research methodologies and the research methods.

Research Methodologies

By Crotty's (1998) definition, methodology is the "strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcome" (p. 3). Metz (2000) also pointed out the importance of identifying the methodologies that underlie certain methods in qualitative research. Prior to discussing data generation and analysis methods, the following section acknowledges the two research methodologies that were used in this study. They are grounded theory methodology as the main research methodology and strangifications as supportive methodological approaches.

Grounded Theory Methodology

The Background

Grounded theory methodology provided this study with valuable approaches to code data, compare categories, develop themes, and encourage dialogue between data and theory. Grounded theory methodology was initially developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in health research, and has been widely used in educational research (Cohen et al., 2000). The central proposition of Glaser and Strauss' grounded theory is that theory is not predetermined by the researcher, but emerges from the experiences of research participants and is based on the research data and

findings (Glaser, 1992; Glaser & Holton, 2004; Glaser & Strauss, 1999). In this study, grounded theory helped me to develop theory based on the higher education leaders' experiences in international partnerships.

Grounded theory methodology consists of a variety of data analysis procedures and techniques as promoted by different advocates of grounded theory. For example, in 1990 and 1998, Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) proposed a contradictory approach to Glaser and Strauss's grounded theory procedures. Strauss and Corbin suggested using predetermined categories to guide data generation; whereas Glaser and Strauss argued that categories should emerge from the data, and should not be predetermined. Despite the variations in coding procedures and techniques, the works of Glaser, Strauss and Corbin emphasised using methods or systematic approaches for "collecting and analyzing data to build middle range theoretical frameworks that explain the collected data" (Charmaz, 2000, p. 509). According to Peterson and Bredow (2008), middle range theories are less abstract than grand theories, and focus on generating new knowledge that is context-specific, practical, and directly applicable to practitioners who deal with a particular issue at workplace. Hence, grounded theory was suitable for this research project that was specifically concerned with some New Zealand, Singaporean, Chinese and Taiwanese higher education leaders' distributed leadership practice in international higher education partnerships.

In addition, Charmaz (2000, 2003) commented that overemphasising systematic methods would reduce the researcher's flexibility to adapt new research strategies, to address the meaning that participants bring to their situations, to acknowledge the roles of the researcher, and to move beyond methods. Charmaz

added constructivist views to Glaser and Strauss' grounded theory through emphasising the flexibility of methods, and the views, beliefs, assumptions and ideologies of individuals in the research.

In Chapter Two, the theory of distributed leadership is grounded in the literature.

In order to link theory with practice, this study used grounded theory methodology, particularly coding systems, to identify and develop concepts from higher education leaders' practice. New theoretical perspectives of higher education leadership for international partnerships were derived from the experiences of the participants through a set of systematic procedures (Glaser, 1992; Glaser & Holton, 2004; Glaser & Strauss, 1999) while addressing research flexibility by addressing multiple perspectives of the individuals in the research (Charmaz, 2000, 2003). Categories and themes were constantly compared and contrasted to ensure that new theoretical perspectives represented the experiences of the participants in this study as seen by me.

The following strategies are essential to improve the rigour of grounded theory methodology. They are a) simultaneous generation and analysis of data; b) memo writing for construction of concepts and categories, c) data coding procedures for emerging and integration of theoretical ideas, and d) intensive comparisons (Glaser & Holton, 2004; Walker & Myrick, 2006). In this study, data analysis was integral to data generation, and further data generation was informed by analysis of the existing data. This approach allowed for flexibility in deciding on follow-up research directions. Grounded theory approaches, when operated systematically and flexibly, may allow data generation, data analysis and theory

development to occur simultaneously (Charmaz, 2000, 2003). Memos were kept to record codes, concepts, categories, and any incidents that emerged from the data generation and analysis process.

In addition, grounded theory methodology is regarded as a constant comparative method of analysis due to its intensive use of question-posing and comparisons in coding procedures (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, 1999; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998).

Coding Procedures

Grounded theory methodology allowed me to constantly compare data and follow a set of coding procedures which enabled me to transform data into new theories. Specifically, this study constantly compared and contrasted data in order to clarify commonalities as well as major discrepancies (Glaser, 1992) in the perceptions and practice among the New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders. In grounded theory, constant comparisons of data are integral to a set of coding procedures. Three major coding steps are open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

Open coding

The grounded theory literature suggests that the initial step in coding data is open coding (Glaser, 1978, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1999; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998). The first task of open coding is to transform data into concepts. This is done by line-by-line coding of the data. This approach helps to identify substantive codes

and develop categories of concepts based on the data with minimum preconceptions about broader findings.

According to Glaser and Holton (2004), questioning may help researchers to be theoretically sensitive during the process of analysing, collecting and coding the data. In this study, I asked the following questions, which were initially proposed by Glaser and Holton:

- a) What is this data a study of? b) What category does this incident indicate?
- c) What is actually happening in the data? d) What is the main concern being faced by the participants? and e) What accounts for the continual resolving of this concern? (Glaser & Holton, 2004, para48)

Categories and codes were then developed based on these questions, grouped and compared throughout the data generation and analysis process.

Open coding was done for all data in this study. For example, a New Zealand higher education leader commented on higher education institutions' common practice of signing MOUs that do not necessarily lead to substantial co-operation. This datum gave rise to a number of concepts or codes as documented in Table 2. This datum described the phenomenon of issues and factors that may impact on distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships (Table 2, labelling phenomenon). Several concepts emerged from this and other data, for example reciprocity, the rules of practice, feedback systems, and individual institutional interests (Table 2, conceptualising). Among these concepts, reciprocity and feedback systems can be further categorised as conditions for sustainability (Table 2, categorising). Some concepts such as the rules of practice

and individual institutional interests were not grouped with other concepts and formed separate categories or sub-categories.

Table 2. An Example of Open Coding

Labelling phenomenon	Issues and factors that may impact on distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships
Conceptualising	Reciprocity
	The rules of practice
	Feedback systems
	Individual institutional interests
Categorising	Conditions for sustainability

Memo writing is the technique used to identify concepts in Table 2. As Charmaz (2000) suggested, memo writing can assist researchers in articulating their thinking, exploring data and codes in new ways, defining new directions of data generation, focusing on the analysis of research, and connecting analytic interpretation with empirical reality. Through memo writing, the connections among categories and properties were examined to grasp a broad understanding of distributed leadership practice of the participants.

Axial coding

Axial coding refers to the second step of coding in Strauss and Corbin's grounded theory approaches. Its main goal is to reconcile fractured data through linking a

category and its subcategories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998). During axial coding, I worked to construct the relationships among categories and their subcategories. I perceived this approach as developing the storyline of the data.

Charmaz (2000) highlighted the importance for researchers to, “define the properties of our categories; to identify the context in which they are relevant; to specify the conditions under which they arise, are maintained, and vary; and to discover their consequences” (p.519). Specifically, Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) suggested that the axis of the category emerges based on systematic considerations of the causal conditions, context, intervening conditions, strategies and consequences of the phenomenon under study. This study constructed the axis of categories in terms of background conditions, contexts, factors and issues, leadership strategies, and outcomes (Table 3).

Table 3. Examples of Axial Coding

Categories	Description	Examples
Background conditions	Understanding background conditions of international higher education partnerships in New Zealand, Singapore, China and Taiwan	Export education has grown as an industry in New Zealand.
Contexts	Exploring different leadership practice in international partnerships as experienced by the participants	The New Zealand university promoted internationalisation, mainly through student exchanges and partnership degree programmes
Factors and issues	Addressing issues and factors that have a bearing upon the 22 higher education leaders in international higher education partnerships	The proficiency of English language of the Chinese partner may impact on the communication with the New Zealand university.
Leadership strategies	Identifying follow-up leadership strategies, used by the participants, to certain issues and factors in international partnerships	The New Zealand university used mandarin-speaking staff to facilitate communication with its Chinese partner.
Outcomes	Identifying subsequent outcome because of applying leadership strategies, as experienced by the participants	The Chinese participants were satisfied with communicating with mandarin-speaking staff in NZ because they shared similar patterns of communication and thinking

First, I explored the background conditions of international higher education partnerships through interviewing the 22 New Zealand, Singaporean, Taiwanese and Chinese research participants. Second, I sought to understand individual leadership practice in international partnerships as experienced by the participants. Third, I identified a number of issues and factors that had a bearing upon the participants' leadership for international partnerships. They resided in the wider social, cultural, historical, political, technological, economic, and organisational conditions within their work contexts. Fourth, the data showed a number of follow-up strategies that the participants undertook in their practice in response to certain issues and factors. In particular, this study identified the significance of some leadership strategies that emerged from the data, and the connections among those strategies. Finally, I identified some possible outcomes as a result of applying follow-up leadership strategies. Through the axial coding process, I connected categories and subcategories around a storyline.

Comparing the data led to modifying and developing the storyline until it filled the data, and enabled me to ensure that categories were capable of portraying the complex leadership practice within and across geographic contexts (New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and China). The perceptions, experiences, and practices of individual participants were compared and contrasted. The statements from the same participant were also compared to maximise data consistency. New codes and categories were compared with existing categories to enhance interconnectedness among categories. Through constant comparisons of concepts and categories, non-applicable concepts were reduced (Glaser, 1992).

Selective coding

Selective coding, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998), is the final process of “integrating and refining the theory” (p. 143). During selective coding, I integrated different stories and emerged themes that are grounded in the experiences of the participants (Chapter Six). This approach helped me to see the broader picture of international partnerships between Western and East Asian HEIs, and to transform codes into new theory.

During selective coding, researchers must identify a core category and then relate all other categories around the core (Walker & Myrick, 2006). For example, the category of distributed leadership in partnership networks emerged as the core category. It covers sub-categories such as distributing leadership roles and opportunities, active communication to foster relationships, distributing forms of leadership capital, and medium for distributing forms of leadership capital. This core category interrelates to the category of culturally embedded prior knowledge, issues and factors embedded within the context, and multiple leadership practice, as well as their sub-categories (Chapter Six).

Another key task of selective coding is to fill the gaps in the research data and holes in the emergent theory through constant comparisons of core categories and other categories around it (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998; Walker & Myrick, 2006). For example, this study found the East Asian and New Zealand participants were both concerned about the English language proficiency of East Asian higher education leaders; whereas none of the New Zealand participants addressed their familiarity with East Asian languages. Having identified the gap, I then asked the

New Zealand participants about their views of language, especially the dominance of English language and learning of East Asian languages in international partnerships between Western and East Asian higher education institutions. This approach helped me to seek feedback and acquire additional information from the participants to construct new theory. Finally, theoretical saturation (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) was attained where no new categories or properties emerged from the data.

Overall, using grounded theory was an untidy process (Appendix J). It started with my initial understanding of HEI international partnerships. I then developed research questions, conducted phase-one and phase-two data collection and analysis, refined theories and judging theoretical saturation, and concluded this study.

In addition to grounded theory methodology, this study employed Wallner's (1995, 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 2000, 2004) strangifications to compare and contrast data across linguistic, ontological and socio-cultural boundaries.

Strangifications as Supportive Methodological Strategies

Strangifications are one of the major methodological strategies of Wallner's constructive realism. Strangifications are the specific strategy that Wallner proposed for promoting inter-disciplinary and inter-cultural coordination of knowledge. Strangifications can be understood as a modification process which makes the language or knowledge of a particular discipline or context understandable in another (Wallner, 1998a). Advocates of Wallner's constructive realism, for example Hwang (2000, 2003, 2005; 2003) and Shen (1995, 2003),

concluded that strangifications have the following advantages: a) enhancing mutual understandings among disciplines; b) allowing researchers to reflect on the methodology and principles of their original disciplines; and c) constructing a coherent reality through correlation among different disciplines. Strangifications are facilitated following a process of: firstly, taking out research findings, theoretical propositions, or terminologies from one discipline in their original languages and contexts; secondly, translating them into the language of another discipline; and thirdly, applying them in this unfamiliar disciplinary context (Shen, 1995; Wallner, 1998a).

In this study, leadership knowledge and practice in New Zealand, Singaporean, Taiwanese and Chinese HEIs were seen as emerging from different contexts and using different languages, and they can be understood as disciplines. In order to construct a sound understanding of leadership for international partnerships between East Asian and New Zealand higher education leaders, this study adopted strangifications to translate languages and link concepts among disciplines and contexts. This study followed Wallner's (1995) three methodological approaches to strangifications. They are linguistic, ontological and pragmatic strangifications.

Linguistic Strangification

Linguistic strangification is a methodological technique for researchers to translate directly from one language used in a particular discipline or context to another. It is the superficial form of strangification. This study employed linguistic strangification to translate interview transcripts when necessary to make the views

of the participants understandable by users of another language, either English or Chinese.

However, translation is not straightforward. There were conceptual and terminological differences across higher education disciplines. As Marco (2007) stated, the gaps between terminologies may be a result of socio-culturally embedded and discipline-specific use of terminologies. In particular, Marco identified two forms of differences between terminologies, by suggesting that “conceptual similarities are clouded by terminological differences, and conceptual differences lurk beneath apparent synonymy” (Marco, 2007, p. 255). Marco’s statement implies that different terms that are used in different societies may convey the same meaning; and that the same term (in the same language) may mean different things in different societies.

For example, the Taiwanese and Chinese higher education leaders are Mandarin speakers. The Taiwanese participants tended to use the term ‘ji hua’ (計劃) whereas the Chinese participants were inclined to employ the term ‘xiang mu’ (項目) to refer to the concept ‘programme’, such as partnership programmes, student exchange programmes, and cooperative research programmes. In addition, there was variation in using the Chinese word ‘ling dao’ (領導) between the Chinese and Taiwanese participants. In Taiwan, ‘ling dao’ is used to refer to the act of leading and leadership; whereas in China, ‘ling dao’ may be used as the leader, leadership, or to lead based on the context of the conversation.

I employed some strategies to clarify terminological and conceptual differences during the research process. First, if significant, terminological or conceptual differences were identified during individual interviews, I paused the

interview and asked the participant to explain the meaning of the term. Second, as I found differences in using terminologies, I invited the participants to comment on these differences where possible. Third, if differences were discovered after the second phase of data generation, I sought explanations by reviewing the literature. Through these strategies, I was able to compare terminologies within the data across cultural and linguistic barriers.

Nevertheless, understanding leadership perceptions and practice in different contexts is far more complex than translating languages. Directly translating languages may overlook the ontological underpinnings behind terminologies. For example, as discussed in Chapter Two, leadership in East Asian societies may entail significantly different characteristics from those in Western societies, such as collectivist orientation and higher power distance. Therefore, this study incorporated ontological strangification to explore ontological similarities and differences of terminologies in the data.

Ontological Strangification

Ontological strangification is proposed as the second phase of the strangification process (Hwang, 2003). According to Wallner (1995), ontological strangification refers to the process of “applying a system or set of methods of one discipline to a very different discipline” (para 12). It required me to take out a set of concepts that underpin a terminology in a discipline, and apply them to another through understanding certain actions that both emphasise on. In other words, if the knowledge can be applied and function in another context, this knowledge offers wider implications. As mentioned previously, higher education context in New

Zealand, Singapore, China and Taiwan can be conceptualised as different disciplinary areas. East context has its own context-specific knowledge, practice, and language. In order to understand New Zealand, Singaporean, Chinese and Taiwanese higher education leaders' practice in international partnerships, I compared and contrasted their patterns of communicating and acting.

This study drew upon Hwang's (2003) approaches to contrast the similarities and differences of terminologies that emerged from the participants' own contexts. Hwang suggested applying a set of aspects which arise from one context to another. To facilitate this, one should understand the common practice on which both contexts lay emphasis. For example, Chinese ethnic higher education leaders in this study used the term 'guan xi' (關係) in the discussion on relational issues. Hwang (1987, 1997-8, 2000) contributed that guan xi as a Chinese relational system is central to leadership practice in Chinese societies. The first step to find the compatible English term for guan xi was to clarify some of the key characteristics of guan xi through reviewing relevant literature and coding the interview transcripts, following the techniques and process offered by grounded theory methodology. At this stage, I have moved from knowing the term 'guan xi' (upper left circle, Figure 1) to understanding its key characteristics (right circle, Figure 1).

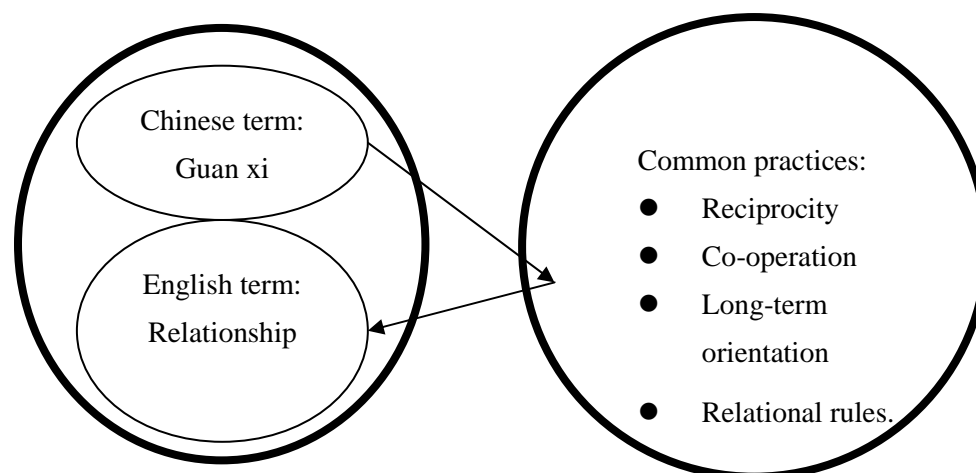


Figure 1 An Example of Ontological Strangification: Guan Xi with Complex Relationship

I then reviewed the Western literature on relationships, and found the notion ‘relationship’ in Western contexts and the term ‘guan xi’ in Chinese societies both focus on reciprocity, co-operation, and long-term orientation (Chapter Two and Three). However, differences in national cultures have impacted on the function of relational rules in different societies. Apart from the literature review, the research findings also show differences in denoted meanings and approaches to relational rules in New Zealand and in East Asian societies. Through the process of finding common and dissimilar patterns of practice, I moved from understanding the Chinese term *guan xi* to understanding the Western notion of relationship (lower left circle, Figure 1).

In this study, the process of ontological strangification served two purposes. First, understanding the denoted meaning of a terminology was required to

construct new leadership knowledge between New Zealand and East Asian higher education contexts. A researcher cannot achieve inter-cultural understandings without in-depth reflection on the events under study. Second, ontological strangification opened up the possibilities of multiple interpretations (Hwang, 2003). It helped to promote alternative interpretations of distributed leadership for international partnerships.

Ontological strangification is intertwined with Shen's (2003) notion of inter-cultural strangification. Shen suggested that contrasting, not simply comparing, cultural concepts is critical to develop international understandings. To Shen (2003), the term 'contrast' is fundamentally richer than comparison, and entails "rhythmic and dialectical interplay between difference and complementarity, continuity and discontinuity, which leads eventually to the real mutual enrichment of different traditions in philosophy" (p. 358). In addition, Wallner (2004) echoed that strangifying perspectives across contexts is more powerful than simply strangifying cultural perspectives within a context.

To sum up, ontological strangification helped this study to compare, contrast and synthesise multiple theoretical perspectives and leadership practice. It also assisted me to develop an awareness of the different manifestations of distributed leadership for international partnerships in Western and East Asian societies.

Pragmatic Strangification

This study also used pragmatic strangification to identify whether the leadership perceptions and practice that emerged from the East Asian and Western higher education contexts are context-specific or had widened pragmatic implications.

According to Shen (2003), pragmatic strangification is concerned with whether the knowledge that is socio-culturally constructed in a particular discipline or context can offer more pragmatic possibilities through taking it out of its original context and applying it to another.

In addition, pragmatic strangification encouraged me to observe my socio-cultural context, where the knowledge is developed, as I drew upon new theories (Wallner, 2000; Wallner & Jandl, 2006). This is because researchers cannot interpret the worlds of participants apart from their own socio-cultural background, heritage and assumptions (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Wallner, 2004). This view resonates with the discussion on prior knowledge in Chapter Three. As a citizen of both Taiwan and New Zealand, I knew both higher education systems based on my own experiences. In addition, my experiences of studying at a higher education institution in China over a summer vacation, travelling in Singapore several times, and participating in conferences in Singapore also allowed me to have basic understandings of the higher education systems in China and Singapore. During the data generation periods, I visited participants in New Zealand, Singapore, China, and Taiwan. Being able to spend at least two weeks in each area, I had the opportunities to observe the cultural nuances and practice of some higher education institutions in these geographic areas. These cultural experiences helped me to examine and identify whether certain leadership perceptions and practice offered widened pragmatic implications.

The following section provides accounts of the research methods used.

Research Methods

This study employed interviewing and document collection as research methods to elicit information for synchronic data analysis. Interviewing acted as the principal approach to acquire information and documents served as complementary data.

Interviewing

Interviewing is the most common data generation approach in qualitative constructivist educational research. Interviewing involves direct verbal interactions between the researcher and participants for co-constructing knowledge. It helps to elicit participants' views of a phenomenon and allows their stories to be heard and for others to reflect on those stories (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Cohen et al., 2000). This study used semi-structured interviews, and paid attention to power-relational issues in the interviewer-interviewee relationship.

Semi-structured Interviews

This study employed semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions (Appendices A & B). Although semi-structured interviews are often conducted based on a set of themes for discussion and depend greatly on the social and communication skills of the interviewer, they have a number of advantages. Advantages may include, for example, a) promoting free interactions between the interviewer and interviewee, b) allowing flexibility for pursuing a discussion around the main areas of concern, c) eliciting participants' views of their past experiences and practices in their own words, and d) permitting probing into the

context of and reasons for answers to interview questions (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Wellington, 2000).

The data gathered from the semi-structured interviews were used to identify thematic categories. In addition, this study was designed so the research participants could co-construct and theorise the data with me. This was achieved through feeding back research findings to the participants, and inviting them to comment on the thematic categories. Finally, emergent themes were used to construct a new theory of distributed leadership for international partnerships between New Zealand and some East Asian Chinese HEIs.

The data generation process was divided into two phases, as mentioned previously. In phase one, I conducted face-to-face, semi-structured individual interviews with 22 higher education leaders in New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and China. Each interview was conducted at an agreed time at the convenience of each interview participant. During face-to-face interviews, important non-verbal cues of interviewees were observed, and added further information to the participants' verbal expression (Curasi, 2001). Non-verbal interactions from the interviewer, such as a questioning nod of the head or an interested expression, may have encouraged interviewees to express their opinions more thoroughly.

I conducted the interviews in either English or Mandarin. The New Zealand and Singaporean participants were interviewed in English. Most of the higher education leaders in Taiwan and China were interviewed in Chinese because the Taiwanese and Chinese participants were second language speakers of English. Conducting interviews with participants in their mother tongue helped them to be more confident and relaxed as they shared their views of leadership for

international partnerships in higher education. Each Chinese interview was summarised and then translated into English.

The second phase of the data generation involved eight face-to-face interviews, one telephone interview, and one written feedback. Each interview was conducted based on the themes that emerged from the initial research findings. The predetermined themes for discussion were initially written in English then translated into Chinese for the Taiwanese and Chinese higher education leaders to comment on. Interviews with the New Zealand and Singaporean leaders were conducted in English language. All the participants were encouraged to express themselves and reflect upon the responses of others while they concentrated on specific interview questions. Follow-up questions, if needed, were derived from the responses of the participants. The semi-structured interviews were capable of exploring in-depth the inner knowledge of the higher education leaders. The longest interview was 2.5 hours, and the shortest was 25 minutes. The rest of the interviews were approximately 45 minutes. The interviews were audio recorded so that I could concentrate on the flow of each interview, and follow each participant's responses.

However, cultural diversity added a complexity to the interview process. As Cohen, Manion, and Morrison specifically pointed out, several sources of interviewer bias may hinder the trustworthiness of the interview, including:

...the attitudes, opinions, and expectations of the interviewer; a tendency for the interviewer to see the respondent in his or her own image; a tendency for the interviewer to seek answers that support preconceived notions; misperceptions on the part of the interviewer of what the respondent is saying; misunderstanding on the part of the respondent of

what is being asked. (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 121)

In order to offset potential bias, I reflected upon my implicit cultural assumptions before I conducted the individual interviews. For example, I assumed giving gifts to participants is appropriate in Chinese cultures, and asking participants to sign a consent form is a general practice in HEIs. After interacting with the participants, I found the Singaporean participants refused to accept gifts from me, and signing a written consent form for interviews is not a general practice in China. In particular, this study paid attention to power-relational issues in cross-cultural interviewing.

Power-relational Issues in Cross-Cultural Interviewing

Based on their model for evaluating power relations in education, this study drew upon Bishop and Glynn's (1999) ideas of addressing the interviewer-interviewee relationships in interviews, while using a grounded theory methodology. Bishop and Glynn (1999) conceptualised interviewing as grounded theory data gathering through considering five power-relational issues, including initiation, benefits, representation, legitimation, and accountability, as discussed previously.

I initiated this study, and thus had power over the following aspects of the research: the design of the methodological framework, the definition of the research objects and questions, the approaches to conducting semi-structured interviews, who gets benefits from this study, and how to present the research findings. I was accountable to the participants. It was also important for the participant's voices to be heard. To facilitate this, I invited the participants to take part in the framing of a new theory, and provided opportunities for them to benefit

from this study through reflecting on their practice, and being informed about the research findings and the practice of others. The participants held higher work positions than I did. Most of the research participants were or had been either involved in senior or middle management positions or had rich experiences in international partnerships. On the other hand, I was a doctoral student, was less experienced in the practice of international partnerships, and was not in any formal position within a higher education institution. In this sense, the interviewees in this study acted as the experts. To bridge the knowledge gap, I sought to enhance my knowledge of international partnerships in higher education through, for example, reviewing the literature and related documents to understand the practice of the participants and the unique contexts of their HEIs.

In addition to interviewing, document collection served as a complimentary approach to data gathering in this study.

Document Collection

This study took into account Yin's (2003) categorisation of five types of documents.

They are:

- a) letters, memoranda, and other communiqués;
- b) agendas, announcements and minutes of meetings, and other written reports of events;
- c) administrative documents – proposals, progress reports, and other internal records;
- d) former studies or evaluations of the same 'site' under study; and
- e) newspaper clippings and other articles appearing in the mass media or in community newsletters. (Yin, 2003, pp. 85-86).

Documents were collected from a variety of sources, such as publications by the participants, national policies on international higher education, individual higher

education institutions' websites, vision statements, and reports produced by the mass media. Some of the participants had published journal articles or books with reference to international higher education. Their publications have been included in the review of literature (Chapter One).

Document collection has many advantages. According to Yin (2003, p. 87), “documentary information is stable (can be reviewed repeatedly), unobtrusive (not created as a result of the study), exact (contains exact names, references, and details of an event), and broad-covering (long span of time, many events, and many settings)”. In addition, document collection as a complementary data generation method provides comparisons with the interview data. The participant’s writing over the past few years provided additional information to their individual interview data.

However, there were some perceived weaknesses associated with gathering documents. In this study, the accessibility of some documents was low. For instance, many higher education institutions’ newsletters were not retrieved easily from the Internet. Some documents produced by individual higher education institutions were for internal use only; and information was not updated on a regular basis. Documents were incorporated with interview data. There were some discrepancies between the interview data and documents. These were clarified by reporting to the participants in the second-phase interviews, and linking to the literature.

Research Participants

There were three reasons why this qualitative study used convenience sampling to recruit a small number of participants, the information on the participants, and the

participant profile. First, as a doctoral student in New Zealand, recruiting participants from a New Zealand higher education institution was considered cost-effective. Second, a public university in New Zealand was selected as representative of Western higher education institutions. The School of Education within the New Zealand university was the centre of focus. Third, the following were selected as representative of East Asian partnerships because they had relationships with this New Zealand university or its School of Education: one Singaporean university, one private university in Taiwan, and one government Department of Education in a province in China. This study also included five participants from a public university in Taiwan and one participant in Beijing, China. The three New Zealand with East Asian partnerships represented different levels of interaction, ranging from general memorandum of understandings, agreements to exchange student and short visits, to a collaborative master's programme for teacher professional development.

The 22 research participants of heterogeneous background had experiences of working in international partnerships. They were from diverse geographic, national, institutional, socio-cultural, and demographic backgrounds. They were not selected on their positions, but whether they had demonstrated leadership experiences and knowledge that are necessary for such international practice. They came from a wide range of academic or administrative ranks (Appendix C). In addition, their demographic backgrounds were different in the following ways: gender, ethnicity, position, discipline, department / faculty / institution, and affiliated higher education institution. The participants were or had been involved in the following leadership roles. Senior management roles included current or

former pro vice-chancellors, presidents or equivalent (three participants). Middle management roles included current or former heads or deans of departments, faculties, colleges or schools and co-ordinators of partnership programmes within HEIs or equivalent (nine participants). The study also involved six faculty members and two administrative staff within departments, faculties, colleges, schools or support units in HEIs or equivalent. Current staff or middle managers of local government bodies who are in charge of international academic exchanges and co-operation (two participants) were also involved in this study.

Due to the small number of East Asian Chinese HEIs that had cooperative partnerships with New Zealand, the East Asian participants were only required to either have had experiences with international co-operation or be involved in the negotiation or implementation of partnership arrangements with Western HEIs, not necessarily New Zealand ones. A heterogeneous sample enabled this research project to identify common patterns and core experiences that were shared across the entire group. According to Patton (2002), “[w]hen selecting a small sample of great diversity, the data and analysis will yield important shared patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity” (p. 235).

All the prospective participants were provided with an invitation letter (Appendix D), a written consent form for participants (Appendix E), the research design (Appendix F), the criteria for selecting participants (Appendix G), and the nominee form (Appendix H). These documents were distributed to the participants using emails, as there is advanced use of ICTs in East Asia and New Zealand. Once the higher education leaders were interviewed, they were asked to nominate

some key contacts who had knowledge and experiences of international partnerships. I then approached these nominated leaders and sought their consent to participate in this study. A list of themes for discussion (Appendix A) was sent to the participants before the phase-one interviews. If the participant was unable to complete the interview at the agreed time, another appointment was made. After the first-phase interviews, the participants were provided with a letter of thanks (Appendix I), and the summary of initial research findings (Appendix B) and were invited to comment on the findings.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were constantly addressed during the research process. Radnor (2001) commented that the researcher is the research instrument “who engages in a transactional process, recognizing that the process is ethics-in-action” (p. 30). The ethical guidelines were developed based on the Western research context. While employing these Western guidelines in East Asian contexts, some approaches became socio-culturally inappropriate during the research process. The Western guidelines for research ethics that were reviewed included: the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Regulations 2000, the ethical guidelines of the New Zealand Association for Research in Education, and some useful principles for good research practice from the literature, including Bishop and Glynn (1999), Ember and Ember (2001), and Lankshear and Knobel (2004). These documents are concerned with two broad dimensions of ethical research practice, the participation and protection of participants.

Soobrayan (2003) cautioned that research ethics are “contextually driven and simultaneously contextually bound” (p.107). As the researcher in this cross-cultural study, I sought to develop inter-cultural understandings, including understandings of national cultures, institutional practice and potential power-relational issues that were embedded within the research context. These understandings were essential for distributing leadership in higher education international partnerships, as discussed in Chapter Two. Based on these understandings, alternative approaches were sought to reflect the participant’s cultural practice.

The following section outlines the specific strategies and specific cultural approaches to research ethics that were used to enhance participant participation and protection.

Participation

Participation was enhanced through seeking informed consent from the participants, their right to withdraw from the research, and their access to data.

First, I sought informed consent without coercion from the participants before the individual interviews. The participants were provided with the necessary information (Appendices D-I) to assist them in making an informed decision about participation in the research. They were given accurate information about the aims and methodology of the research, and their involvement in this study.

I used culturally-specific approaches for informed consent with the Chinese and Taiwanese participants based on their cultural practice. New Zealand and

Singapore participants accepted the practice of signing a consent form. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Chinese people value credit and honour more than laws. Chinese people tend to do business without signing contracts. Signing consent forms is not considered as the norm in educational research in China and Taiwan. I was frequently asked by the Chinese and Taiwanese participants: “What is this form for?” and “Do I need to sign this form?” Hence, I obtained oral consent from some Chinese and Taiwanese participants as they felt uncomfortable signing a consent form. I started each interview by seeking the participant’s consent, to record his or her interview using an audio recorder.

Second, the participants were informed about their right to withdraw partially or totally from the study within a reasonable timeframe. In phase one, one New Zealand participant withdrew from the study, another participant was recruited. In phase two for personal reasons, some participants were unable to participate in a face-to-face interview. The participant’s individual reasons for withdrawing from participating in this study were respected and addressed. They also had the right to choose not to answer any particular question. They had the right to direct any questions regarding the research to me or to my supervisors.

Third, the participants had the right to know the research findings. They were entitled to the copyright on any data contributed by them; whereas I had sole ownership of the analysis of the information produced in the course of the research. Summaries of the interviews were made available to them for checking the accuracy as well as approving its usage in the research.

Protection

Another key area of research ethics is protection of participants. When approaching participants, I sought to protect the participants through ensuring privacy and confidentiality, minimising potential harm, and demonstrating respect. As Stake (2003) advised, qualitative researchers should perceive themselves as guests in the world of the participant, and follow good manners and strict code of ethics.

I was committed to respecting the research participant's privacy and confidentiality. All information collected was kept in secure storage. In addition, the findings of this research are strictly confined to academic use only, such as this study and any resulting publication arising from this research, conference papers (Ho, 2006a, 2006b, 2007) and a book. Pseudonyms were used in this study and other reports to protect the identity of each participant. For example, I adopted codes such as NZ1, TWT2, SG3 and CN4 to refer to particular New Zealand, Taiwanese, Singaporean and Chinese participants. The names of their institutions were also replaced by using the New Zealand university, the Department of Education in a province in China, the Singaporean university, and the Taiwanese university. These New Zealand (NZ) with East Asian Chinese HEI partnerships were referred to as China-NZ, Singapore-NZ and Taiwan-NZ partnerships.

Protecting the participant's privacy and confidentiality reduced potential harm to them and their institutions. In addition, the interview questions in this study were designed to encourage in-depth reflection on the participant's leadership perceptions and practice. However, if the participant considered an interview question to be sensitive, he or she had the right not to answer.

Furthermore, the research participants were respected during the research process. They were able to decide the time and place for interviewing at their convenience. All the face-to-face interviews were conducted at the participant's workplace either in their offices or in meeting rooms as discussed previously. This study followed Bishop and Glynn's (1999) framework for grounded theory interviewing to maximise partnership, participation and protection within interviewer-interviewee relationships. The participant's opinions and comments on the overall study and the interview questions were respected.

In particular, this study valued politeness as an important element of respect, yet societies may follow different approaches to politeness. For example, in the planning stage, I did not plan to give presents to the participants. I initially approached New Zealand, Taiwanese and Singaporean participants without bringing gifts. I was then advised by one of the Taiwanese participants that it is the norm to give presents to scholars in China. Based on this advice, I gave presents to Chinese participants only. Some Chinese participants even gave presents to me in return to show their generosity and appreciation. It was inappropriate in Chinese culture to refuse receiving presents because it would let the other party lose face. Having identified this cultural practice in terms of politeness, I gave presents to the participants and accepted theirs to show respect when I was in China.

Summary

This study employed a qualitative research approach, using grounded theory methodology and strangifications for dealing with cultural data. This study involved 22 research participants from New Zealand, Singapore, China and

Taiwan. Semi-structured interviews and document collection were used to collect data. The research findings were grounded in the participants' experiences of international partnerships. Chapters Five and Six present the findings that emerged from the interviews and documents. In particular, Chapter Five gives accounts of formal arrangements of the China-NZ, Singapore-NZ and Taiwan-NZ partnerships.

CHAPTER FIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS: FORMAL ARRANGEMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Chapter Five presents an overview of the formal arrangements of the China-NZ, Singapore-NZ, and Taiwan-NZ partnerships. This chapter specifically identifies some of the formal arrangements that were organised by these HEIs, for example the motives, leadership, involvement of personnel and students, scope, interaction, and communication. These formal arrangements formed the basis of distributed leadership practice in the New Zealand with East Asian Chinese HEI partnerships. The findings are presented with reference to the literature on formal arrangements in distributed leadership as discussed in Chapter Two.

A New Zealand University

A public university was chosen as representative of New Zealand HEIs in this study. This is because there are no private universities in New Zealand. The documents from this New Zealand university showed statistics of student exchange agreements only. According to the documents, 26 out of 37 student exchange arrangements were with North American and European HEIs. In addition, the university had eight Asian partnerships, including one in Hong Kong, four in Japan, one in Korea, one in Malaysia, and one in Singapore. A private Taiwanese university established student exchange arrangements with the New Zealand university in 2007. The Singapore-NZ and Taiwan-NZ partnerships will be discussed in this Chapter.

Apart from student exchanges, over a four year period, the School of Education at the New Zealand university established a collaborative teacher professional development programme with the Department of Education in a province in China. The China-NZ programme enrolled graduates, teachers at all levels, and administrative staff in government bodies to undertake one to two years of study towards a Masters of Education degree. This China-NZ partnership involved the New Zealand university receiving Chinese foreign fee paying students, and sending New Zealand faculty members to China. This China-NZ partnership can be understood as export education. It involved implementing New Zealand curricular standards, charging foreign student fees, and delivering higher education services to Chinese students.

In addition, the New Zealand university had partnership agreements with a Singaporean university, and a Taiwanese university. Some staff members within the School of Education of the New Zealand university facilitated a short-visit programme for a group of aspiring school principals enrolled a Singaporean university. The short-visit programme appeared to be one-off and unsustainable. The New Zealand university also had a student exchange agreement with the Singaporean university. Up until 2007, the Singapore-NZ student exchange programme accepted some Singaporean students, but lacked New Zealand students who were interested in studying in Singapore. As far as the Taiwan-NZ partnership was concerned, the New Zealand university signed a MOU with a Taiwanese university in 1998, and a student exchange agreement in 2007. During 1998 and 2007, the two universities lacked substantial exchanges and cooperative

activities. The China-NZ, Singapore-NZ and Taiwan-NZ partnerships will be discussed in the following sections.

China-NZ Partnership

The China-NZ partnership was formed between the New Zealand university and the Department of Education (the Department) in a province in China. The Department acted as a legal agency for facilitating a variety of international cultural and academic exchanges and co-operation on behalf of this Chinese province in this study. The Department also provided services to a large number of social bodies, educational institutions, non-government agencies, study abroad students, foreign teachers, researchers, and scholars in the province. One of the major responsibilities of the Department was to facilitate, implement, and administer international partnership programmes which were endorsed by local and foreign HEIs, mainly English-medium HEIs. Different ranks of HEIs in this Chinese province engaged in the act of establishing international partnerships. These partnerships reflected individual HEIs' needs and their partner institutions' strengths.

In particular, the Department formed a collaborative Master's degree programme with the New Zealand university. The China-NZ programme was government funded and targeted the discipline of education. It allowed Chinese education practitioners to undertake professional development courses in New Zealand. The findings indicate that the China-NZ programme involved a number of inter-institutional arrangements.

Motives

The Chinese and New Zealand HEIs formed the partnership based on significantly different motives. To the Chinese partner, the partnership was initiated to respond to the call for bilingual education, to train quality teachers, in particular English teachers, and to speed up the pace for internationalisation at all levels of education systems in the province. To the New Zealand university, the motives for initiating the China-NZ partnership were three-fold: to recruit international students for establishing Asian connections, to expand international linkages, and to make profits from foreign student fees [NZ1, NZ2, NZ4, & NZ5].

Implementation

The Chinese province authorised a local teacher education institution to administer and deliver language training over a three month period prior to the actual degree programme. The New Zealand university also sent lecturers over to China to help train prospective students and to prepare them for learning in a New Zealand academic environment. One Chinese participant commented that having Chinese and New Zealand lecturers on site for preparation of study abroad had several advantages [CN3]. For example, the Chinese lecturers understood the thinking patterns of Chinese students; they were in charge of teaching writing and grammar. New Zealand lecturers were responsible for teaching listening and oral conversation. Integrating both Chinese and New Zealand lecturers in English preparation courses can be understood as a contextualised approach to course delivery. Upon finishing the preparation courses, prospective students sat an

English test. Some Chinese participants [CN4 & CN5] considered the English test as simpler and easier than the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), which was widely accepted by New Zealand HEIs for considering prospective students' eligibility for a degree programme.

The China-NZ programme could be classified as a scholarship programme. The Chinese province paid one third of the tuition fees in the first year. The rest of the tuition fees were sponsored by their employers, such as schools and tertiary education institutions, and the Chinese students themselves. The amount of funding from their employers was reliant on the contract the student negotiated with their employers. The New Zealand university appointed one local lecturer to act as the coordinator of the partnership in New Zealand; whereas the Department in the Chinese province was responsible for monitoring the progress of the partnership in China. There was evidence of frequent communication and visits between partners.

Degree courses offered by the New Zealand university were taught in English by New Zealand lecturers and were confined to education studies. Some compulsory courses were tailored to meet the needs of the Chinese students, and did not involve domestic New Zealand students. A few courses involved Chinese tutors to assist the Chinese students with academic matters. The New Zealand university involved a number of administrative staff, middle managers, and senior leaders to support the China-NZ partnership. The majority of them were of European ethnicity and did not speak Chinese. In order to facilitate communication, the New Zealand university used staff members with Chinese backgrounds in other disciplines other than education. These Chinese staff members were valued as

translators, interpreters, negotiators and cultural advisors in the China-NZ partnership [NZ1, NZ4, CN2 & CN3]. They had the advantage of being fluent in both English and Chinese and familiar with the administration processes and academic requirements in both systems, and understood the thinking patterns of both parties. This helped to improve communication efficiency and student learning.

One of the staff members advised that the partnership could be further enhanced if the New Zealand university had employed academic staff members of Chinese ethnicity within the education discipline to assist the Chinese students with academic issues as well as facilitating international communication [CN3].

Termination

The partnership finished in 2006 due to the Chinese province's shift in funding directions. It showed that over time this Chinese province changed its priority in supporting professional development for educational practitioners. One Chinese participant commented that there was a burgeoning demand for partnering with Western HEIs which can offer doctoral degree programmes [CN2]. This was because of the rising demands for Chinese senior teachers, lecturers, and administrative managers to pursue higher qualifications. Another Chinese participant also noted the province's emphasis on upgrading the capacity of education practitioners through introducing international doctoral degree programmes [CN4]. However, due to Chinese education practitioners' low level of English proficiency, writing doctoral thesis in English was considered as the main barrier for them to pursue higher degrees in a purely English-speaking Western HEI.

Hence, it would be ideal for Chinese HEIs to partner with HEIs which are capable of understanding Chinese students' special needs, communicating with Chinese students in their mother tongue, and at the same time delivering Western or advanced knowledge in education.

In addition, the rise of the New Zealand dollar over the past few years had increased the cost of pursuing master's degrees at the New Zealand university [NZ4]. Some negative publicity about New Zealand higher education from the Chinese students who had returned to China also affected potential Chinese students' decisions to study in New Zealand HEIs [NZ4 & NZ5].

Up until 2008, this Chinese province had only provided funding for education practitioners to study in a master's programme in educational leadership in a Singaporean university.

Singapore-NZ Partnerships

This section provides an overview of the Singapore-NZ partnerships, which were established by the New Zealand university and a Singaporean university. This Singaporean HEI was ranked among the top 201 world class HEIs, based on the Times Higher Education Supplement (2007) results, and was highly internationalised. The Singaporean university exhibited a wide range of international exchange and cooperative opportunities for staff and students across different disciplines and levels. The partnership programmes for students fell into four categories: student exchange programmes, studying abroad programmes, working abroad programmes, and travel programmes. In particular, this Singaporean university had a student exchange agreement with the New Zealand

university in this study, and sent a group of school principals and teachers over to the New Zealand university for a short-visit programme. The following sections introduce the Singapore-NZ student exchange programme, and the short-visit programme.

Student Exchange Programme

The Singapore-NZ student exchange agreement allowed all undergraduate students from both parties across different disciplines to spend a period of time, preferably a semester, at the partner institution. As in other student exchange programmes, this Singapore-NZ student exchange programme was designed to be reciprocal. However, one of the New Zealand participants [NZ5] revealed a difficulty of mutual exchanges and little activity because of no undergraduate New Zealand students participating. A New Zealand higher education leader stated:

In the first 5-year term of that agreement, we only had ‘one’ student from [Singapore] here, and we didn’t send the students to [Singapore]...When we renewed the agreement, we also did accept to take another two [Singaporean] students to come next semester (B semester, 2006)... After we have accepted these two additional students, the ‘reciprocity balance’ on that agreement will be three to zero! Now, unless we get students to go back in the other direction, we will not be able to accept more [Singaporean] students, for the government reasons articulated before, also,...because it’s embedded in their agreement that the agreement being reciprocal. [NZ5-1]

Despite the lack of activity and reciprocity, the New Zealand university had endeavoured to sustain the Singapore-NZ student exchange partnership. The main

reason may be because this Singaporean university was considered as highly ranked among top-tier HEIs worldwide [NZ5].

Short-Visit Programme

The Singaporean university provided professional development programmes for educational practitioners in Singapore schools. These professional development programmes integrated elements of international visits for extending the learning of educational practitioners. One Singaporean participant [SG3] commented that up until 2006 the Singaporean university had sent groups of educational practitioners to Europe, Australia, Hong Kong, China, and New Zealand. She said “We see the world as a campus!” [SG3].

The Singapore-NZ short-visit programme began in 2004, and was sponsored by the Ministry of Education in Singapore to meet the purpose of learning internationally. According to the participants [NZ4-1 & SG3], a group of twelve Singaporean aspiring school principals visited the New Zealand university for leadership development over a period of two weeks. This short-visit programme involved visiting various primary and secondary schools in New Zealand, and allowed the participants to learn the management, support systems, government policies, teaching, and learning in New Zealand schools.

The initiators at both universities played a significant role in realising this partnership. The New Zealand initiator was an academic middle manager, had well-established international networks, and supported making linkages with HEIs in Asia. The initiator in Singapore supported bringing the Singaporean group to New Zealand for professional development. The two initiators met at various

conferences, began to know each other's work, and later on developed the short-visit programme [NZ4-1]. It implied the importance of establishing international connections as higher education leaders engage in international exchanges of knowledge and practice.

This partnership was a one-off programme, and did not turn into a long-term partnership. This may be because of the departure of the initiator from the Singaporean university. This would affect the Singaporean university's connection with the New Zealand university. Another reason may be because the Singaporean university tended to send its students to different education systems for professional development. As they had sent a group of teachers to New Zealand, it would be more likely to send other groups to different countries. In addition, the Singaporean participants in this study revealed a lack of New Zealand contacts and motives for forming partnerships with the New Zealand university [SG1, SG2 & SG3]. The lack of interest may be a result of New Zealand HEIs' lack of visibility and low profile in East Asia.

Taiwan-NZ Partnerships

The New Zealand university also nurtured partnerships with a university in Taiwan. This Taiwanese university placed a strategic priority on internationalisation, and mainly involved establishing sister university relationships and study abroad programmes with foreign HEIs. The New Zealand university in this study initially formed a sister university relationship with this Taiwanese university in 1998. By sister universities, this study refers to

university-wide or comprehensive partnerships between HEIs. In 2007, the two universities further developed a student exchange partnership.

Sister University Relationship

According to the documents, from 1968 to 2008, the Taiwanese university had signed 102 sister university agreements with HEIs around the world. However, the statistical data lacked information as to which partnership agreements had expired and which were active. Among these agreements, six had led to cooperative programmes. These six cooperative programmes were all established after 2000. This suggested that partnerships which lead to substantial academic exchanges and co-operation between the Taiwanese university and its overseas partners had only started recently.

The Taiwanese university signed a memorandum of understandings (MOU) with the New Zealand university in 1998 to form a sister university relationship. It was initiated by both parties with an intention to establish a balanced spread of partnerships across geographic regions, and across public and private higher education providers. There were mutual visits associated with the Taiwan-NZ partnership at the contract signing stage. A New Zealand participant who was part of the team that initiated the Taiwan-NZ sister university relationship, revealed:

The Vice Chancellor visited China and Asia with a delegation and we discussed the possibility. I then looked at a number of institutions that I might want to visit, and I tried to get a balance between the state funded institutions and private institutions. [This Taiwanese university] is a really good private institution. That's how that came about. And then we visited them...I think signed a MOU. And then they came and visited us...and then I returned...so it basically starts with leaders visiting each other.

[NZ1]

A Taiwanese participant who knew about the Taiwan-NZ sister university relationship also recalled mutual visits [TWT1]. However, apart from reciprocal visits between leaders and scholars, this MOU had not been pushed further into substantial programmes until 2007. The term 'sleeping partnership' was raised by a Singaporean leader to refer to the partnership with low level or non interaction during the term of the agreement [SG1]. The term 'sleeping partnership' helps to describe the Taiwan-NZ sister university relationship.

Between 1998 and 2007, the Taiwanese university reported the New Zealand institution as its sister university; whereas the New Zealand institution did not. One New Zealand administrative staff [NZ5] revealed that the different understanding of this Taiwan-NZ sister university relationship may lie in the different interpretation of what counts as an existing partnership. To this New Zealand participant, a MOU which follows no collaborative activities did not count as substantial partnership, and only provided book value, even though this MOU did not have a date of expiry [NZ5]. The comments from the New Zealand leader [NZ5] on the MOU as providing book value may be true for the Taiwanese university. The Taiwan-NZ sister university relationship had been widely reported on the Taiwanese university's promotional materials, such as newsletters and web pages.

When asked if they know about the Taiwan-NZ sister university relationship, all of the leaders within the College of Education at the Taiwanese university except for one senior manager revealed that it was the first time they had heard about this partnership. However, the Taiwanese participants noticed that the Taiwanese university in general had a lot of sister university relationships. One

participant mentioned:

As staff members, we know very little about [the Taiwanese university's] international partners...This is because generally we did not touch that area. We are not informed of how those sister universities were selected. All I know is that [this university] each year send a group of people for a tour to visit sister universities. [TWT5]

According to a Taiwanese participant [TWT2], international partnerships that empowered professional dialogue between colleges, faculties, schools or departments within a large HEI would create more practical values than comprehensive partnership agreements between universities. This Taiwanese leader further suggested that a focus on shared or similar issues in a region, for example collaborative research on educational reforms in the Asia-Pacific region, may help to facilitate professional dialogue between partners. This perspective was agreed by all the participants in the second-phase interviews.

However, an academic middle manager pointed out the paradox that partnerships established at the department level may be short of funding when compared with those at the university level, and that may result in a lack of support:

For example, sometimes overseas scholars would like to come to visit us, but the College of Education did not have special funding to support their visits. You have to use resources though! In terms of financial support, the College of Education still requires that kind effort from the mother university. This is because individual colleges have limited resources. Up until now the College of Education has not had a complete set of processes and flexible funding. If you have considerable support behind you, you may be able to speak louder and you are more likely to carry out your promises. [TWT2]

This participant's comments conveyed the significance of flexible funding, support and formalised operating processes within individual departments, colleges, schools, or faculties for guiding higher education leaders to engage in international partnership.

Student Exchange Partnership

The Taiwanese university formed student exchange partnerships based on reciprocal terms. This implied the Taiwanese university would send and receive students to and from some of its sister universities.

During my visit to the Taiwanese university in 2006, I was asked by a lecturer, who I interviewed, to give a speech in English about the New Zealand higher education system to a class of around 40 students. At that time, the students had limited understandings of the New Zealand higher education system. The Taiwanese university expected to send some students over to the New Zealand university in the 2009 academic year for an overseas study experience. This was based on Taiwan-NZ student exchange agreement signed in 2007. The data showed tremendous development in the Taiwan-NZ partnership during the past few years. However, the documents only provided evidence of sending Taiwanese students to its sister universities, including the New Zealand university. There was lack of data to show that this Taiwanese university received students from its sister universities, apart from arrangements with a Japanese university. It was unclear that mutual exchanges of students existed in the Taiwan-NZ partnership.

Student exchanges have become one of the major strategies for internationalisation in the Taiwanese university. However, the participants at the

College of Education reported that education students lacked participation in student exchange activities [TWT2, TWT3, TWT4, and TWT5]. English language capacity was an area of concern. Students who participated in exchange programmes at this Taiwanese university mainly came from disciplines of English and other foreign languages. In addition, one participant considered the decision makers within the College of Education were generally lecturers above 50 years of age, not proficient in English, and were short of incentives to learn English and participate in international activities [TWT5]. This may have a bearing upon education students' perceptions of internationalisation and incentives for taking part in student exchange programmes. In addition, the field of education in Taiwan was rather static than other fields of study [TWT5]. At the time I conducted the first interviews (year 2005), the College of Education had recently established international partnerships with HEIs in Hong Kong, Macau, the United States and the United Kingdom.

Theorising Formal Arrangements in Distributed Leadership

The literature review and the findings of this study both support the knowledge claim that formal arrangements act as a fundamental element of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships. To sum up, the New Zealand university formed partnerships with a government Department of Education in China, and universities in Singapore and Taiwan. The China-NZ partnership was based on a master's of education programme in New Zealand, and involved delivering New Zealand curriculum and receiving Chinese students. The Singapore-NZ partnerships included a student exchange agreement, and a

short-visit programme for Singaporean teachers to learn the New Zealand education system. The Taiwan-NZ partnership was initially formed based on a sister university MOU, and was later on expanded into a student exchange agreement.

The findings support the literature on formal arrangements in three aspects: formal agreements, individual institutional interests, and middle management. First, formal distribution of leadership roles required signing formal agreements which specified the duration, scope, personnel, and resources of the partnership programme or activity, as well as relevant financial and professional gains, and responsibilities of both parties. The interviews and documents suggested that university-wide bonding or sister university relationships, formed by the top management of two HEIs, did not necessarily lead to substantial exchanges and co-operation. Sister university bonding was covered by MOU. Most of those MOUs remained static or had little substantial reciprocal activity, lacked interaction, leadership champions, and a home or base for nurturing long term relationships.

In this study, formal distribution of leadership roles involved top-down, bottom-up, and horizontal models. By top-down models, this study referred to partnerships that are initiated by the top management of the HEI, and that specific partnership activities, resources, and leadership roles are later specified and developed between partner institutions. As Hartley (2007) noted, within the framework of government education policies and agenda, hierarchical forms of accountability remain legitimate in distributing leadership. The findings suggest formal top-down distribution of leadership roles was the norm and guided the

HEIs in this study to meet education standards set by the government. Bottom-up models of international partnerships involved department or faculty-based partnership initiatives, and were championed by academic staff, who shared common research interests at two HEIs. These academic leaders may not be in middle or senior management positions within their HEIs. However, they are the foundation of the partnership. The research findings show bottom-up approaches to international partnerships with faculty commitments and engagement hold promise for building substantial partnerships. Within a large pool of partnership agreements, this study found only a small number of MOU had grown into a substantial exchange, collaborative or joint degree programmes. These substantial partnerships involved intensive interaction, department-based leadership, clearly defined personnel roles, and carefully designed scope and complexity of the programme or activity.

Leadership roles and resources can be distributed horizontally and cross-culturally between the partners, based on formal arrangements. This research finding is parallel with Beerkens and Derwende's (2007) views that international higher education partnerships involve horizontal arrangements between HEIs. Initiators and implementers of partnership programmes, alumni, and a number of supportive groups from both parties together formed a network of inter-organisational work relationships.

Second, the China-NZ, Singapore-NZ and Taiwan-NZ partnerships were developed based on the interests of the university or government Department of Education in a province in China. The institutional self-interest changed over time. Hence, international partnership programmes and activities were not sustainable.

Third, middle management acted as partnership initiators, implementers or co-ordinators within the faculty, school, college or department of education. They were either designated leadership roles by the senior management, or they initiated partnership programmes and sought support from the senior management. Distributing leadership roles to middle management fundamentally involved vertical (top-down and bottom-up) distribution of leadership.

The findings of this study suggest that formal arrangements are only a fraction of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships. Distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships should also involve enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context, sustainability, and learning. Chapter Six presents the research findings that go beyond formal arrangements of the New Zealand with East Asian Chinese partnerships.

**CHAPTER SIX RESEARCH FINDINGS: DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP
IN INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: BEYOND FORMAL
ARRANGEMENTS**

Chapter Five has presented the findings that were specifically relevant to the formal arrangements of leadership roles and responsibilities based on the experiences of 22 New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders and documents. Chapter Six further identified other groups of interrelated issues and factors that impacted on the practice of distributed leadership in the China-NZ, Singapore-NZ and Taiwan-NZ partnerships. They are enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context, sustainability, learning, and multiple practice.

These themes are linked back to Chapter Two the key elements of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships. The constructivist epistemology as discussed in Chapter Three also helped to interpret the interview data, particularly individual active construction of knowledge, the importance of prior knowledge, and knowledge construction as embedded in socio-cultural contexts and as social practice. The higher education leaders' multiple distributed leadership practice can be conceptualised as the outcome of learning, understanding and interpreting their and their partners' practice and contexts, based on culturally-embedded prior knowledge.

Enhanced Leadership Opportunities

The literature reviewed in Chapter Two suggests that enhanced leadership opportunities is a key element of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships. The findings of this study show that the New Zealand with East Asian Chinese HEI partnerships involved a wide range of people within and outside the HEI to support international partnerships. They are administrators, mandarin-speaking staff, doctoral students and alumni. They actively used multiple channels to facilitate inter-institutional communication. Nevertheless, some higher education leaders in this study did not see themselves as having formal leadership positions to initiate international partnerships. These higher education leaders' views of leadership were influenced by culturally embedded prior knowledge, as discussed in Chapter Three, that had impacted on their involvement in internationalisation activities. The following sections provide accounts of the themes which are specifically relevant to enhanced leadership opportunities: widened leadership roles and opportunities; and perceptions of leadership roles.

Widened Leadership Roles and Opportunities

Key finding: Widened leadership roles and opportunities were found as being a strong contributing factor for distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships.

The interview data showed that widened leadership roles and opportunities had an impact on distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships.

This study identified a number of key stakeholders both academics and administrators, who helped to distribute leadership within international partnerships. These key stakeholders were partnership initiators, implementers, administrative staff, academic staff, alumni, Mandarin-speaking staff, and other support groups. They were not confined to the senior and middle management of the HEI. They were key support persons who contributed to the partnerships, based on their expertise, knowledge and experiences, within and outside the HEI as well as at different management levels of the HEI.

Hence, the findings of this research project showed the existence of hybrid leadership (Gronn, 2008), including lateral and horizontal leadership, as discussed in Chapter Two. Distributing leadership opportunities in the HEI required an institutional culture that encourage people at lower levels of the management hierarchy to engage in leadership roles (Harris et al., 2007; Woods et al., 2004). The findings support Harris' (2008) views that distributed leadership allows coexistence of formal leadership and informal leadership within an organisation, and consolidates the relationship between “vertical and lateral leadership processes” (p. 174). Vertical leadership process refers to formal and hierarchical distribution of leadership roles and responsibilities (Harris, 2008). Lateral leadership process involves engagement of formal and informal leadership across different levels of the HEI (Hargreaves & Fink, 2008). The literature on distributed leadership identified lateral distribution of leadership as emergent activities when groups of people work together, share leadership roles, and collectively make decisions towards desired goals (Gronn, 2008; Harris et al., 2007). The research findings show enhanced leadership opportunities were carried

out through laterally distributing leadership roles and responsibilities.

Partnership initiators were perceived by the participants as people of authority who could oversee the big picture, communicate vision, allocate physical resources, align human efforts, and foster partnership opportunities through their social networks. A New Zealand participant gave an example of how he, as the initiator, developed an international postgraduate programme:

I had a representative come from [Europe] which is my [European] connection and they asked me if I'd like to take 70 post graduate students...Academically I can do it, but I didn't realise at the time that it would necessitate me becoming engaged in a whole range of relationships which I didn't think...Very quickly I developed a whole new range of skills and expertise which I had never thought of...I came to the realisation that this is a really good way for students to get an educational programme. No university has the claim on all knowledge. You cannot go to one university anywhere and think, "I am going to get the total education". Universities can't afford the critical mass of staff, they can't afford the resources, they can't afford a whole range of things and by definition, professors or teachers - some are better than others. I started thinking about that we could actually start putting programmes together and so the group programme actually used 4 or 5 professors from [Europe] who came to [my university] to work with us. I used one Canadian professor, and I also used a couple of industry people and I think we had about 14 or 15 different people working at some stages of the programme. [NZ2]

Initiators were normally higher education leaders in senior or middle management positions, such as Pro Vice-Chancellors, university presidents, heads of departments or faculties, deans of schools, or chairpersons of departments. In particular, the China-NZ partnership involved Chinese government officials in a province as it was a government funded partnership programme.

Implementers were essential to promote, build and sustain existing partnerships on a daily basis. Implementers were normally nominated by initiators upon considering their expertise and knowledge. Implementers could involve both academic and administrative higher education personnel, in middle management positions or without managerial responsibilities. The following comment from a New Zealand participant points to the importance of implementers:

It's the specialisation we are talking about. It depends very often on individuals. That's the key ...It is individuals that make it work. I can go and sign documents, but unless there are individuals who are interested...[NZ1]

Higher education leaders who had major administrative responsibilities provided tremendous support to other higher education personnel within and/or outside individual HEIs. These administrative staff might be at any level of a HEI or government body. They might be senior managers, middle managers, or staff without management responsibilities. They demonstrated a wide understanding of issues and factors that affected their institutions. All the New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders with administrative responsibilities understood the complexity of inter-organisational administration, the impact of currency exchange rates on foreign student tuition fees, the significance of the media on the HEI's reputation, and the cultural as well as financial benefits that emerged from partnerships. The administrative staff who directly dealt with international students also provided pastoral care [NZ4 & CN3].

The academic staff in this study focused on the academic side of international partnerships. They presented an in-depth understanding of the academic issues they

experienced or their students experienced in partnerships, for example different approaches to teaching and learning, different academic standards, and different understandings of plagiarism [NZ1, NZ3, CN1, SG1, SG2, SG3, TWC1, TWC2, TWT1, TWT2, TWT3, TWT4, & TWT5]. Some of them mentioned that they provided pastoral care to their international students.

Alumni who had been trained at a foreign institution and had positive experiences with the institution were found to be important in partnership building. For example, many New Zealand leaders found alumni, particularly postgraduate international graduates, acted as agents or ambassadors for the institution or country where they obtained their overseas qualifications. These postgraduate international graduates included government officials or people involved with educational institutions in their home country. A New Zealand leader gave an example of an Indonesian travel study programme which involved an Indonesian graduate who had completed her master's study at the New Zealand institution and who was contacted by her government to foster a partnership [NZ1].

However, alumni who had negative social interaction experiences in a foreign institution may be less willing to foster partnerships with that institution. For example, one female Taiwanese participant pointed out that many senior staff members in HEIs in Taiwan pursued their doctoral degrees in Western countries, primarily in the United States. They appeared to have little incentive in initiating and participating in international partnerships with these Western institutions. She felt this might be because these academic leaders had not developed social networks and had not become involved in the local community during the course of their doctoral studies. She commented:

When they did their doctoral studies in the United States, they did not watch TV, read newspapers...they did nothing but study in the research office or laboratory...they had little participation in the foreign society...Even at the time when they got their degrees, they had few contacts with other places except their supervisors and colleagues...so they did not have in-depth 'cultural observation' of that society, and they will encounter cultural problems in international partnerships. [TWT5]

Mandarin-speaking staff members were found to be key to the New Zealand university in communicating with Chinese and Taiwanese partners. This study found Chinese Mandarin-speaking staff members were valued as match makers of partnerships, interpreters and advisors of cultural issues at the New Zealand university. In this study, the China-NZ and Taiwan-NZ partnerships were promoted by a Chinese staff member at the New Zealand university, who had complex relationships (*guan xi*) with many Asian HEIs due to his previous work experiences in China. As mentioned previously, one Chinese participant [CN2] commented that the New Zealand university was chosen over another Australian HEI for a partnership because of this Chinese staff member's relational networks in China. The relational networks of staff members contributed to the New Zealand university's success in winning the partnership opportunity.

The interview data showed that Mandarin-speaking staff were used during the negotiation processes. After the MOU or partnership agreement was signed, they were irregularly requested for assistance in communication with the Mandarin-speaking partner so communication could be facilitated through the partner's mother tongue. Other support included doctoral students who helped international students with academic issues, and international centres that assisted international students with enrolment and student visa applications.

The findings of this study show that lateral distribution of leadership capital could be hindered by the divisions between academic disciplines and departments within HEIs. For example, information on student exchange programmes was not openly shared between the college of applied linguistics (which sent out a large number of exchange students) and the college of education (which lacked exchange students) at the Taiwanese university. This was probably because the disciplinary division of HEIs predominantly encourage independent practice in teaching and research and may have inhibited networks and collaborative practices (Burchell & Dyson, 2005; Holley & Dagg, 2006; Kutner et al., 2006).

Perceptions of Leadership Roles

Key finding: The higher education leaders' culturally embedded perceptions of leadership roles were seen to provide a strong basis for their practice in international partnerships.

Culturally specific perceptions of leadership roles were identified as a key contributing factor influencing higher education leaders' different approaches to distributed leadership in international partnerships. As discussed in Chapter Three, culturally embedded knowledge shapes higher education leaders' attitudes, values, action and beliefs. This prior knowledge impacted on the participant's perceptions of their own leadership roles and practice in international partnerships.

In terms of the perceptions of their own leadership roles, the New Zealand and Singapore leaders revealed a higher level of ownership of leadership in international partnerships than their Taiwanese and Chinese counterparts. This

study found the Chinese and Taiwanese scholars tended to aspire to leadership and relationships governed by rules. When asked about their leadership roles in international partnerships, the Chinese and Taiwanese academic leaders articulated international partnerships as something additional to their work responsibility and indicated that only those in authorities or positions in relation to international partnerships could exercise leadership. For example, a Taiwanese leader revealed:

I am not in the position of developing international partnerships...you should really ask the head of the International Centre or someone at the senior management...[TWT4]

Some of the participants had been in senior management positions in the past. However, they felt that they were not currently in 'official' positions to initiate partnerships [CN1 and TWT3]. The research findings of this study show that leadership was interpreted in a narrower sense by the Taiwanese and Chinese participants when compared with the New Zealand participants. Chinese and Taiwanese participants believed that leadership mainly came from authority of power and academics in middle and senior management roles.

In the New Zealand university, not only academic higher education leaders acknowledged their leadership responsibilities, but administrative staff also believed in their leadership roles in international partnerships. Administrators' leadership roles involved sustaining ties, sharing expertise, providing pastoral care to international students, and assisting academic staff in international partnerships. As this study interviewed Singaporean academics only, it would be meaningful for future studies to explore Singaporean administrators' views of their own leadership roles in international partnerships.

This study found that some cultures supported individuals taking up leadership opportunities and roles based on their expertise, knowledge and experiences, but some did not. This research finding indicated the link between the higher education leaders' culturally embedded prior knowledge, and their tendency to taking up leadership opportunities (Chapter Two). This finding echoed the literature on efficacy beliefs and confidence as discussed in Chapter Two. As mentioned previously, the more positively one perceives his or her own leadership roles, the more likely he or she would take up leadership opportunities. Hence, taking up leadership opportunities did not occur immediately under the influence of cultures that support higher level of power distance, such as Chinese and Taiwanese cultures (Chapter Two). The Chinese and Taiwanese higher education leaders in this study needed conditions such as self-efficacy beliefs and confidence to step outside of their original roles and engage in other leadership roles, such as international partnerships.

Hence, self-confidence becomes an essential condition for distributed leadership at the personal level. According to Altbach and Knight (2007), social confidence in higher education international partnerships requires “giving priority to defining the roles and responsibilities of all players involved in quality assurance—including individual institutions and providers, national quality-assurance systems, non-governmental and independent accreditation bodies, professional associations, and regional or international organizations” (p. 302).

Understanding the Context

The second category that emerged from the research findings is that of understanding the context. In this study, the individual higher education leaders' personal and organisational practice appeared to be constantly in negotiation with issues and factors that were embedded within local and global higher education contexts. The research findings suggest the importance of understanding the context where international partnerships between HEIs take place. As Southworth (2004) highlighted, “[c]ontext is not a simple phenomenon—it is multiple, blended and variable” (p. 347). Hence, understanding the context was complicated and required the higher education leaders' attention to the issues and factors that were embedded within the context. An understanding of the context helped higher education leaders to move beyond cultural differences, and focus on shared or similar issues that different countries encountered.

This section identifies some issues and factors within the context that impacted on the development of international partnerships. Included themes are centres and peripheries in world higher education, competitive forces in higher education markets, and culturally-specific relational rules.

Centres and Peripheries in World Higher Education

Key finding: The phenomenon of centres and peripheries in the world higher education system was evident

The research findings echoed the literature on centres and peripheries in the world higher education system. With globalisation and internationalisation, the world of centres and peripheries has developed in a more complex way than in the past (see

Chapter One for discussion on Altbach's notion of centres and peripheries).

Traditionally, the West was considered the centre and East Asia was regarded as the periphery. The suggestion was made that the gap between East Asia and West was narrowing. In this study, some of the leaders perceived East Asia and West as a fluid and dynamic concept, rather than two separate notions. To them, boundaries between East and West in these East Asian societies have become blurred. In particular, the research findings show that the concept of East and West has become less relevant to today's HEIs. East and West can be categorised based on different standards such as cultural orientations and economic development. One Chinese leader commented that:

Traditionally, the East was generally perceived as countries strongly influenced by Confucianism such as China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea and Singapore. This is to view the East from a narrow scope. If we expanded the scope of the East a bit, Middle Eastern, Islamic and Buddhism cultures can be included in Eastern cultures. Another aspect of identifying East and West is from an economic perspective. Compared to some under developed and developing economies in Asia, Japan can be counted as a Western country.[CN1]

In addition, the Singaporean, Chinese and Taiwanese participants commented that New Zealand HEIs were not on their universities' priority list as far as partnerships were concerned. In addition, the Western HEIs which the East Asian participants referred to were in highly industrialised European countries in the OECD. On the other hand, Singapore, China and Taiwan have not yet entered the OECD realm. Industrialised OECD countries have been traditionally perceived as the centres, and their HEIs have been highly ranked (see Chapter One). However, to the Taiwanese and Singaporean higher education leaders, New Zealand HEIs

were not highly ranked as far as international partnerships were concerned. It implied a peripheral status of New Zealand HEIs in the context of world higher education markets. In this study, the Singapore university also emerged as a centre of international higher education in Asia where there is blend of East Asian and Western cultures.

The research findings suggest that categorising HEIs as Eastern or Western or as centres and peripheries has become complex and confusing in today's higher education environment. The traditional interpretation of the West as the centre and the rest as peripheries is inappropriate to portray the multiple roles and practice of individual HEIs. Hence, it would be meaningful to identify the special practice of a HEI, other than simply labelling the HEI as Eastern or Western based on its geographic location. For example, one Singaporean leader commented:

Japan is the East...but Japan is very modernised, and more modernised than New Zealand! So how do you define the East? Where does the East stop? Does it stop in India? Does it stop in Afghanistan? Does it stop in Turkey? Those categories of East and West are inherently problematic. So you have to sort that out when you are looking at East and West institutions and defining by looking at those institutions, particularly institutions in Taiwan, China are of a certain kind, institutions in Singapore are of a different kind, and institutions in New Zealand are of a different kind. And use those three different categories of institutions to see how the integration and co-operation can work out. And then you might find some similarities and differences. [SG]

Along with the phenomenon of multiple centres and peripheries in the world higher education are competitive forces in higher education markets.

Competitive Forces in Higher Education Markets

Key finding: The international higher education partnerships discussed can be conceptualised as being competitive forces in international higher education markets

Supporting Porter's (2008) model (Chapter Two), the research findings indicate a number of competitive forces in international higher education markets. These forces are customers and suppliers of Western higher education services, new entrants, substitute higher education services, existing competitors, and partners. HEIs may carry multiple roles in the practice of international partnerships.

In this study, East Asian HEIs can be perceived as the major customers of Western higher education services. HEIs in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the USA and the UK are suppliers of English-medium degree programmes. These Western HEIs are in some ways competing with each other in terms of recruiting international students from East Asia. However, Western and East Asian HEIs can also be conceptualised as partners as they enter into partnership agreements. New entrants may be new HEIs or companies that offer Western knowledge, non-degree-granting professional training or certificates in East Asia. Substitute services may be advanced knowledge other than Western knowledge that is required by East Asian HEIs.

A Chinese participant noted some market mechanisms helped to balance power relations between export education providers and consumers of higher education services. She revealed:

I think Western hegemony in world higher education is gradually reducing. Now they are not so much dominant. If they become hegemonic, we could

choose not to cooperate with them, couldn't we! We don't necessarily have to partner up with a particular HEI. There are a variety of HEIs in many countries that we can choose from!...It's because we are buyers and they are sellers! Buyers still have some ascendancy over sellers. [CN3-2]

This comment indicates the bargaining power of consumers in the international education market. Porter's (2008; 2006) model of five competitive forces provides an analytical lens to explore the bargaining power of East Asian HEIs (as customers of Western higher education services), and the bargaining power of Western HEIs (as suppliers).

According to the interview data, East Asian HEIs as customers presented the following bargaining power. Firstly, the cost involved in switching Western higher education service providers was low in collaborative programmes without joint establishment of campuses, such as the China-NZ collaborative degree programme, and the Singapore-NZ short-visit programme and student exchange programmes. Secondly, rankings of world HEIs and information of individual HEIs (such as university websites, newsletters, government reports, journal articles) were open to the public and were available through the media. The East Asian HEIs as customers of Western higher education services had full access to information by simply searching the internet. Thirdly, existing substitute Western higher education services were available in the world higher education markets for East Asian HEIs to partner with. Fourthly, East Asian HEIs as customers were very price sensitive in the international education markets. Changes in East Asian HEIs' funding, their partners' tuition fee structure, and currency exchange rates influenced their partnership decisions.

Western HEIs as suppliers also possess some bargaining power. The findings suggest their main bargaining power came from low supplier switching costs. In particular, prestigious Western HEIs can terminate a partnership with an East Asian HEI, and initiate a new one relatively easily. However, the data from this study showed the New Zealand university may have suffered from weak bargaining power due to the following reasons. Firstly, the visibility of this New Zealand university in East Asian higher education markets was low. The East Asian higher education leaders in this study understood very little about the expertise and reputation of the New Zealand university. Secondly, the East Asian HEIs in this study had already established partnerships with other higher education service providers in the USA, the UK, and/or Australia. This may have impacted on this New Zealand HEI's partnership opportunities. Thirdly, the data showed the cost of delivering Western higher education services was fixed, and could not be adjusted along with the currency exchange rate. The above factors hindered this New Zealand university's partnerships with East Asian HEIs.

The interview data of this study showed the New Zealand university had advantages when competing with other international higher education service providers. These advantages include New Zealand being an English speaking country, having a comparatively safe environment, low tuition fees and living expenses, developed international networks and ease of access to the Asia-Pacific region. These advantages allowed the New Zealand university to serve as an alternative to dominant North American, European and Australian higher education service providers.

In addition, the Singaporean and New Zealand universities were at the same time competitors for and partners in different opportunities within a complex international education market in the Asia-Pacific region. The Department of Education in a Chinese province was a customer of the New Zealand university's and the Singaporean university's education services. Meanwhile, the Singaporean and New Zealand universities were partners in student exchanges.

Porter's (2008) notions of competitive forces helped this study to review the New Zealand university's strategic position in international partnerships with East Asian HEIs. However, this study argues that competitive forces can only serve as a starting point for practitioners to understand the power-relational context where a particular international partnership programme or activity is situated.

Culturally-specific Relational Rules

Key finding: Understandings of culturally specific relational rules helped to enhance interaction and communication with higher education leaders from other cultures in international partnerships.

Culturally-specific relational rules were implicitly embedded in the participant's practice in international higher education partnerships. This study found that the New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders used culturally-specific approaches to establish relationships. The ways New Zealand and East Asian participants communicate, show politeness, and build relationships were constructed differently. The findings show the leaders of Chinese ethnicity in Taiwan and China demonstrated a strong Chinese orientation in the discussion on leadership practice and relational rules. Nevertheless, this study found that, if the

participant could distribute resources and arrange personnel based on the partner's unique cultural orientation and needs, chances of sustaining HEI international partnerships were high. This study identified some culturally specific relational rules: face, favour, power distance, long-term orientation, and attitude towards signing contracts.

In this study, the Taiwanese and Chinese leaders acknowledged how 'face' (*mein zi* 面子) and 'favour' (*ren qing* 人情) work in building relationships (*guan xi*) in Chinese societies. During the interviews, Chinese and Taiwanese participants talked in Chinese about notions of face and favour in Chinese *guan xi* networks without needing to explain the meaning. Most of the New Zealand and Singaporean participants neither used these terms nor identified them as important relational rules in New Zealand. Only one New Zealand leader identified the notion of 'face' and said it was exercised by some Asian leaders with whom higher education leaders had interactions. Other New Zealand leaders in the study might be aware of face and favour but they did not mention these particular terms. The Singaporean leaders of Chinese ethnicity agreed with the importance of face and favour in Chinese societies, including China, Taiwan and Singapore. Other New Zealand participants made no comment about face and favour in Chinese relational networks. New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwanese and Chinese participants' different attention to notions of face and favour can be contributed to cultural differences (see Chapter Two). A Chinese participant noticed different approaches to favour in the China-NZ partnership:

When I saw the theme "face and favour", I had strong feelings. In this New Zealand programme, some students who had just arrived in New Zealand

were capable of studying in the master's programme. They did not adjust very well. That's why they could not follow the course instructions in the beginning. It was understandable that some of them failed their assignments. Sometimes, we would like to "intercede" [with the New Zealand university] to allow these students to pass certain courses. But they refused to do so and required these students to take these courses again. Therefore, I felt if it was in China, things would be much easier! Chinese people tend to follow the work of favour, but Western people tended to follow regulations, and there's no room for intercession. [CN3-2]

Interceding could be understood as an intervention and attempt to use pressure to persuade the New Zealand university not to take action against the Chinese students who failed the courses. Such favour falls into the category of complex favour. As mentioned in Chapter Two, complex favour involves misallocation of public or social welfare resources (Leung & Chan, 2001), slipping money to interfere with HEIs' decision making on student grades.

However, complex favour was not acceptable in New Zealand. One New Zealand leader commented that he refused to lower the required IELTS score for recruitment when requested to do so by a Japanese higher education leader, supporting the above Chinese leader's comments. The New Zealand leader noted:

We require IELTS 6.0 or something like that – 6, that's right - for someone who wants to enrol in a degree programme. And it was a Japanese university, they wanted IELTS 5.0 and I made the point to them that I felt it was unethical if we accept the student and accept the student's money when we know fully well that she would not be able to pass with such a low level of English. We argued about that for several months and finally they agreed...and when we were going to sign [the agreement], the Vice President got in the car with me and then tried to get me to lower the IELTS requirement, and I had to say to him, "Look, either we leave it where it is or we will not be signing". Higher education would have lost an awful lot of

face if we had to call it off, so it stayed. [NZ1-1]

This shows the New Zealand leader's high respect for his values of fairness, meritocracy, honesty and equity. By meritocracy, this study refers to this New Zealand participant's recognition of power being obtained by merit, defined in terms of achievement, rather than by ascribed criteria such as wealth (Abercrombie et al., 2006). In addition, the New Zealand leader's comment indicated the interconnectedness of face and favour - refusing to perform certain favour may result in the other party's loss of face whereas giving favour may imply enhancing the face of the other party but not at the expense of one's core values. For example, a Taiwanese participant felt that visitors from Western institutions often thought "Going to Taiwan is giving you 'face'! I do you a big 'favour'!" [TWT4]. This participant expressed his disappointment in some of the Western conference delegates' failure to meet his expectations in a joint conference:

Look! Some were invited to Taiwan for conferences for 3 years in a row, but have they asked us to attend any academic activities at their institutions? No! A few days ago, I spoke to them in the conference that some of them came because of personal ties, some because of institutional ties, but when they leave Taiwan they should remember us regardless where they go, and regardless of who will take over their positions. They should keep this tie!
[TWT4]

Furthermore, the Taiwanese leader's comment revealed a long-term orientation towards building relationships and sustaining ties. The Taiwanese leader did not express his expectations of reciprocity to the Western partners of the joint conference programme in the first year; and expected the partners to understand his expectations without making them explicit. This shows this Taiwanese leader's

tendency to embed important messages in implicit or non-verbal communication. As discussed in Chapter Two, such communication style was identified as a key characteristic of collectivist cultures. This may be why Chinese leaders [CN4 & CN5] preferred communicating with mandarin-speaking staff at the New Zealand university rather than non-Mandarin speakers. In the China-NZ partnership, the New Zealand university used support from Mandarin-speaking staff and postgraduate students to earn the trust of the Chinese partner.

This Taiwanese leader had also expected his Western partners to invest comparable effort and resources. However, those partners may not understand these expectations or may be unable to meet these expectations. He stated:

Some even came to the conference with only a PowerPoint document, not a full paper!...But we tended to provide a 'highly courteous reception' to foreign conference delegates or visiting scholars. Sometimes they will have the impression that "Wow! It's very fun to come to Taiwan! We live in five-star hotels and eat delicious cuisine!" They shouldn't take it for granted! They should meet their obligations! [TWT4]

One of the New Zealand participants commented on the New Zealand university's difficulties in providing a highly courteous reception to visitors from partner institutions:

If I travel in Asia, and particularly in Korea, I get treated as though I were minor royalty. When you have reciprocal visits, I remember one visit in Japan where I arrived on a Saturday afternoon, wearing jeans and an open-necked shirt and here were eight people in dark suits, ties and white shirts waiting at the airport to greet me. And for the next four days, I had the president's car, an interpreter, a chauffeur and a young man whose job was to run ahead of me and open doors so I didn't have to open any doors myself...The problem that this creates is that if they were to come and visit

here, I don't even have a ministry car. So what I used to do is I used to say to them, "Now, in your country, if you honour a guest, you provide a car, a chauffeur, but in our country we honour the guest by actually driving yourself". Those were still expectations which you had to negotiate quite carefully so you didn't offend your partners and still showed him respect and hospitality and so on and so forth. But sometimes it can lead to a bit of trouble. [NZ1]

The previous Taiwanese and New Zealand participants' comments illustrate that meeting expectations in international settings was complex. This is because the East Asian and Western higher education leaders follow a set of culturally and institutionally different practices, communication styles, and ways of showing respect.

In addition, this study found differences in the power distance between New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders. The Singaporean, Taiwanese, and Chinese leaders preferred being called by their titles and were greatly concerned with providing differentiated reception packages based on the guest's positions and titles; whereas New Zealand leaders were fine with being called by their first names and paid relatively less attention to their reception packages. The findings indicated that there was higher power distance within East Asian universities, and lower power distance in the New Zealand university.

A New Zealand leader reflected on his past experiences of dealing with Taiwanese, Singaporean and Chinese higher education leaders, and found their different approaches to signing partnership contracts. The New Zealand participant noted that Singaporean and Taiwanese HEIs were more Westernised than Chinese ones in terms of the negotiation process. He commented that Singaporean and Taiwanese HEIs "first negotiate then sign agreements" whereas

Chinese HEIs “sign agreements then negotiate” [NZ1]. This is an example of the higher education leader’s understandings of the partner’s patterns of practice.

Sustainability

Sustainability acted as another key element of distributed leadership in these international partnerships. Most participants in this study considered sustainability in international partnerships as a matter of committing to and continuing of current partnership agreements or programmes. A commitment to distributing leadership capital in the partner HEI was identified as an important attribute to sustainability in the international partnerships. The participants were positive that exercising leadership and engaging in long-term interactions between international partners helped to awaken sleeping partnerships and lead to substantial academic exchanges and co-operation. As discussed in Chapter Five, the Taiwan-NZ student exchange partnership did not occur until nine years after the signing of the sister university MOU bonding. This study found long-term orientation, as identified by Hofstede (2001), was not only a key characteristic of the East Asian higher education leaders but also emerged as a key criterion for maximising sustainability in these New Zealand with East Asian higher education partnerships. However, the findings of this study suggested that it was unavoidable that the international partnership programmes or activities had to end at certain point in time along with the changing needs of the universities and the government Department of Education. Thus, it would be more meaningful to recognise the importance of sustaining leadership capital, as well as establishing a process for sustaining the internationalisation of the HEI rather than simply maintaining a contract.

In this study, the concept of sustainability involved two aspects of meaning, in addition to sustaining partnership agreements. They are: first, the commitment to and continuance of social, cultural and economic forms of leadership capital to current partnership agreements; and second, the commitment to and continuance of internationalisation processes and awareness of some external factors. These two aspects are discussed under the headings of committing leadership capital, and institutional feedback systems and external factors.

Committing Leadership Capital

Key finding: The New Zealand with East Asian HEI international partnerships required committing social, cultural and economic forms of leadership capital

One of the important findings that emerged from this study is that successful international partnerships between Western and East Asian HEIs involved commitments to and continuance of distributing various forms of capital such as social capital, economic capital and cultural capital. Sustaining leadership capital moved beyond simply distributing leadership positions, and was contingent upon individual institutional interests and the leadership of the HEI. Bourdieu's (1985) notion of economic capital and symbolic capital (including social capital and cultural capital) provided this study with a theoretical lens to interpret the 22 higher education leaders' practice of distributing social, cultural and economic capital in international partnerships (see Chapter Three). This section presents how sustainability was addressed through distributing social, cultural and economic forms of leadership capital within and beyond the HEI partnership network.

Social Capital

The research findings of this study suggest that distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships involved using, exchanging, expanding and sustaining social capital, such as networks of relationships.

The higher education leaders in senior and middle management positions in universities or government bodies established their social networks before they engaged in international partnership programmes or activities. They understood who they could source to assist with international communication. As discussed previously, the China-NZ partnership used Mandarin-speaking staff in other departments or faculties other than the School of Education to facilitate cross-cultural communication and negotiation. They knew which faculties, departments, colleges, or schools had certain expertise for achieving particular partnership tasks. The government Department of Education in a Chinese province also recognised a teacher education institution's expertise in teaching English as a second language and assigned this institution to deliver English preparation courses for the China-NZ partnership [CN2, CN3, & CN4].

Within the individual HEIs, support from a wide range of units formed clusters of support networks. For example, the Singaporean university involved a number of university units, such as International Relations Office, Global Immersion Programme Office, and Career Attachment office, to support its international partnership programmes [documents – university website]. They collectively contributed to academic exchanges and co-operation, as well as international employment opportunities for their students. However, the New

Zealand university's documents indicated that they did not seem to offer international postgraduate students future employment opportunities. A Taiwanese participant [TWC1-2] commented that future employment opportunities were one of the main reasons for Taiwanese students to pursue postgraduate studies in the USA.

Within the same faculty or department, senior managers assigned tasks to administrative staff, middle academic managers, and academic staff based on their knowledge of individual staff capacity. As discussed previously, a New Zealand higher education leader [NZ3] in this study was appointed to coordinate the China-NZ partnership programme. International alumni, who had positive learning experiences at their HEIs, would actively act as 'match makers' of international partnerships for their HEIs. This finding showed alumni's high level of trust in the HEI may lead to future partnership opportunities. Postgraduate students were temporarily used to help with academic problems that were experienced by international students in partnership programmes. For example, the China-NZ partnership used postgraduate students as tutors to help with the Chinese students' learning needs (Chapter Five).

The interview data echoed the literature on international higher education partnerships that the departure of key personnel may impose potential threats to the sustainability of international partnership programmes or activities (Heffernan & Poole, 2004, 2005). Specifically, the interview data showed that the change of leadership in the partner institution led to potential challenges in communication, resourcing, and funding. For example, one Singaporean leader portrayed how

changes in leadership would affect the partnership and how leaders could deal with these challenges:

...if there's a change of leadership in the other institutions, and then unless you have the leadership - they have the same mind and same drive, you do have some challenges. [SG1]

Through participating in international conferences, higher education leaders knew the capacity of higher education leaders in another country or institution. International conferences emerged as a commonly used approach to extend international relational networks which could later lead to international partnership opportunities. For example, the Singapore-NZ short-visit programme was developed based on the personal relationships which partnership coordinators established at international conferences [NZ4].

The research findings support Gooderham and Nordhaug's view (2003) that the extent to which knowledge was transferred depended upon the social interaction in which both parties engaged during the interaction process. As discussed in Chapter Five, longer terms of partnerships, such as degree programmes, were found to be more likely to nurture sustainable relationships and transfer substantial knowledge than shorter term partnerships, such as conferences. One Taiwanese participant noted that joint conferences provided opportunities for meeting people who shared similar research interests. However, conference delegates may not meet their obligations of delivering quality presentations, and the level of interaction may be limited due to a time limit [TWT4]. International conferences can be an arena of conflicting thoughts and expectations. As mentioned previously, a Taiwanese leader [TWT4] commented on Western

partners' failure in meeting principles of reciprocity in a joint conference. This resulted in the Taiwanese participant losing trust in the partner. The reasons for failing to bring reciprocity in responsibilities at joint conferences may be because of cultural differences, and different patterns of communication, thinking and acting. Considering a number of significant socio-cultural differences, formal distribution of leadership roles across HEIs is more complicated than within institutional distribution of leadership responsibilities.

Cultural Capital

The interview data suggested that distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships involved using, understanding and sustaining cultural capital, such as languages, positions, and titles. In this study, all the participants noted the transmission and exchanges of cultural capital, increased inter-cultural, inter-institutional, and interpersonal understandings. There was also evidence of sustaining cultural capital in partnership practice, such as the New Zealand higher education leaders using English language to communicate with the East Asian partners.

As discussed in Chapter Three, individual higher education leaders are carriers of socio-culturally situated personal and institutional habitus (Bourdieu, 1992; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Reay et al., 2001). Through partnership networks, Western higher education leaders' personal and institutional cultures, ways of acting, and patterns of communication and thinking were exposed to higher education leaders in East Asia, and *vice versa*. Learning across communities of practice was also facilitated through interactions in partnership

networks.

All the higher education leaders in this study, to a larger or smaller degree, learnt the social practice of another HEI or country. For example, a Singaporean participant noted:

Australia and New Zealand, they seemed quite rapidly to accept more autonomy. This was quite different from Singapore because we have a largely conservative system. England also went that way. It provided very interesting contrast to Singapore. This is probably some of the reasons why visits to some of the places [HEIs] provide us with the opportunity to look at the ways good systems work differently. [SG3]

However, they did not necessarily know what they had learnt until they reflected upon particular incidents. In this study, the individual interviews acted as a medium for the participants to reflect on their practice, and construct professional knowledge of international partnerships. For example, one Chinese participant revealed, “Yes, yes, yes! I think you just reminded me of this area. This is what we did not have in other partnership programmes ...” [CN3-2]. The data illustrated the participant’s new insights and reflection upon past work episodes as a result of interacting with the interviewer. This finding indicated that, if the higher education leaders could reflect upon past experiences, they were likely to systematically develop knowledge of international partnerships. This approach to learning echoed Wallner’s discussion on microworlds (Chapter Three).

The higher education leaders in this study used multiple channels of communication, languages and texts to articulate their thinking, exchange perspectives, and promote mutual understandings in international partnerships. In particular, English acted as the main language for the New Zealand and East Asian

higher education leaders to facilitate international, inter-cultural, and inter-institutional understandings. In this study, the Western HEIs which the East Asian HEIs partnered with largely fell into the category of English-medium HEIs. The East Asian higher education leaders were required to use English language to facilitate cross-cultural communication. English language and other communication approaches in the context of higher education partnerships can be interpreted as contextualised symbolic tools (Chapter Three). The findings correspond with Bourdieu's discussion on language as a form of cultural capital which groups of people use to maintain and promote their educational and socio-cultural status and distinction, and limit other groups' access and participation (Bourdieu, 1991; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). Protection was sustained when the university in a less advantaged status in the partnership was provided with opportunities to use its first language for communication, to negotiate terms and conditions for co-operation, and / or to discuss areas of concern.

The research findings suggest Chinese HEIs' preference of working with people who can understand their thinking patterns, ways of acting, expectations, and mandarin-speaking staff. In particular, the Singaporean university in this study demonstrated the advantage of offering advanced Western knowledge and expertise, as well as Chinese cultural heritages. This Singaporean university was capable of meeting Chinese HEIs' expectations of 'working with similar minds'.

The interview data showed that academic and administrative higher education leaders who were at a lower level of the managerial hierarchy presented a lower level of confidence and efficacy beliefs in relation to their leadership roles in

international partnerships; whereas the higher education leaders in middle management and senior management positions were authorities of power, and were more confident about their leadership roles. For example, one Singaporean participant in middle management revealed confidence in his leadership role:

International partnership is very much defined by how two parties can come and work together. There is the win-win situation...I drive the partnership and I pro-actively seek partnerships. [SG1]

A Taiwanese participant, a junior academic, commented that the bureaucratic culture of his HEI had prevented lecturers from taking up leadership roles:

Confucius said “he who holds no rank in a State does not discuss its policies”. I had very limited involvement of internationalisation activities in my university. You have to know the ‘ecology’ of the university - if you do not hold the position, do not meddle in the affairs of that position. If you act aggressively, people would question your intention. [TWT4]

Although some higher education leaders may lack *guan xi* or complex relational networks, titles and positions, they may use English language as a cultural capital to assist them to increase participation in international partnerships. Hence, widened leadership opportunities, which were obtained through using higher education leaders’ language competencies, helped to enhance distributed leadership within the HEI. In East Asian HEIs, junior faculty and administrative personnel, with high level of English proficiency, may be granted resources and opportunities by middle and senior management to participate in international partnerships [TWT5]. Similarly, in New Zealand, faculty with foreign language competencies were used by middle and senior management as cultural agents, advisors, negotiators, translators, and/or interpreters in partnerships with

non-English-medium HEIs. Although these support persons are secondary players in international partnerships, they used international cooperative opportunities to increase their social networks, experiences, competencies, and inter-cultural understandings.

Economic Capital

The interview data suggested that distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships involved using, exchanging and sustaining economic capital, such as international student fees and Western higher education services. For example, the NZ-China partnership involved Chinese students paying tuition fees to the New Zealand university to enrol a master's programme; the Chinese student number dropped as the currency exchange rates increased the students' cost of consuming New Zealand higher education services [CN3]. This finding echoed the literature on financial factors. If economic capital and financial benefits could not be sustained, the partnership may weaken and eventually terminate. In addition, as discussed previously, the HEI's institutional self-interest may change over time. Those changes may also impact on the sustainability of economic capital. For example, the China-NZ partnership was initially established to provide Chinese school teachers with advanced professional development opportunities. As the partnership progressed and had trained a considerable number of Chinese teachers, the Chinese province had to review the partnership and sought other professional development opportunities which target a different group of teachers. A Chinese participant commented:

We would like to continue the partnership with the New Zealand university, but [the province] will not provide funding next year. We are in the process of considering developing a doctoral degree programme. We've also got a group of school leaders studying in Singapore. [CN2]

All the participants commented on the flow of money from East Asian students through various cooperative activities and programmes to European, North American, Australia and New Zealand HEIs. The receivers of economic capital from Asia are mainly industrialised OECD members, and English-speaking countries. This finding reflected Asian HEIs' demand for Western knowledge from these countries, as well as Western HEIs' need for funding as a result of reduced government funding and resources (see Chapter One). However, Singapore was an exception in this study. The findings show the short courses offered to a group of Singaporean teachers and principals did not accrue a financial benefit to the New Zealand university [NZ4]. The benefit was the New Zealand university's interest in developing social relationships with the Singaporean university.

This study found that knowledge transfer was a multifaceted economic, social and cultural activity. In this study, disciplinary knowledge which had been transferred from Western HEIs to East Asian ones acted as economic capital that was traded in the Singapore-NZ, China-NZ and Taiwan-NZ partnerships (Chapter Five). The interview data showed that formal distribution of economic capital for international partnerships was subject to the cultural and social capital individual higher education leaders possessed. The higher education leaders indicated that they got increased access to economic capital as they grew social capital within and beyond their institutions or communities of practice [TWT5, NZ1, CN1, CN2 & TWC1]. The findings support MacBeath's (2005) and Huy's (2001) use of

higher education leaders' personal and professional networks to facilitate partnerships (Chapter Two).

The findings suggest that economic factors included tuition fee structures, currency exchange rates, decline of public funding and resources, availability of financial endowment, and competitive forces in international higher education markets. The finding on disciplinary knowledge as an economic form of capital extends Bourdieu's notion of knowledge that is part of habitus, social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1973, 1985, 1992; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

Bishop and Glynn's (1999) discussion on the three principles for educational relationships - partnership, participation and protection - aided this study lenses to explore if distributed leadership was sustained in the New Zealand university with East Asian Chinese higher education partnerships. Applying the three principles to the context of international higher education partnerships, the findings broaden the scope of Bishop and Glynn's (1999) discussion on relationship building in school settings. The findings show the New Zealand university's commitments to power-sharing, cultural sensitivity and reciprocity which the literature suggests to be key contributing factors to successful and sustainable international partnerships (Heffernan & Poole, 2004, 2005; Johnson & Wilson, 2006; Webber & Robertson, 2003, 2004). The findings of this study and the literature both indicate the interconnectedness of commitment, trust, and reciprocity in the international partnerships (Beerrens, 2002; Beerrens & Derwende, 2007; Latham, 2001).

Based on the interviews and documents, this study found that substantial partnerships were sustained when the higher education leaders committed time,

and social, cultural and economic forms of leadership capital to meet their obligations and their partners' expectations. The findings of this study show the higher education leaders enhanced their access to international partnership opportunities and leadership capital through increasing the level of commitment and support, and engaging learning and professional development. The findings challenge Bourdieu's (1984) discussion on distinction of social groups, and suggest the possibility for the higher education leaders and their universities to develop practices and promote their overall capacity and international competitiveness, based upon the notion of community of practice.

Institutional Feedback Systems and External Factors

Key finding: The sustainability of the HEI's internationalisation processes was influenced by institutional feedback systems and external factors

The research findings show that the institutional feedback systems and a number of external factors impacted on the sustainability of the HEI's internationalisation processes. Specifically, this study identified financial factors, publicity and safety as imperative in sustaining these international partnerships.

Institutional feedback systems

All the participants perceived on-going feedback systems, including monitoring and evaluation, as a critical requirement for improving and sustaining partnership practice. The New Zealand and East Asian Chinese HEIs in this study used informal approaches to monitoring the progress of partnership programmes. As discussed earlier, implementers of partnership programmes commonly used emails

for inter-institutional communication. They would informally seek feedback from relevant stakeholders within the institution. For example, a New Zealand participant noted that, although formal monitoring was available, informal monitoring was done through chatting or conversations in the staff room:

I monitor - big focus on monitoring getting progress and pushing and giving support where it was needed...There needs to be someone monitoring and if there's indication of progress which isn't as might be expected, then we move quickly and put in efforts to support the students – and that's my job to keep in touch and to know what's going on. I have all sorts of informal channels with different people who tell me about things. I talk to staff in the tea room – I mean there's just a lot of informal talking.
[NZ3]

Informally seeking feedback on the progression of the partnership provided an opportunity for learning. The literature on learning, as embedded in socio-cultural contexts and as social practice (Chapter Three), helps to explain the higher education leaders' learning within partnership networks.

The HEIs in this study did not use formal and institutionalised systems or procedures to monitor the progress of individual partnership agreements. However, there was a lack of platforms for higher education leaders to share knowledge, experiences and progress of international partnerships within the HEI. For example, the documents and interview data [TWT1, TWT2, TWT3, TWT4 & TWT5] provided statistical and descriptive evidence of the Taiwanese university's student participation in study abroad programmes. Little was known about the actual learning and life experience of the students on their return, and the effectiveness of those study-abroad programmes because there was a lack of evaluation systems. According to a Taiwanese participant [TWT5], she was

required by the university to prepare a document on their overall internationalisation approaches. However, she found it very difficult to familiarise herself with study abroad programmes and identify problematic areas due to a lack of feedback systems. She commented:

I am concerned about the effectiveness of the junior study abroad programme, how the programme had benefited the students, and in what ways the programme had inspired the students and impacted on the student's personal growth. There is supposed to be some kind of evaluation of how things were done! However, there was no evaluation!...The Office of International Exchanges and International Education at [the Taiwanese University] only sent out students, and did no evaluation on their return. [TWT5-1]

Other participants from the Taiwanese university were also unfamiliar with study abroad programmes as their education students did not actively participate in these programmes. The findings indicate a lack of institutionalised feedback systems and common platforms for sharing and exchanging experiences and expertise in international partnerships in the New Zealand, Chinese, Singaporean and Taiwanese HEIs.

In addition, this study found efficient and flexible operational processes within and between partner institutions were equally important for preparing conditions for sustainable internationalisation in international partnerships. For example, a New Zealand leader commented that other universities in New Zealand and Australia had acted more efficiently than this New Zealand university in terms of processing student applications, responding to external inquires, and administrative requirements [NZ4]. This would impact on this New Zealand university's international competitiveness. Some participants highlighted the

importance of a certain level of flexibility in individual HEI's internal operation processes [NZ4, CN2, & CN3]. It was suggested that a certain level of flexibility in the co-operation process would empower both parties to work out problematic areas more effectively.

Financial Factors

Financial factors were seen as influential preconditions for sustaining these New Zealand with East Asian Chinese HEI partnerships. The cost of implementing programmes, currency exchange rates, financial support or funding from their faculties/colleges/institutes, universities, governments or foundations were perceived by all the participants as influential factors. In degree programmes, where Asian students had to pay full tuition fees, the cost of getting qualifications from Western HEIs was linked with the currency exchange rate. A New Zealand higher education leader recalled the downward trend in the New Zealand dollar that had led to the changing landscape of international student markets in New Zealand. She stated:

Of course we can't change, we can't say "because we know that, we'll reduce your fees", we can't do that! Because the international fees are set, it doesn't matter that your dollar is up or down. That's a key factor. The other thing is, you don't know when it's going to change! Like years ago, China was a way up there because the dollar is so cheap. Japan was a huge market. Now, it is disappearing! They are saying that they are getting better value in Australia, so, how do you compete? [NZ4]

The effect of currency exchange rates on the sustainability of partnership programmes was a factor in the China-NZ partnership. A female Chinese leader

commented that part of the reason why the number of Chinese teachers enrolled in the China-NZ programme dropped in 2005 was probably due to the rise in the New Zealand dollar. She explained that might have affected the actual cost to the Chinese teachers who took part in the partnership programme:

For example, at the time we started to send [Chinese] teachers to the New Zealand institution, 40,000 RMB [Chinese dollar] was enough for NZ\$10,000 tuition fees at the exchange rate of 4. Now the exchange rate has reached almost 6, the cost on the teachers became RMB 60,000! [NZ4]

Furthermore, continuing and sufficient funding from the local government played a critical role in sustaining these partnerships. The availability of funding was strongly linked with the institution's decisions on carrying out long-term programmes. Once the funding became insufficient, the participation of the institution or the students/staff in a partnership was affected. For example, one Chinese participant revealed that, since the local government had stopped providing part of the funding for teachers to participate in the China-NZ programme, the number of Chinese teachers enrolled in the programme had declined. This New Zealand participant said "they used to send around 30 teachers, but this year (2005) only around 10 teachers went to New Zealand" [NZ4].

One Chinese leader revealed that people in international academic exchanges and co-operation would choose partners firstly based on a financial benefit analysis, and secondly based on the private relationships with foreign HEI staff [CN2]. This Chinese leader commented that both parties had to analyse the degree of financial benefits and profits because co-operation has to be reliant upon certain conditions and contexts: "In international interactions, the most important principle is benefits

because benefits could last for a long term, and friends or partners are temporary and are conditional” [CN2-2]. Hence, mutual benefits can be described as one of the preconditions for international partnerships. International partnerships can be viewed as a trading activity.

In particular, Taiwanese and Chinese leaders pinpointed that financial support was closely linked to their personal or their institution’s relationships with higher authorities of power. For example, a Taiwanese female leader considered partnerships with prestigious institutions in Western countries as “backyard diplomacy”[TWC1].

Increasing future employment opportunities was identified as an area of improvement for the HEI to provide international students with financial incentives. As discussed previously, one of the reasons why Taiwanese students preferred studying abroad in the USA was that their HEIs provided job opportunities for international students [TWC1]. This finding supported Stohl’s (2007) comment that expanding employment opportunities to international graduate students would significantly benefit HEIs in areas such as introducing future partnerships, expanding study-abroad opportunities, encouraging foreign-language acquisition, and recruiting future students.

Publicity

Publicity was considered by some New Zealand and Taiwanese leaders as another source of influence on the sustainability of these international partnerships. This aspect was not identified in the literature review (Chapter Two). It provides a new lens for understanding sustainability in international higher education

partnerships.

The participants commented that negative publicity and biased propaganda, which was reported through the media, were harmful to the development of understanding the outside world, and to establishing relationships with particular foreign countries. For example, some New Zealand leaders noticed that the negative publicity of crimes committed by Asians in New Zealand portrayed by the mass media in China might have a direct relationship to the lower number of Asian students coming to New Zealand in 2005 compared with previously. Publicity about a country and the HEI impacted on international student numbers.

This study found the East Asian higher education leaders had little understanding of New Zealand higher education. Yet the New Zealand leaders in this study knew about some prestigious Asian universities such as Tsinghua University and Peking University in China and Nanyang Technological University in Singapore [NZ1, NZ2, NZ4, & NZ5]. This was because of the high profile of these HEIs in international higher education markets. The lack of publicity of New Zealand higher education in foreign education markets may have limited the New Zealand university's opportunities for extending international partnerships.

In addition, promoting higher education partnership initiatives across a large geographic area increases the difficulty of getting publicity. For example, the China-NZ programme was open to all graduates and education practitioners within a province in China. This study found all the Chinese participants in the capital city of the province knew about and took part in the China-NZ partnership. However, other Chinese higher education leaders [CN1 & CN5] in the field of

education in other cities, near the capital city of this particular province, were not familiar with the China-NZ partnership.

Furthermore, the research findings show that all the HEIs in this study did not fully promote the publicity of international partnerships within these institutions. For example, the Singaporean leaders in this study all worked within the education faculty and did not know about the Singapore-NZ student exchange programme [SG1, SG2 & SG3]. Similarly, the staff member within the School of Education at the New Zealand university did not know about the Singapore-NZ student exchange partnership. There was a lack of promotion of student exchange programmes within these HEIs.

Safety

The safety of the host country and institution was seen to impact on the choice of a HEI as a partner institution. Safety was an important aspect in determining a HEI's suitability for international partnerships, especially with East Asian parents' strong involvement in educational decisions. Safety was mentioned by some Taiwanese and one New Zealand leader [TWT1, TWT5, NZ4 & NZ5]. The Taiwanese leader said she had needed to recall exchange students back from France when there was an incident of terrorism [TWT1]. Another Taiwanese participant also noted that after 9/11, the number of Taiwanese students who studied abroad dropped dramatically [TWT5]. However, a New Zealand leader revealed confidence in New Zealand's safe environment [NZ5]. Another New Zealand leader echoed that New Zealand was considered as a desirable location for Asian international students primarily because of its English-speaking environment, and secondly due to their

parent's perceptions of New Zealand as a safe country [NZ4].

The interview data further showed parents' concern for a safe higher education environment for international students. For example,

There may be a perception that New Zealand is a safe country, whereas America or some of the big cities in the United Kingdom may well be the perceived as unsafe! You have to remember that their parents may perceive it as being safe. [NZ5]

It was raised by one New Zealand participant [NZ1] that Asian HEIs exercised stricter discipline over their students than did New Zealand HEIs, and that the parents of Asian international students would expect New Zealand HEIs to follow the same practice. The New Zealand leader reflected upon the difficulty of ensuring Asian students' road safety as New Zealand HEIs do not interfere with adults' social life:

The driving was a big one [issue] because the question came up, "should we stop Chinese buying sports cars and killing themselves?" And the thing is that legally under the human rights legislation, we can't do that. We can't do that so all we can do is to advise them, and we can't regulate their social life. Stop the boys and the girls going off to the beach together – well we can't do that. It's against the law...Yeah, which we have to be very careful that on one hand we don't damage our reputation, we stay within the NZ law, and we make it clear to the parents that we are in no position to exercise parental authority over adults. So that's been a challenge. [NZ1-1]

The above comment suggests the New Zealand HEI's strong emphasis on and respect for laws and regulations; whereas some Japanese and Chinese higher education leaders would try to intercede with some authorities not to follow certain actions or regulations, such as negotiating the IELTS. This finding corresponded with the literature on Chinese people's low sense of laws and legal systems (Zhang

et al., 2004).

Learning

The findings of this study show the importance of learning in distributed leadership, particularly across cultural and institutional differences for sustaining the international partnerships. Learning was identified in the literature review (Chapter Two) as a key element of distributed leadership. This study found other key elements of distributed leadership (formal arrangements, enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context and sustainability) all involved learning.

As discussed previously, to formally arrange leadership roles and resources in international partnerships, the higher education leaders had to know the expertise of people in their social networks, understand the academic and administrative constituents of the partnership, and identify the institutional motivations for the partnership. The interview data suggested that it was possible to facilitate enhanced leadership opportunities if the higher education leaders learnt to become self-confident in taking up leadership roles, considering the culture of the country and the HEI. Understanding the context required the higher education leaders to learn and understand how power-relational issues in the international higher education markets might impact on the partnership, such as national cultures, centres and peripheries, and competitive forces. Sustainability in these international partnerships was facilitated through on-going monitoring the progress of the partnership, and observing external factors (such as financial factors, safety and publicity) and their effects on the partnership. Publicity was an area which was not identified in the literature, and was important in the New

Zealand with East Asian HEI partnerships.

Specifically, the interview data suggested two essential roles of learning in the New Zealand with East Asian HEI partnerships. They are discussed under the headings of learning for bridging differences and learning through a shared language.

Learning for Bridging Differences

Key finding: The higher education leaders in international partnerships indicated they would learn from each other to bridge cultural differences.

Although the higher education leaders in this study were influenced by their culturally embedded prior knowledge and institutional practice, it was possible to bridge differences through learning how to address the partner's needs and through active communication.

The higher education leaders had developed their preferred ways of communicating and acting before they came to the practice of international partnerships. For example, as discussed previously, the Chinese leaders revealed their preference for working with Mandarin-speaking staff at the New Zealand university. The research findings show that higher education leaders' culturally embedded prior knowledge provided a strong position for directing their leadership practice in international partnerships. As discussed previously, the Chinese and Taiwanese participants had a tendency to provide guests with a highly courteous reception with the expectations of nurturing long-term relationships; whereas the New Zealand participants in this study revealed the difficulty of providing the same level of reception to their guests. These were

areas of differences which occurred because of cultural differences. Socio-cultural constructivist views of learning (Chapter Three) help to understand the importance of individual construction of knowledge, prior knowledge, and knowledge construction as embedded in socio-cultural contexts and as social practice.

However, it is possible to bridge cultural differences if higher education leaders learn across boundaries of differences. Some approaches for bridging differences between partner HEIs were identified. Initiating collaborative research in the Asia-Pacific region was considered a powerful approach to help to solidify and strengthen substantial partnerships [TWT2 and SG1]. The following statement from a Singaporean leader is representative of the leader's perceptions of establishing partnerships beyond cultural boundaries:

I don't think that there is a difference in terms of factors affecting the success of partnerships between Eastern and Western. To me, I believe that it is the leadership in the programmes that counts! If you have a far-sighted leadership view and if there is also a proactive attitude behind the leader who drives the programme of partnership, I think this would lead the partnership with greater flame and success...There is more leadership difference that has an impact on the success of a partnership rather than the thoughts, you know the cultural thoughts...Some of these challenges will come in, but I don't think that there is a challenge that is so deep, so enormous that we cannot resolve [it]. I am positive because I drive it![SG1]

Interpersonal approaches that were commonly employed by the New Zealand, Singaporean, Taiwanese and Chinese leaders to initiate cross-cultural HEI partnerships included adapting appropriate greeting and reception approaches, and using appropriate communication styles based on the partner's cultural

preferences. However, the perceived appropriate greeting and reception approaches and communication styles differed across the higher education leaders in this study. For example, the Chinese participants in this study preferred communicating with Mandarin-speaking staff at Western HEIs. A Chinese participant commented:

We certainly feel that mandarin-speaking staff play an important role at the New Zealand university. If we need to communicate anything with the New Zealand university, we would use them because they are negotiators...A lot of issues have been successfully solved because of them. If we communicate directly with the senior or middle management at the New Zealand university, we feel they [the senior or middle management] couldn't understand our customs and ways of doing things so issues couldn't be successfully dealt with. [CN3-2]

Another Chinese participant stated that, upon considering which foreign HEIs to partner with, they chose the New Zealand university over an Australian HEI, which was of similar prestigious status and quality to the New Zealand one [CN2-2]. The main reason was because the New Zealand university used Mandarin-speaking staff to help initiate the partnership. One of the Mandarin-speaking staff was a lecturer, who originally came from China, and had experiences of working in Chinese HEIs. He established some useful relationships (*guan xi*) within the Chinese higher education networks, and understood both Chinese and New Zealand ways of thinking and acting.

In addition, observation was considered as an important strategy for higher education leaders to address different cultural approaches to politeness and communication. For example, one New Zealand participant commented on how he reacted in a dinner reception at the host HEI: "You can't go wrong from first watching the host then following what the host did." [NZ1].

Reciprocity acted as a key leadership strategy for the participants to bridge cultural differences. According to the interview findings, reciprocity entailed mutual contribution, mutual respect, mutual understandings, mutual trust, and mutual benefits. Mutual benefits were considered as the precondition for any partnership. Benefits may not occur immediately. For example, the Taiwan-NZ student exchange arrangements did not occur until 2007, nine years after the initial MOU in 1998; and the New Zealand university renewed the Singapore-NZ student exchange agreement despite the lack of New Zealand students travelling to Singapore. However, without benefits, no partnerships would exist. In terms of benefits, international partnerships may also contribute to individual HE leaders' personal and professional growth. For example, a New Zealand participant [NZ3] commented on the professional and personal benefits that emerged from the China-NZ partnership programme:

...with the [Chinese] students there is that same sort of reciprocity. We contribute, they contribute – that kind of to-ing and fro-ing in terms of every aspect of our academic work... I have found some of my work with the [Chinese] students incredibly enriching ...on a professional level and on a personal level. So working with them is one of the most interesting things I've done in my career... [NZ3]

This quotation indicated that the New Zealand participant's learning emerged as she interacted with the Chinese students. This finding echoed the discussion on learning as embedded in socio-cultural contexts and as a social practice in Chapter Three. Nevertheless, the extent to which the higher education leaders learnt cross-culturally remained problematic because of their individual and institutional habitus and the socio-culturally embedded rules of practice (Bourdieu & Passeron,

1990; Reay et al., 2001; Thomas, 2002).

The findings show that there were benefits of international partnerships on the student's widened learning and future career opportunities. The overall internationalisation processes, learning, improvements and changes that were involved in international partnerships would contribute to the HEI's enhanced capacity. In addition, active communication to foster relationships and reach mutual understandings was perceived as a critical approach to bridging differences. All the participants in this study noted that the use of active communication helped them to reach mutual understandings in international partnerships. For example, a Chinese participant commented that "only through active communication and interaction can mutual understandings be promoted, and only through mutual understandings can empathetic understandings, peace, and harmony be promoted" [CN4]. They indicated that partnerships were built upon individual leaders' social networks. This required leaders to engage in frequent communication and interactions, based on their existing institutional contacts and personal relationships. Furthermore, the leaders believed that personal contacts and expertise could be shared among staff members within and between partner HEIs to enable strengthened and widened partnership opportunities.

Languages were found to be essential for bridging differences between the New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders. However, the findings show that the higher education leaders may not learn cross-culturally if their differences were too distinct. For example, a significant language difference existed in the China-NZ and Taiwan-NZ partnerships, and the New Zealand higher education leaders revealed a lack of incentives for learning East Asian

languages. This finding supports Wenger's discussion on the tension between individual or community competencies and experiences. Wenger (2000) commented that such tensions may cause discomfort and so may create momentum for learning, but "if experience and competence are too disconnected, if the distance is too great, not much learning is likely to take place" (p. 233). The following section discusses the issues related to learning languages in these international partnerships as experienced by the research participants.

Learning through a Shared Language

Key finding: A shared language, either English or East Asian languages, was considered imperative for learning the practice of the partner and for distributing leadership capital at an equivalent level.

The higher education leaders in this study perceived a shared language as paramount in international partnerships through which they learnt the practice of their partners, and distributed leadership capital between their universities and partners at an equivalent level. English language acted as a gateway to Western with East Asian Chinese HEI partnerships. Although the New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders in this study employed English as the common language, the communication approaches they used to facilitate cross-cultural communication appeared to be culturally embedded. According to Crystal (2003), the dominance of English is phenomenal because no language other than English have ever been widely shared and distributed by the enormous numbers of speakers. The increasingly hegemonic role of English as a global language and as the common language in professional knowledge networks has increased the

competitiveness of HEIs in English-speaking countries in the rapidly growing international higher education markets (Altbach, 2004a; Bennell & Pearce, 2003; Postiglione, 2005). Tsui and Tollefson (2007) commented that, as English has become an essential constituent of global literacy skills in the era of internationalisation and globalisation, non-English-speaking countries particularly face enormous challenges in acquiring English simply because English “is not their native tongue” (p. 1).

In this study, English was used as the medium of communication. As English is not the first language in China and Taiwan, the Chinese and Taiwanese leaders experienced greater challenges than Singaporean and New Zealand leaders as they engage in international partnerships. English language affected the higher education leaders’ partnership practices in two aspects: the English proficiency of the East Asian higher education leaders, and New Zealand leader’s lack of incentive for learning Asian languages.

English Proficiency of East Asian Higher Education Leaders

The English proficiency of individual higher education leaders in East Asia influenced the competencies of the HEI in participating in international partnerships with English-medium HEIs. This study found the overall English capacity or proficiency of the East Asian HEIs had a bearing upon the level of co-operation and the involvement of the faculty in international partnership programmes and activities.

In this study, the Western HEIs which the East Asian participants referred to were those in Australia, Canada, France, New Zealand, the USA, and the UK.

Except for HEIs in France, the majority of those Western HEIs fell into the category of English-medium HEIs. English language was a medium through which the leaders communicated to reach an agreement or mutual understanding, initiated student or staff exchange programmes, conducted collaborative research, engaged in professional dialogue, or jointly delivered programmes. As English is the language of instruction in Singapore and New Zealand, it was not surprising that the New Zealand and Singaporean leaders indicated the importance of English in communication in international partnerships. The globalisation of English as a language also affected the practice of higher education leaders in Taiwan and China. The research findings suggest that, Taiwanese and Chinese participants perceived English as a leading language in academia and in international education.

However, the findings suggest that partnerships with Western institutions, which included professional development for faculty members and collaborative research, were rare in Taiwan and China. This was probably because these partnerships required a high level of English proficiency of the participants to be able to engage in professional dialogue. In this study, the Chinese and Taiwanese higher education leaders agreed that their professoriate might encounter a language barrier in partnering with English-speaking institutions. In particular, one lecturer [TWT5] pointed out that the major source of obstacles for exchanges was the low level of English proficiency of Taiwanese lecturers in general. She commented:

Even those who had received training at foreign HEIs, they are not necessarily capable of teaching their subject areas in English; they may not engage in English conversations quite comfortably. Needless to say, teaching in English is another challenge. The focus now is on the students. How much can students learn and understand [in English]? However, I

think the actual obstacles are the lecturers. You can see that many lecturers had training overseas, but they still couldn't teach in English. They are the actual obstacles to academic exchanges. [TWT5-1]

Hence, Taiwanese and Chinese lecturers might have difficulties in delivering English-medium courses to international students. This limited the opportunity for mutual exchanges. In addition, this Taiwanese participant commented that junior staff members, who were proficient in English, were supported by powerful senior professors to facilitate international partnerships [TWT5-2]. Powerful senior professors in Taiwan relied on junior staff members' English ability to engage in international activities and to apply for international funding. However, these senior professors tended not to attribute the success of these international activities to the endeavour of junior staff as far as rewards and funding were involved. This Taiwanese participant termed these senior professors as "scholar tyrants" [TWT5-2]. According to the literature, scholar tyrant or scholar lord refers to senior scholars who control resources in higher education through their authority and power (曾钊新, 2006; 葉啓政, 2003; 刘兴, 2004). Zeng (曾钊新, 2006) criticised that scholar tyrants as symbols of corruption and privilege, and are harmful to Chinese academia. The research findings are insufficient to show whether the phenomenon of scholar tyrant had occurred in New Zealand and Singaporean academia. This may be an area for future research to explore.

Singapore and New Zealand HEIs were at an advantage when developing partnerships with top tier world class universities, primarily European and North American ones. The New Zealand participants noted Singaporean's English ability as being better than Chinese and Taiwanese. A New Zealand leader revealed that

she did not have any difficulty working in a partnership programme with Singaporeans due to their high level of English ability. She noted:

Singapore is an easy one because of the English. English is their main language. That will eliminate a lot of the difficulties because you're dealing with countries of English speakers...and there were no difficulties at all! ...I would say that they're the Chinese of Western culture. They were very much Westernised I found...saying just pick up on things very quickly, and didn't require explanation where I do find dealing with [Chinese].
[NZ4]

The Singapore participants contributed their English proficiency to the nation's colonial background and English as a medium of instruction and communication. All the Singapore leaders, thus, revealed no difficulty when jointly working with Western institutions in research projects and twinning programmes as they considered Singaporean institutions as Western.

The findings suggest that English language as a culturally-contextualised mediated tool has provided both facilitations and constraints to the HEIs (Haste, 2001). In terms of facilitations, English language (cultural capital) was used by the New Zealand and Singaporean universities as a distinction to maintain their status in the world higher education system. In terms of constraints, the globalisation of English as a language affected the practice of HEIs in non-English speaking countries in East Asia (D. Hui, 2001; Postiglione, 2005). The East Asian higher education leaders needed to use English language as they pursue advanced knowledge and participate in mainstream knowledge networks. Thus, the Chinese and Taiwanese leaders may switch from their local academic languages and topics to a dominant Western one in order to meet the requirements of the majority

participants.

New Zealand Leaders' Lack of Incentive for Learning Asian Languages

The lack of incentives for learning Asian languages may limit partnership opportunities. English is the official language of New Zealand along with Maori, and is the medium of instruction in HEIs. The New Zealand participants in this study, including European or North American migrants, used English as the official language at the workplace, and as the common language for international communication. The findings of this study suggest that in New Zealand there was a lack of incentive to learn Asian languages. This is linked to New Zealand higher education leaders' prejudgments (Chapter Three) of English and Asian languages. For example, one New Zealand leader [NZ5] commented:

There is not a high prestigious factor in New Zealand on speaking in foreign languages. If you come from a non-English speaking country, in many ways to engage to the rest of the world, you have to learn English. In terms of exchanges, that makes English-speaking countries so much more attractive because everybody wants to go to an English speaking country and, you know, work on their English, study in English!...I think New Zealanders would still have a feel of closer affinity with going to European countries or North America as opposed to going to Asia which may indeed be far closer geographically, far less expensive. And the quality of the institutions that we have relationships with in Asia may indeed be higher than the quality of some institutions we have in the North America or Europe. [NZ5]

The findings reflect New Zealand people's tendency of learning languages except for English "for other than purely utilitarian (economic and trade) reasons" (Bishop & Glynn, 1999, p. 44).

In addition, a New Zealand participant noted the relationship between language curriculum in schools and student exchange practices in higher education. He took Japanese language for example and commented on New Zealand students' lack of interest in going to Asian countries if they did not know their languages.

...people are going [to Japan] for language reasons because Japanese is a taught foreign language at many many high schools, but Korean is not, Chinese is, but still not nearly as many as people who learn Japanese, French, Spanish, or German. At the time when Chinese becomes widely taught in New Zealand high schools, I wouldn't know when that's going to happen. We may then find students who come to universities and they have a greater aspiration to go to Mainland China, to Hong Kong, to Taiwan...Because of what they've learnt, they may then feel a greater level of comfort about going to Asia, and a greater curiosity! [NZ5]

Furthermore, this study found that lacking incentives for learning other languages was not confined to New Zealand HEIs, but was common to HEIs in other English-speaking countries, such as the USA, the UK and Australia. A Taiwanese participant particularly commented on American scholars' lack of incentives for learning second languages, and this in turn may limit these scholars' opportunities for partnerships:

Okay, I can see that in the United States, too. They usually just use their language and they can go everywhere in English. So they have low interests in other foreign languages. Wherever they go, people speak English anyway, right? They accommodate me, why should I accommodate them? So it's very normal. A lot of foreign scholars that I met when they come to Taiwan, sometimes they're aware of that; sometimes they would say "I feel terrible that I can't communicate with you in Chinese!" Of course, they limit themselves from learning Asian

languages, and they limit their cooperative opportunities. [TWT5 – 2]

This quotation is indicative that language proficiency is linked with partnership opportunities in HE.

To sum up, the findings of this study suggest that language ideology shaped language practices (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). As Lieberman pointed out, “[t]hose who write the rules, write rules that enable them to continue to write the rules” (Lieberman, 1985, p. 167). The East Asian higher education leaders who did not use English language as a medium for teaching, learning, and research experienced unfavourable power-relational occurrences in international partnerships. The dominance of English language means the East Asian higher education leaders in this study believe that only through English language are they entitled to participate in international partnerships and other international activities in the world higher education system. This language ideology also undermined reciprocity and equal power relations in the partnerships. This language ideology remained difficult to change within a short period of time in the Singaporean, Taiwanese and Chinese contexts.

So far, from the interview data and documents emerged five categories of distributed leadership which help to enrich the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. These categories are formal arrangements (Chapter Five), enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context, sustainability and learning (Chapter Six). The sixth category that emerged from the data is that of multiple international partnership practice.

Multiple Practices

The findings of this study indicate that multiple international partnership practice was carried out differently at the individual level and institutional level across contexts. This implied different interpretation of distributed leadership in New Zealand, Singapore, China and Taiwan. The 22 higher education leaders interviewed were involved in multiple practices as they moved across roles, perspectives, and cultural nuances in international partnerships. This aspect of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships is under explored in the literature. This section discusses the higher education leaders' multiple international partnership practices under the two headings: multiple individual practices, and diverse institutional practices.

Multiple Individual Practices

Key finding: The higher education leaders in international partnerships carry multiple work responsibilities in their practice.

The research findings of this study show that the higher education leaders in international partnerships carry multiple work responsibilities. This had a bearing upon the higher education leaders' commitment levels to distributed leadership in international partnerships.

International partnerships were integral to the higher education leaders' daily practice. While taking part in international partnerships, the higher education leaders also embraced other work responsibilities, and/or were associated with other communities of practice. For example, one Singaporean leader [SG2] commented on his multiple leadership roles such as researcher in comparative

education, Dean of Education, and Vice Dean of a research centre over the past few years. They were not confined to their primary work contexts. In particular, all the academic higher education leaders in the study participated in international associations, conferences and research projects; taught students from a variety of linguistic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds; hosted visiting scholars from overseas countries; and/or published internationally to communicate with a wider audience or scholarly community [NZ1, NZ2, NZ3, CN1, CN4, CN5, SG1, SG2, SG3, TWC1, TWC2, TWC3, TWC4, TWT1, TWT2, TWT3, TWT4, & TWT5].

In addition, this study found that internationalisation conveyed dissimilar messages to the New Zealand and East Asian participants. The notion of internationalisation has become increasingly confusing. Standards and models which were ideal in one context may not be suitable in another. To the East Asian and New Zealand higher education leaders, English appeared to imply a symbol of internationalisation. The research findings show that the Chinese, Taiwanese, and Singaporean leaders considered English as a symbol of 'Westernisation'. To the higher education leaders in China and Taiwan, internationalisation meant incorporating English as a medium of instruction in programme delivery and conference presentations, and the language of publication. To the New Zealand higher education leaders, internationalisation meant embracing and learning Asian cultures, but learning Asian languages was not part of this.

Diverse Institutional Practices

Key finding: The New Zealand and East Asian Chinese HEIs pursued multiple practices in international higher education markets.

The New Zealand and East Asian Chinese HEIs in this study pursued local and national practices while being bound to global influences and international standards. The New Zealand and East Asian Chinese HEIs tended to internationally benchmark with relatively advanced HEIs, with the goal of becoming academically as well as financially competent and competitive in the local and world higher education system.

The findings also indicate the phenomenon of twisted roots, as defined by Altbach (1998), that not only existed in Asia, but was also experienced by the New Zealand university. The interview data showed that the New Zealand university encountered demands for internationalisation, such as the need for foreign-fee-paying students, and developing its students' international perspectives and competitiveness [NZ1 & NZ2]. The New Zealand university's mission statement also indicated the need for recognising Maori achievements, integrating Maori cultures in its curricular, and retaining Maori students. Balancing both needs is a central task for the New Zealand university.

Individual institutional interests played a significant role in determining the level of synergy, the win-win outcome, and the mutual benefits. It raises the importance of identifying both parties' institutional interests as higher education leaders plan partnership strategies. Partnerships could be fruitfully developed

between institutions that are of different needs and interests if individual HEIs were committed and had something to offer. For example, the China-NZ partnership was driven by fundamentally different motives. The Chinese partner demanded capacity building of its education practitioners through learning Western or perhaps advanced knowledge in a New Zealand university. The New Zealand university required foreign fee paying students to meet its financial targets. The partnership was initiated based on the partners' different survival needs. Differences between partners provided opportunities for mutual learning. In particular, one New Zealand participant commented that mutual learning and reciprocity was as a result of differences:

There are different things we can offer, just as they can offer us something. That brings me back to this “reciprocity” thing - that it’s not just us being experts and teaching everybody else, but we learn from each other. [NZ1]

Reciprocity emerged as a key element in international partnerships that reoccurred in individual interview data.

In addition, a Taiwanese participant pointed out that, because of the needs for survival, Taiwanese higher education leaders needed to “attach to” [TWT2] prestigious or large HEIs in foreign countries in order to receive funding from international sources. This perspective was supported by other Taiwanese academic leaders in this study. In the sense of ‘attachment’, Taiwanese scholars did not determine the research agenda, directions and topics, but followed their partners'. On the contrary, another Taiwanese participant noted that Western scholars sometimes would invite Taiwanese scholars for collaborative research in order to apply for funding from a leading scholarly foundation in Taiwan, Chiang

Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange [TWT5]. In this case, Taiwanese scholars were highly valued by Western scholars in terms of their social networks in Taiwan. Power relations between partners in international research projects may change according to the availability of resources that each party possesses.

The findings of this study also suggest that individual institutional interests and needs may vary at different points in time and in different situations. Thus, substantial co-operation and exchanges may not be sustainable or may be hindered due to individual institutional needs. For example, a Singaporean leader commented on the strong institutional needs that may impede the partnership practice between his university and a Canadian university:

[A] challenge will be that their own institutional needs may be very very heavy and as an outcome they may not have resources, you know, to meet your needs as you originally planned. If I need Educational Psychology from [a Canadian university], and in that particular semester, they also have very heavy academic programme. [SG1]

Therefore, the Canadian partner did not have spare resources and personnel to support the Singaporean university.

In this study, the East Asian Chinese HEIs were very concerned about the university rankings. To many Taiwanese higher education leaders, internationalisation fundamentally conveyed the message of partnering with prestigious Asian, European and North American HEIs. New Zealand has not yet become a priority as far as international partnerships are concerned.

The East Asian and New Zealand higher education leaders also showed different attitudes towards professional integrity in international partnerships. As

mentioned previously, two New Zealand leaders expressed that they had been asked by some Asian leaders to lower recruitment requirements such as the IELTS ranks [NZ1 & NZ3].

Summary

This study provided opportunities for the 22 New Zealand, Singaporean, Taiwanese and Chinese higher education leaders to rethink and reflect on their perceptions and experiences of Western with East Asian higher education partnerships. Themes that emerged from the documents and interview data included: formal arrangements (Chapter Five), enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context, sustainability, learning and multiple practices.

Figure 2 shows the relationships of the five key elements of distributed leadership in international partnerships. It helps to understand what distributed leadership means in partnerships between Western with East Asian Chinese HEIs, what is or shall be distributed, the processes involved in such practices, and the necessary conditions for sustaining distributed leadership.

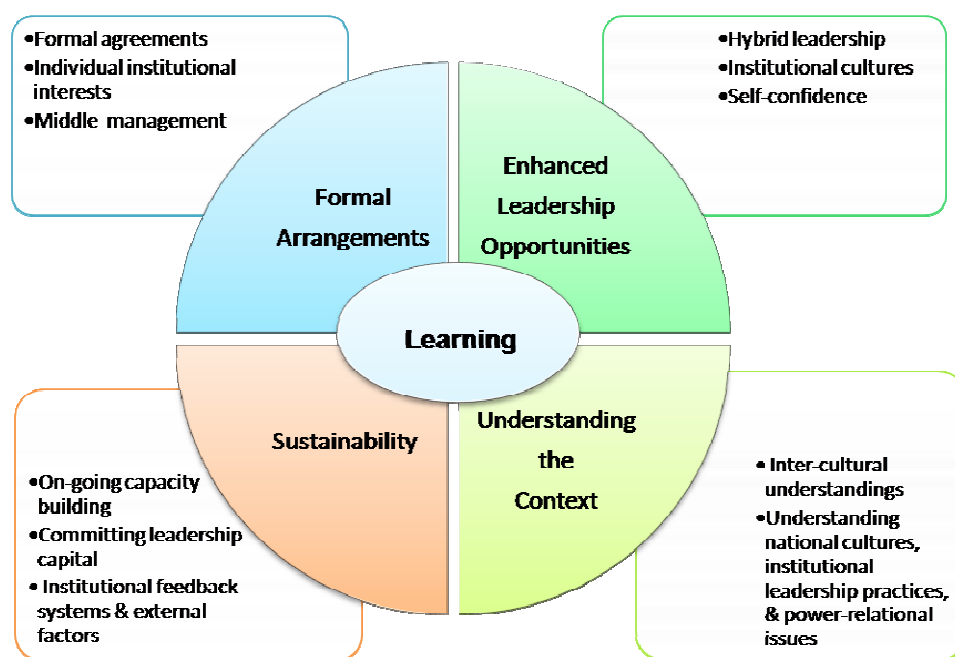


Figure 2 Distributed Leadership for International Higher Education Partnerships

The interview data and document information in this study suggested the following distributed leadership practices in the international partnerships, in relation to Chapter Two. First, the higher education leaders in this study focused primarily on formal distribution of leadership roles and responsibilities. Second, there was evidence of enhanced leadership opportunities in the international partnerships to support formal leadership. However, the level of self-confidence in taking up leadership opportunities differed among the New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders. Third, the higher education leaders showed understanding of the context, such as understandings of centres and peripheries in world higher education, competitive forces in higher education markets, and culturally-specific relational rules. Fourth, sustainability was considered as an essential aspect of international partnerships. The findings show evidence of

sustaining partnership agreements and leadership capital, and the influence of internationalisation systems and external factors on the sustainability of international partnerships. Fifth, learning for bridging differences and through shared languages was visible in the interview data. In particular, this study identified that the language used in the partnerships affected the higher education leaders' learning of self and others. Finally, multiple practices were identified as additional to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. The interview data showed the challenges faced by the higher education leaders as they tried to balance their multiple roles with those of their institutions in international partnerships.

Theories that emerged from the research findings will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

CHAPTER SEVEN DISCUSSION: LEARNING FOR DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

Chapter Seven theorises the research findings in light of the theoretical framework for this study, and discusses the significance of the research findings. In this study, learning occurred in all the key elements of distributed leadership (formal arrangements, enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context and sustainability). In these New Zealand with East Asian Chinese HEI partnerships, learning demonstrated the potential for facilitating distributed leadership, and for enhancing reciprocity in the partnership network. As Gonzales (2004) pointed out distribution of leadership is characterised by a reciprocal process through which a collaborative and spontaneous learning culture is mutually constructed.

To theorise the learning and practice for distributed leadership in international partnerships, this chapter presents and discusses a conceptual framework. The conceptual framework helps to explain how learning would impact on multiple distributed leadership practices in international higher education partnerships (Figure 3).

Conceptual Framework for the Learning and Practice of Distributed Leadership in International Higher Education Partnerships

A conceptual framework for the learning and practice of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships (Figure 3) is constructed based on five

elements: three sources of learning distributed leadership (including prior knowledge, understandings of the context, and knowledge of leadership capital, issues and factors), reflection, and multiple distributed leadership practices. The framework helps to understand how higher education leaders' distributed leadership practices can be influenced by and improved through addressing these interrelated elements of learning. The framework identifies the relationship between necessary inputs and potential outcomes in developing distributed leadership practices in the international partnerships. It adds to the knowledge base of “how leadership might be practised and what consequences—intended and unintended—occur” (Storey, 2004, p. 251).

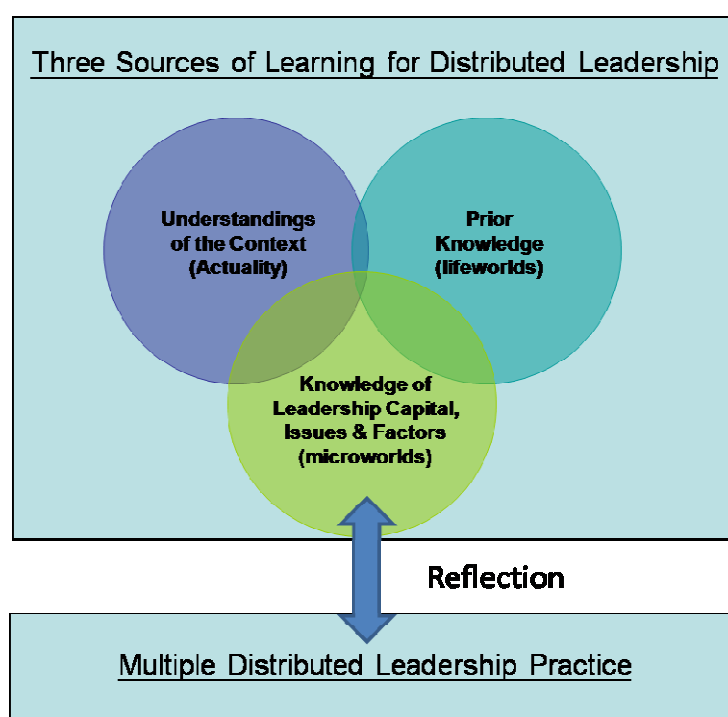


Figure 3 The Learning and Practice of Distributed Leadership in International
Higher Education Partnerships

The upper part of the framework illustrates three sources of learning for distributed leadership. They are understandings of the context, prior knowledge, and knowledge of leadership capital. The three sources of learning interact with each other, and together influence the multiple leadership practices in international partnerships. This study argues that it is possible to combine the three areas of understandings using Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and fields (Bourdieu, 1992; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990), Lave and Wenger's (1991) notions of situated learning in communities of practice, and Wallner's (1995, 1997, 2004) concepts of actuality, microworlds and lifeworlds (Chapter Three). Integrating the three areas of learning with the above theoretical perspectives helps to conceptualise higher education leaders' socio-cultural learning for international partnerships.

Reflection is situated in the middle part of the framework, and links and informs learning and practices. The literature review identifies reflection as an approach to enhance inter-cultural understandings (Lasonen, 2005; Poole, 2006; Zhou et al., 2008) and to actively construct new knowledge and develop future practices (Barlow & Antoniou, 2007; Huston & Weaver, 2008; Savin-Baden & Major, 2007) as was also found in this study. When the higher education leaders reflected on their past experiences and their practices, they conceptualised an understanding of their leadership practices in the partnerships. However, it was almost impossible for the higher education leaders to compare cultures, curricular systems, and educational without making judgements, as Coulby (2006) argued. The research findings show the higher education leaders made judgements and decisions based on their prior knowledge and their understandings of the context.

This finding was parallel to the discussion on the constructivist epistemology in Chapter Three.

Multiple distributed leadership practices are positioned in the lower part of the framework. It emerges from the interview data, and represents multiple leadership practices at the personal as well as institutional levels. The interview data suggested that, through reflecting on practices, higher education leaders could enhance their understandings of the context, individual prior knowledge, and knowledge of leadership capital. In particular, English language as a cultural capital and as a medium of communication in the New Zealand and East Asian partnerships was evident in this study. The research findings draw attention to some issues in relation to the use of language in international partnerships.

In the following sections the framework of learning and practice of distributed leadership for international higher education partnerships is discussed under the following headings: prior knowledge with leadership practices; understandings of the context with leadership practices; knowledge of leadership capital, issues and factors with leadership practices; significance of reflection; and issues of language practices.

Prior Knowledge with Leadership Practices

Prior knowledge influenced the higher education leaders' perceptions of leadership and their culturally-specific leadership approaches. Bourdieu's notion of habitus (Chapter Three), Wallner's (1995, 1997, 2004) notion of lifeworlds (Chapter Three, upper right circle in Figure 3), and Hofstede's (1991, 2001) notion of national cultures (Chapter Two) all help to interpret this research finding.

These theoretical perspectives suggest a social group's cultural traditions, history, preferences, and dispositions towards certain social activities are socio-culturally embedded. The higher education leaders in this study had constructed their socio-culturally specific prior knowledge in their early socialisation and learning experiences, before they took part in HEI international partnerships. This prior knowledge included individual habitus, cultural values, cultural assumptions, culturally-specific leadership perspectives, patterns of communication, and philosophical foundation.

The higher education leaders' prior knowledge was deeply ingrained in their practices. As Bowe and Martin (2007) highlighted, individual cultures have preferred ways of communicating, presenting politeness, and building relationships. Mathews (2000) also commented that people in the era of globalisation and internationalisation tend to merge multiple practices, and that the primary or original culture of the person would remain strong in his or her pursuit of social practice. Without deep reflection, some of the higher education leaders may have taken their cultural practices for granted, as the way things are. Wallner (1995, 1997, 2004) indicated that the approach the higher education leaders employed to construct cultural knowledge was to use intuition. The higher education leaders tended to use intuition to make decisions in cultural settings. According to Claxton (2001), intuition is based on prior knowledge and experiences, and does not come from nowhere. For example, higher education leaders would observe what the host did in a dinner situation, and follow the host's cultural practice of eating. On the one hand, intuition had the strength of helping the higher education leaders to make immediate decisions; on the other

hand, using intuition sometimes limited the higher education leaders' use of deep thinking, reflection, and cultural sensitivity.

As Bourdieu (1988) argued, individual habitus informs whether a higher education leader is suitable for the field of higher education. Similarly, the interview data showed that the higher education leaders in different management positions and countries developed different habitus towards international partnerships and towards their own leadership roles. These habitual tendencies impacted on the higher education leaders' multiple distributed leadership practices in the partnerships.

The higher education leaders' perceptions of leadership were congruent with Hofstede's five national culture dimensions of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism or collectivism, masculinity or femininity, and short-term or long-term orientation (Hofstede, 2001; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). The higher education leaders in the study showed different tendencies towards the five national cultural dimensions as well as patterns of communication, attitudes, behaviours, actions and professional knowledge in relation to international partnerships. This finding echoed the literature review on national cultures (Chapter Two), and showed a dialectical relationship between the higher education leaders' habitus and their multiple leadership practices.

The research findings present some examples of leaders adapting mutually acceptable leadership practices in Western with East Asian partnerships. To achieve this, they engaged in learning across cultural boundaries, and have moved beyond their culturally-inherent practices. It showed that prior knowledge is possible to change as a part of the higher education leaders' personal growth (May,

1999b). In this study, tacit learning through social interactions between Western and East Asian higher education leaders occurred along with their increased socio-cultural experiences in the international partnerships. Although the higher education leaders may have lacked intention to learn the specific for Western with East Asian partnerships, they may have later understood what is important to learn. According to the literature, growth in the workplace inevitably requires a series of adjustments as well as development of professional knowledge and competencies (Billett, Smith, & Barker, 2005; Smith, 2006). In addition, Wenger's (2000) notions of learning at the boundaries in communities of practice (Chapter Three) help to elaborate the possibility for higher education leaders to learn cross-culturally.

This study showed a link between the leader's culturally embedded perceptions of leadership roles, and their efficacy beliefs for taking up leadership roles (Kark et al., 2003; Ross & Gray, 2006). The higher education leaders in the study, who perceived their own leadership roles positively, tended to believe in themselves as educational leaders, and took active actions in the international partnerships. This finding adds to the literature on teacher leadership and teacher efficacy beliefs (Harris & Muijs, 2005; Ross & Gray, 2006), by suggesting addressing the impact of socio-culturally embedded prior knowledge on leadership perceptions and beliefs.

The connection between prior knowledge and understandings of the context was evident in the interview data, and supported Bourdieu's position on the strong relationship between habitus (prior knowledge) and field (context). Bourdieu stated that habitus and field interpenetrate and influence the conditioning of each

other, and specifically that “[h]abitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world, a world endowed with sense and value, in which it is worth investing one’s energy” (Reay, 1997, p. 227). The New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders in this study worked in the world higher education market or the field of HEI international partnerships. They each carried unique cultural heritage, knowledge, preferences and perspectives. Through their viewing and acting in the field, they added cultural meaning to the mainstream HEI networks. The findings help us to understand why some rules of practice favour certain groups of HEIs in the world higher education markets.

Understandings of the Context with Leadership Practices

Understanding the context of international partnerships and how the context impacts on practice formed an essential part of the higher education leaders’ learning and practices of distributed leadership.

The work context was an essential arena for learning. As Hodkinson, Biesta and James (2008) pointed out, it is essential to understand learning as an on-going process, and the ways which learning takes place in the “wider social, economic and political factors, which lie outside as well as inside the person and the learning situation” (p. 28). Understandings by the leaders in this study, of the context for Western with East Asian international partnerships involved understanding potential social, economic and political factors that may influence the HEI’s internationalisation practice. Drawing upon Bourdieu’s notion of the rules of practice, the research findings suggest that the higher education leaders attended to external factors as they practised in the field of international

partnerships (Bourdieu, 1992, 2000; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Specifically, Wallner identified that people form understandings of the rules of practice in actuality, which is additional to lifeworlds and microworlds (upper left circle in Figure 3). The framework demonstrated the possibility of linking Bourdieu's notion of the rules of practice and Wallner's notion of actuality.

Understanding the context assisted the higher education leaders to observe the partnership networks and the macro higher education markets, understand national and institutional practices, and become familiar with power-related issues in distributed leadership practices. In this study, distributed leadership in HEI international partnerships was embedded in socio-cultural contexts and was a social practice, drawing upon Bourdieu's notion of field (1992), Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of community of practice and Marginson's (2008) notion of global field of higher education.

The higher education leaders in this study were embedded in contexts of multiple cultures and practices, with an array of visible and invisible boundaries (Alfred, 2002). Blurred boundaries between the Western and East Asian HEIs emerged as a result of interpenetration of these global factors. The research findings are congruent with the literature on international partnerships between Western and non-Western HEIs such as in Africa, Middle East, South America, Southeast Asia, and Asia Pacific (Gopinathan & Altbach, 2005; Postiglione, 2005; Tedrow & Mabokela, 2007). These authors sought to challenge the phenomenon of Western universities being in the centre of internationalisation in world higher education. In particular, Altbach (1981) asked if it was possible for peripheral HEIs to become central in the international context almost three decades ago. The

question remains viable today in examining the power-related issues as experienced by higher education leaders in the East Asian and New Zealand contexts. The research findings suggest that boundaries between the New Zealand with East Asian Chinese HEIs were reducing because of the demand for partnerships and the higher education leaders' multiple distributed leadership practices. This indicates the possibility for peripheries to become centres, for centres to collaborate with peripheries, and for HEIs to perform as centres and peripheries in different contexts in the world higher education market.

While pursuing partnerships, the HEIs in this study remained competitive in the world higher education markets. A market force perspective (Porter, 2008; Porter & Kramer, 2006) helps to explain the multiple roles of New Zealand and East Asian Chinese HEIs and their complex power-relations. However, Porter's framework of five competitive forces could be enhanced by adding a sixth and a seventh force. A sixth force may be the public power (Porter & Kramer, 2006). In this study, public power came from government bodies, the media, alumni and prospective international students, whose views of the HEIs may impact on the sustainability of international partnerships. A seventh force may require HEIs to work collaboratively with an emphasis on capacity building. For example, the Singapore-NZ partnership focused on collaboration of the two universities, and on the capacity building of the Singaporean teachers.

Figure 3 shows the overlapping of the higher education leaders' prior knowledge (which was constructed in lifeworlds), knowledge of leadership capital, issues and factors (which was constructed in microworlds), and their understandings of the rules of practice (which was constructed in actuality). The

three sources of learning are interconnected and influence each other. The findings suggest the three sources of knowledge assisted the higher education leaders to deal with issues and factors that were embedded within the partnerships. The findings echo Wallner's (1995) discussion on learning and practices. Wallner commented that, although actors cannot fully comprehend the context, it is possible for them to increase their level of control over the context through constructed understandings in lifeworlds and microworlds. This highlights the agency, ownership and active roles of the higher education leaders in constructing knowledge. In this study, the higher education leaders made sense of and understood the context based on their culturally-embedded prior knowledge. By comparing, contrasting and reflecting on their experiences in international partnerships with prior knowledge and the rules of practice, the higher education leaders constructed knowledge of leadership capital, issues and factors that were paramount in international partnership practices.

Knowledge of Leadership Capital, Issues and Factors with Leadership Practices

Another source of learning for distributed leadership is the knowledge of leadership capital, issues and factors that may impact on the practices of international higher education partnerships (lower circle in Figure 3). The international partnerships in this study were embedded in the context that consisted of social, economic and cultural forms of leadership capital, and a plethora of context-specific issues and factors. The findings support the literature on higher education leaders' understandings of issues in internationalisation and in educational leadership (Webber & Robertson, 2003, 2004). In particular, the

findings on distributing forms of leadership capital add to the current literature on international higher education partnerships which mainly stresses distributing social forms of leadership capital (such as leadership roles, positions, opportunities, and networks). Comprehensive understandings of social, cultural and economic leadership capital that the higher education leaders obtained and distributed was essential for them to succeed in the partnerships. Such knowledge was required for the higher education leaders to evaluate what was to be distributed and how it was to be distributed in their practices.

This knowledge allowed the higher education leaders to observe how multiple forms of leadership capital were used, accumulated, circulated, and interrelated, and would lead to particular outcomes (Bourdieu, 1977). This study showed that frequent interaction and a long-term orientation could possibly increase the flow of leadership capital between partner HEIs. Frequent interaction and long-term orientation also helped to enrich the attributes, resources, knowledge, competencies, skills, and qualities of the individual higher education leaders. This indicates the need for people who are involved in higher education internationalisation activities to communicate and interact regularly, and attend to any possibility that might lead to future partnerships.

The findings suggest that transferring capital between the New Zealand and East Asian Chinese HEIs was dependent upon the needs of individual HEIs, not necessarily from a higher status to a lower one, which is what Altbach (2007) suggested. The findings provide an alternative lens through which to interpret Altbach's (1998; 2004) notion of centres and peripheries, and knowledge dependency in the arena of international partnerships (Chapter One). The higher

education leaders' knowledge of leadership capital existed side by side with their knowledge of issues and factors that may impact on the success of the international partnership.

This chapter has identified and discussed a number of issues in these partnerships, including issues of commitment, trust, reciprocity, language practices, individual and institutional habitus. The approach the higher education leaders in this study used to construct knowledge of leadership capital, issues and factors was reflection. Such approach to learning falls into Wallner's (1998) discussion on the development of disciplinary or professional knowledge in microworlds. It is suitable to position the higher education leaders' knowledge of leadership capital, issues and factors in microworlds (Figure 3).

Significance of Reflection

Another important construct of the framework (Figure 3) is that of reflection. This study particularly addressed the significance of reflection on the higher education leaders' practices in international partnerships, and on transferring tacit learning into professional disciplinary knowledge. Such disciplinary knowledge was constructed in microworlds, in Wallner's term, but was not emphasised in Bourdieu's (1992) notions of fields and habitus. According to Wallner (2004), knowledge is not equivalent with knowing and "[k]nowing without reflection is not knowledge" (para 8). The research findings support Wallner's views that simply relying on past experiences and common sense in dealing with international partnership issues would challenge the professionalism of higher education leaders. Drawing upon Wallner's perspectives, the framework (Figure 3) suggests

constructing disciplinary knowledge in microworlds, and indicates the dialectical relationship between multiple leadership practices and the learning of social, cultural and disciplinary knowledge. This framework extends Bourdieu's discussion on socio-culturally embedded learning and practices. The framework further suggests the possibility for the higher education leaders to develop their practices, through reflecting on the three sources of learning.

Braxton (2005) addressed the urgency for "a scholarship of practice" to meet two primary goals: improving administrative practices in higher education, and developing a knowledge base that recognises the professional status of administrative work (p. 286). Similarly, the research findings of this study suggest that the international partnerships were grounded within the context of continual renewal and improvements of higher education performance, responsibilities, and standards.

The higher education leaders in this study (at all levels) required learning of relevant skills and competencies to become responsive and proactive to complex leadership agenda (Gornitzka & Larsen, 2004; Huston & Weaver, 2008; Ramsden et al., 2007; Whitchurch, 2006). There was a need for enhancing the scholarship of practice in these international partnerships through heightened learning, reflection upon practices, and inter-disciplinary, inter-cultural and inter-organisational coordination among the higher education leaders.

However, reflection was primarily done individually rather than collectively. The difficulties in reflecting upon the higher education leadership practices in international partnerships were related to their increasingly demanding work environment. They all experienced heavy workloads and time commitment issues.

Demanding higher education work conditions have required a considerable commitment of time on the part of higher education leaders, and have limited their time for reflective practices (Houston et al., 2006; Rosser, 2004). According to the literature, a number of perceived economic and political factors have hindered higher education personnel's time commitment to their work. These factors include increased staff mobility, accountability, responsibilities, entrepreneurial roles, stress levels, and workloads on higher education staff (Bok, 2003; Hancock & Hellowell, 2003; Marginson & Wende, 2007; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). These factors have prevented the higher education leaders from committing time to reflection and, therefore, new learning.

In this study, international partnerships were found to be both a source of recognition of achievement as well as a source of increased workload for the New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders. Under the performance-based funding and appraisal regimes in New Zealand, increasing tension exists between demands for workloads and variable motives for recognition and rewards (Houston et al., 2006; Middleton, 2004). Likewise, Taiwan and China also implemented a similar performance-based funding and appraisal system which requires higher education leaders to be involved in internationalisation activities and increased workloads (Chou & Ho, 2007; Yang et al., 2007). This study suggested that the greater workload of higher education leaders, the more difficulties they face in proactively or actively taking on different approaches to practices. To the Taiwanese and Chinese participants, different approaches to practices meant learning and teaching in English language; to the New Zealand participants, different approaches to practices included learning Asian languages. Due to a lack

of time and heavy workloads of the higher education leaders, time for developing language capacity was restrained. However, HEIs could arrange support staff who can speak the partner's mother tongue to facilitate better communication and enhance mutual understandings.

Some higher education leaders in this study commented on the benefits of participating in this study as the interviews encouraged them to reflect upon their past experiences and possible future action in international partnerships. In addition, they relied greatly on communicating with the partner HEI using emails. Studies on group communication using emails have shown that email communication is convenient, does not significantly increase workloads, helps to facilitate reflective practices, increases group satisfaction, and has the potential to improve relationships within the emailing network (Kidd & Nestel, 2004; Leong, Gingrich, Lewis, Mauger, & George, 2005). As the higher education leaders in this study have already been using emails for daily communication, emailing can act as a powerful tool for them to share, exchange, and obtain information as well as to develop professional knowledge.

This study further suggested communication through emails has the potential to facilitate collective reflection on professional practices in international higher education partnerships across cultural, national, and institutional boundaries. In this study, the higher education leaders used emails to cross-culturally communicate, compare, contrast and consolidate culturally specific terminologies, concepts, norms, knowledge and practices. The process of reflecting upon prior knowledge as well as issues and factors that are embedded within the context is critical for emerging new knowledge and socio-culturally

competent leadership practices in international higher education partnerships.

Summary and A Working Definition of Distributed Leadership in International Higher Education Partnerships

Building upon the literature on distributed leadership in Chapter Two and the findings of this study, this chapter presents and discusses a conceptual framework for the learning and practice of distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships. The conceptual framework helps to understand how the higher education leaders' three sources of learning would impact on their multiple leadership practices, and how reflection would help to bridge learning and practices in international partnerships.

The three sources of learning identified in this study include prior knowledge, understandings of the context, and knowledge of leadership capital, issues and factors. This study argued that three interrelated dimensions of learning intrinsically impact on the New Zealand and East Asian higher education leaders' distributed leadership practices in the partnerships. If these three dimensions of learning were addressed, the leaders would be more socio-culturally competent in practising in international partnerships. In promoting these three dimensions of learning, the level of reciprocity and sustainability in partnership networks would be enhanced. It is suggested that higher education leaders' learning or lack of learning about how to distribute leadership would lead to differentiated leadership practices. Multiple leadership practices in the international partnerships was a result of the higher education leaders' different understandings of the issues and factors that reside within the higher education context. It was also the outcome of

different life experiences and prior knowledge that were developed within their socio-cultural groups and HEIs.

A working definition of distributed leadership in international partnerships between the New Zealand and East Asian Chinese HEIs emerged as the following:

Distributed leadership in international higher education partnerships is inclusive leadership practices that address formal arrangements, enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context, sustainability and three sources of learning (prior knowledge, understandings of the context, and knowledge of leadership capital, issues and factors) in international partnership networks; that focus on the relationship between learning, reflection, and multiple (multi-layered and multi-levelled) leadership practices; and that are particularly subject to the level of language proficiency.

Chapter Eight concludes this study, provides recommendations for future practices and research, and identifies limitations of this study.

CHAPTER EIGHT CONCLUSION

Globalisation, internationalisation, and many other entrepreneurial concepts have spread widely through the higher education sector in the 21st Century. However, the rules for international partnerships between Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs appear to overemphasise economic benefits and overlook the educational leadership implications for such practices. In these resourcing and relationship practices, Western and East Asian higher education leaders are seeking new social orders and institutional rules to nurture successful partnerships. This study served the purpose of identifying the type of educational leadership that could help higher education leaders to move across boundaries of national, cultural, structural, and institutional differences, and to address issues and factors that may impact on such leadership practices. The type of educational leadership being promoted in this study was distributed leadership.

In conclusion, this chapter firstly provides recommendations for possible future leadership practices. It then indicates areas that future research may consider in terms of research methodologies and theoretical frameworks. The final part of this chapter identifies areas of limitations of this study, and indicates approaches used to minimise these limitations.

Recommendations for Future Distributed Leadership Practices

This section provides some recommendations for future distributed leadership practices in international higher education partnerships. Although the focus of this study is restricted to the international partnerships between the New Zealand

university and its East Asian Chinese partners, it should be noted that some of the findings may have wider implications for education practitioners and researchers who are concerned about international partnership practices in other contexts, such as other countries, cultures, language practices, and disciplines.

Approaches to Enhance Distributed Leadership

It is suggested that higher education leaders undertake active leadership roles that enhance distributed leadership. Higher education leaders need to understand that distributed leadership for international partnerships overlays three main premises: (1) leadership practices are culturally embedded within the leader's original socio-cultural group; (2) distributed leadership requires profound understandings of issues and factors that interpenetrate and reside within the world higher education context; and (3) HEIs need to address the importance of sustainability, understand the context, engage in learning, provide enhanced leadership opportunities as well as put formal arrangements in place for individual partnerships.

Distributed leadership has the potential to overcome differences, maximise reciprocity, and enhance leadership opportunities. Understanding differences and similarities in needs, expectations, priorities, cultures, thoughts, perceptions, and practices was highly regarded by all the participants as a key leadership approach to international partnerships. To achieve this, higher education leaders have to observe and learn socio-culturally or institutionally-specific practices.

Specifically, this study suggested that the educational leaders' perceptions of their own leadership roles and efficacy beliefs can be further promoted. This

requires higher education leaders to attend to their culturally inherent leadership perceptions and prejudgments. Higher education leaders are required to actively engage in leadership roles. They need to acknowledge and value their academic, management, administrative or support roles in international partnerships. HEIs may benefit from developing a leadership culture that fosters multi-layered and multi-levelled leadership within the organisation.

It is crucial to “possiblise” (Webber & Robertson, 2003, p. 31) how HEIs in one socio-cultural setting can best incorporate with the other to enhance distributed leadership. It is suggested that higher education leaders in international partnerships need to be innovative in thinking. They need to consider how international partnerships can be fruitfully developed beyond positioning Western HEIs as centres and the rest as peripheries. Changing mindsets on power- relations between HEIs would enable higher education leaders to develop, enhance, and perhaps change leadership practices, and to competently distribute social, economic and cultural forms of leadership capital across differences. Committing leadership capital within HEIs and with their partners across a number of lateral and vertical differences, in Marginson’s (2008) term, helps to nurture trust and maximise reciprocity in international partnerships. Hence, there is a link between sustainability and boundary-breaking leadership practices in international higher education partnerships (Marginson, 2008; Robertson & Webber, 2002).

Higher education leaders also have an obligation to look into issues in international partnerships beyond the institutional level. They need to consider the impact of external factors on the development and operation of international partnerships. For example, HEIs may examine their curriculum design, staffing

structure, resources, and government policies to seek ways to promote inter-cultural understandings.

Familiarity with second or foreign languages would help to nurture cross-cultural understandings. A national second language or foreign language policy might benefit the New Zealand university in taking part of export education, international education, and international partnerships.

In particular, New Zealand, Singapore and Taiwan are relatively small countries when compared to China and Australia in the Asia-Pacific region. HEIs in these countries would be relatively small and flexible. This helps them to develop a niche market and provide partner institutions, students or any one who is a consumer of higher education services with tailored systems or programmes. Innovative approaches in delivering export higher education would distinguish New Zealand HEIs from a raft of providers in what has become an increasingly competitive export education market.

Active Communities of Practice

To nurture distributed leadership practice between international higher education partners, higher education leaders are recommended to actively participate in communities of practice. Key players in international partnerships are expected to work collaboratively to address entrepreneurial issues, conflicting values, and distribution of institutional and government resources and funding (Slaughter & Leslie, 1999; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

To enhance distributed leadership in international partnerships, higher education leaders need to actively establishing networks of support within and

beyond their HEIs. Initiating cross-role, cross-cultural, inter-disciplinary, or inter-organisational dialogue on collaborative approaches to enhance practices could facilitate this. Support teams, such as administrative personnel in academic departments and international centres, can actively share their expertise in administering international affairs with their academic colleagues. This may help academic higher education leaders to attend to the financial and market factors that are inherent in the ever changing world higher education environment. A heightened sense of community could help higher education leaders to reduce inward-looking and insular practices, and enhance reciprocity and respect differences.

A focus on longer term relationship building is needed. These can be developed by aligning alumni and support persons in international partnership networks, applying cultural strategies such as *guan xi*, face and favour, using foreign negotiation, providing international students with positive learning experiences and work opportunities, seeking sustainable support from government bodies and HEIs.

In addition, attention to complicated power-relational issues across communities of practice is required. Many East Asian HEIs are in a less favourable situation than Western providers of higher education in terms of the language of instruction and the Western academic tradition. However, in terms of bargaining power in export higher education markets, East Asian HEIs as customers of Western higher education services held strong position. Western HEIs may consider how they as suppliers of Western higher education knowledge could respond positively to the demands of its East Asian partners. Correspondingly, East

Asian Chinese HEIs may consider how they could step out of the existing Western higher education model, and develop their special characters based on the local context, as they work with Western HEI partners.

Leading Learning and Professional Development

Profound learning and reflection are needed to inform higher education leaders' practices. Sustainable development of human capacity and leadership in the internationalisation process deserves greater emphasis (Barth et al., 2007; Seddoh, 2003; Song & Tai, 2007; Summers et al., 2005). The process for internationalisation could be enhanced through capacity building of staff, committing leadership capital, providing feedback, and addressing external factors. As Levin and Fullan (2008) highlighted, sustainability in leadership demands multi-level and multi-dimensional capacity building of the people and partners within and outside the educational institution.

Collective reflection among higher education faculty members could improve distributed leadership practices in international partnerships. Collective reflection can be carried out through conversations in social interactions such as meetings, social gatherings, mentor-mentee relationships, and peer coaching (Grant, 2004; Hubball & Burt, 2006; Huston & Weaver, 2008). Along with the advancement of information and communication technologies, a variety of on-line approaches can be employed to promote collective reflection between partner HEIs.

Further development of the higher education leaders' inter-cultural competencies is necessary for distributed leadership practices. Relevant units

within individual HEIs and external government bodies may need to review current funding, reward, and promotion structures for the provision of relevant professional development opportunities. Higher education leaders should value their prior knowledge, and then critically analyse their strengths and weaknesses to determine areas for development of inter-cultural competencies. In particular, Webber and Robertson (2003, 2004) advised leadership development programmes integrating local, national, as well as international perspectives to avoid misunderstanding, and to facilitate understandings of international policies and practices.

It is also essential for HEIs to explore how higher education leaders can be further motivated and equipped with necessary skills and knowledge for practising. According to Stohl:

If we want to internationalize the university, we have to internationalize the faculty. We have to move them in the necessary directions. We thus need to consider not only how to do what needs to be done but also how what needs to be done affects the faculty and how we can mobilize their power over the process. (Stohl, 2007, p. 367)

In order to mobilise higher education leaders' effective participation in international partnerships, government bodies and HEIs must provide necessary conditions and incentives to encourage collaborative and reflective learning and facilitate professional development of inter-cultural competencies.

Organisational Systems for Sustainability

This study suggests that distributed leadership in international partnerships are grounded in organisational systems and processes that promote sustainability.

Therefore, higher education leaders should consider what systems are needed for enhancing sustainability in their partnership contexts. HEIs need to develop processes and systems for sustaining internationalisation, as well as to commit resources and personnel to current partnership agreements, activities or programmes. Systems that promote efficiency, flexibility, and professional integrity, and address potential issues and factors within partnership networks are needed. These include, first, institutionalised feedback systems and processes to effectively monitor the progress of individual partnership programmes or activities, attend to potential conflicts of interests, understand both parties' changing needs and expectations, and adequately distribute leadership and resources. Due to different governance systems across Western and East Asian HE, higher education leaders need to build consensus on how to successfully meet national, institutional, and departmental standards and requirements while addressing partners' needs for efficiency and flexibility. It is also important for HEIs to monitor higher education leaders' demanding work conditions and the impact on professional development and renewal (Houston et al., 2006; Whitchurch, 2004, 2006).

Second, to facilitate distributed leadership, Western HEIs, as providers of higher education services, must endeavour to protect professional integrity and assure education quality while focusing on profit-seeking. East Asian Chinese HEIs as consumers of higher education services must focus on improving the overall institutional capacity, including English proficiency of staff and students and professional knowledge, while seeking Western qualifications and partnerships. Higher education leaders need to observe competitive forces within

the context of international partnerships, and develop better understandings of how distributed leadership practices could balance the demand for competition as well as co-operation.

Third, practitioners of international partnerships are required to incorporate cost-effective analysis of necessary input and potential outcome to effectively address social, cultural and economic factors on the sustainability of international partnerships. This is because committing social, cultural and economic forms of leadership capital is paramount in promoting sustainable distributed leadership. Higher education leaders need to understand how external factors such as safety, publicity, financial factors, competitive market forces, and government policies can influence the sustainability leadership capital. Addressing Bishop and Glynn's (1999) three principles (partnership, participation and protection) for building relationships in international partnerships can enhance sustainability and nurture trust and reciprocity between partners.

Fourth, sustainability in distributed leadership can be improved through effectively increasing the publicity of the HEI and the partnership in a foreign market. Providers of higher education services need to ensure positive learning experiences for international students, and offer them extended employment opportunities. This would encourage international students to promote the host HEI upon their return to home countries. Encouraging learning of East Asian languages may also help New Zealand HEIs successfully understand East Asian higher education systems, establish linkages, and thus promote New Zealand HEIs in East Asian markets. In order to participate fully in the field of international higher education, East Asian higher education leaders carry the leadership

obligation to enhance their HEIs' profile through international publications, conferences, as well as capacity building of the staff and students.

Finally, higher education leaders must place priority on ensuring student safety and provision of socio-culturally appropriate pastoral care in their daily practices. Profound understandings of international students' special requirements for studying and living in a foreign country are essential for all higher education practitioners. These approaches are examples of approaches to maximise sustainability in the HEI's internationalisation process.

Recommendations for Future Research

First, researchers need to develop socio-culturally specific knowledge that is grounded on the reality of a particular group of people in a society, nature, or culture (Yang, 2005). Instead of simply following dominant Western methodologies, researchers of cross-cultural studies have to examine the research context and seek theoretical perspectives that reflect the realities of the context. This study has illustrated a number of ways to achieve a high level of compatibility between the leadership literature, philosophical perspectives, and methodological approaches. A variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives were used based on their suitability for interpreting the research findings. Incorporating dominant theoretical perspectives, in particular European and North American ones, with perspectives from New Zealand and East Asia may help to moderate the excessive use of Western theorising in the higher education literature.

Second, comparative leadership studies have the potential to develop cross-cultural understandings. This study, as comparative inquiry, empowered me

to enrich inter-cultural understandings. Comparative studies can be a powerful way for collective reflection and learning distributed leadership practices. It would be meaningful for higher education leaders to undertake comparative approaches to analyse their own practices and explore areas of improvement.

Third, this study argues that simply contributing differences in practices and thoughts to culture may lead to misinterpretation. Researchers of cross-cultural educational practices must be cautious about using cultural labels such as Chinese culture, Singapore culture, Taiwanese culture, New Zealand culture, East or West and so on. Labels or labelling may not be culturally appropriate or adequate to interpret the complexity of socio-cultural and historical knowledge that have contributed higher education leaders' practise. Misconceptions of cultures are somehow inevitable as researchers tend to understand their own contexts better than others'. To avoid labelling of cultures in comparative studies, researchers need to be self-cautious about personal biases and cultural assumptions.

Fourth, researchers of cross-cultural studies can employ strangifications (Chapter Three) as powerful methodological strategies to enhance inter-cultural and inter-disciplinary co-operation of data. Strangifications can offer specific tools for researchers to explore underlying connections among theoretical perspectives, and implicit relationships among social structures. It is noteworthy that integrating strangifications with grounded theory methodology assisted this study to effectively reflect upon cultural data. Strangifications can act as a reflective knowing approach for constructing cultural knowledge. In addition, this study has demonstrated some ways to use strangifications as methodological approaches to facilitate coordination of knowledge that is developed within different contexts. In

this study, strangifications allowed this study to explore the differences and commonalities between Chinese relational norms such as Guanxi, face and favour and equivalent English terminologies. However, relational norms which are relevant to the Singapore and New Zealand contexts are also meaningful to explore, for example, Malay and Indian views of relationships in Singapore and Maori views of relationships in New Zealand.

Limitations of the Study

Any analysis based on the accounts of a few higher education leaders is necessarily tentative. Yet, the very different experiences of the higher education leaders in New Zealand and East Asia signals the importance of addressing aspects of socio-cultural, historical, economic, technological, and political influences that have a bearing upon the personal and collective practices of higher education leaders.

This study would have been enriched if I had involved the same participants for two rounds of face-to-face interviews. The richness of the research findings could have been enhanced if I had involved more participants with similar backgrounds from the same country. However, this study was designed to involve such a diverse group of higher education leaders. This was because, as Hayhoe (2007) suggested, identifying common patterns of practice across differences can be a methodological approach to emerge meaningful findings and which helps to explore in-depth cultural patterns. Further research could employ more participants with similar work experiences and responsibilities.

This study sought to employ participants from a similar disciplinary background, education or teacher education. However, I was unable to explore in-depth the institutional habitus of individual higher education leaders' departments, faculties, schools, or colleges within its mother HEI. Future studies could employ more participants from a particular discipline in the HEI to explore their collective practices, cultures, and dispositions within the field of education.

Conclusion

If higher education leaders' distributed leadership practices were deeply embedded in their original work context, how effectively can individual higher education leaders learn and adapt to globally defined professional practices? This study showed that distributed leadership, which incorporates five key elements (formal arrangements, enhanced leadership opportunities, understanding the context, sustainability, and learning), has the potential to promote reciprocal learning, understandings, respect, trust and benefits in the New Zealand with East Asian Chinese HEI partnerships. The kind of distributed leadership being promoted in this study makes significant departure from simply distributing leadership titles, positions and responsibilities. This study gives rise to an inclusive approach for exploring how social, cultural and economic leadership capital might be successfully distributed across national, social, cultural and institutional boundaries in international partnerships.

The key argument of this study is that distributed leadership has the strength to assist higher education leaders to engage in socio-culturally competent leadership practices in international partnerships. There is a dialectical

relationship between higher education leaders, the context, and multiple distributed leadership practices. This study regarded a wide range of key stakeholders in international partnerships as higher education leaders, considering their agency, contribution and importance in international partnerships. They are, for example, senior and middle management, partnership initiators and implementers, academic and administrative staff, alumni, and postgraduate students. This inclusive view of higher education leaders extends traditional conception of higher education leadership, and promotes enhanced distributed leadership opportunities in HEIs.

The context of the New Zealand with East Asian HEI international partnerships was complex. It was an arena of multiple practices, cultures, centres and peripheries, competitive market forces, and a number of external factors that impacted on distributed leadership practices in international partnerships. Multiple distributed leadership practices are the outcome of vertical and lateral differences among HEIs in the world higher education market. As such, understanding differences through reflection helps higher education leaders develop inter-cultural understandings and competencies to deal with different individual as well as institutional practices.

Trade in higher education services between Western and East Asian Chinese HEIs continues to grow in the world higher education markets in the 21st Century. Higher education leaders should raise their cultural awareness and engage in on-going reflection and learning to understand how distributed leadership can be successfully practised between partners in different contexts. This study provides lenses for higher education practitioners to explore, understand, reflect upon,

analyse their partnership practices and plan future leadership actions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A Themes for Discussion

[DATE]

Dear [NAME],

Thank you for agreeing to be in my research project. You are invited to take part in the first-phase interview. It will take 45 minutes to answer several questions concerning your perceptions of international partnerships, your leadership roles, and cooperative strategies in partnerships between Western and East Asian higher education institutions. The questions below will be used as guidelines only.

1. Background

- Can you give me some information on your background? (family/ work experiences/ responsibilities)

2. Your perceptions of international partnerships

- Can you tell me about the current practice of international partnerships in your institution?
- What are your perceptions of international partnerships?
- What are your perceptions of developing international partnerships with higher education institutions in New Zealand or Western countries?
- What are your responsibilities related to the international partnership with the New Zealand institution?

3. Your perceptions of your leadership roles

- How do you feel about your leadership roles in the China-NZ / Singapore-NZ / Taiwan-NZ partnership?

- Can you tell me about your involvement in the decision-making of cooperative strategies in this partnership?

4. Cooperative Strategies

1) Initiation stage

- Who initiates this international partnership?
- Why did your institution choose the New Zealand university as its partner institution?
- Can you specify the motives for forming the international partnership with the New Zealand institution? What values underpin the processes used to establish this international partnership?
- How are relationships established?
- Whose interests/experiences are paramount in this partnership?
- How is power-sharing initiated?

2) Implementation stage

- In what ways do strategic processes facilitate common goals? How does your institution achieve compatibility between the partner's goals?
- In what ways does your institution share in running this partnership? How does your institution integrate the partner institution's organisational culture and national culture?
- Whose cultural reality is current?
- Whose realities and experiences are legitimate?
- What authority does this partnership have?
- Who are the leaders from both sides of the partnership accountable to? How is this accountability demonstrated?

3) Institutionalisation stage

- What do you believe are key factors of sustainability derived from this international partnership?
- In what ways does your institution monitor its and the partner's international partnership strategies?

5. Issues derived from the partnership

- What are the impacts of this partnership on your institution? Or on the New Zealand institution? (benefits / challenges)
- Who benefits from this partnership?
- What are the issues you have experienced in the partnership? (e.g. cultural / social / political / communication / power-relation / language issues)

6. Additional Comments / Suggestions / Improvements

- What are your future expectations of this partnership?
- What can be addressed or improved to sustain this international partnership?

Appendix B Summary of Initial Research Findings

THEME 1: Perceptions of Leadership Role

The study found sustainable international partnerships in higher education were strongly linked with higher education leaders' leadership role in fostering and maintaining networks, relationships, and interactions within and outside their own institutions, and between partner institutions. Themes emerged under the category of leadership role include:

- “Champions” - proactive / active attitude of academic leaders and senior management;
- “Sustaining ties” - Frequent communication and interactions among institutions;
- Sharing of personal and institutional contacts and experiences;
- Alumni of international backgrounds as agents of international partnerships – A Taiwanese leader termed this “backyard diplomacy”;
- The value of Mandarin-speaking staff members at the New Zealand university in negotiation and communication processes;
- The value of support networks – from both academic and administration sides within the institution, and in the community; and
- Some Taiwanese and Chinese leaders perceived senior management as the only authority to develop international partnerships.

What are your thoughts on these?

THEME 2: Reciprocity and Mutual Benefits

Reciprocity and mutual benefits were considered as the most critical elements in international partnerships in higher education. Themes include:

- *Guan Xi* (a Chinese term) or complex relationship as a precondition for international partnerships;
- The motives behind the partnerships impacted on the level of ‘synergy’, win-win outcome, or mutual benefits;
- Reciprocity was complicated to achieve cross-culturally, especially for Taiwanese and Chinese leaders:
 - Chinese indigenous concepts, ‘face’ (*mianzi*) and ‘favour’ (*renqing*), and trust were considered as key elements of *guan xi* in international partnerships;
 - ‘Hegemony’ was identified in resource allocation in partnerships with Western countries; and
 - Taiwan’s poor international relations had an enormous influence on the development of international partnerships in higher education.

What are your thoughts on these?

THEME 3: Internationalisation vs. Language Acquisition

- English served as a medium through which higher education institutions or academic leaders communicate to:
 - Reach an agreement or mutual understanding;
 - Initiate student or staff exchange programmes;
 - Conduct collaborative research;
 - Engage in professional dialogue; or
 - Jointly deliver programmes.
- To Asian leaders, English implied a symbol of internationalisation or Westernisation; whereas to New Zealand leaders, internationalisation meant embracing and learning Asian cultures, but learning Asian languages was not part of this;
- New Zealand students' lack of incentives or low level of interest in learning foreign languages was considered as a barrier to New Zealand institutions' outreach practice in non-English speaking Asian countries.

What are your thoughts on these?

THEME 4: Representation in the foreign education market

The low level of representation of the higher education institution in the foreign education market had a bearing upon:

- The stakeholders' low level of understandings or recognition of the higher education of the country, and
- Their leadership role in seeking co-operation or partnership opportunities with the overseas institution, or in initiating activities after the signing of agreements.

The findings in relation to the representation of individual countries' higher education institutions include:

- Prestigious Chinese higher education institutions had a high profile in New Zealand and other Asian countries;
- Singapore, Taiwan and China all had a certain level of understandings of each other's higher education;
- There was a lack of understandings of New Zealand education and its higher education institutions by most Asian leaders;
- New Zealand and Taiwanese leaders had limited understandings of each other's higher education systems and institutions; and

- The Singaporean university was considered as a reputable institution or a benchmark in Asia by some New Zealand leaders.

What are your thoughts on these?

THEME 5: Organisational systems for sustainability

- The concept ‘sustainability’ involved two dimensions of meaning: first, the continuance of current partnership agreements, activities or programmes; second, the institutionalisation of processes and systems for sustaining internationalisation;
- The HEI generally took informal approaches to monitor the progress of their partnership programmes;
- The relevance of the partnership and the resources provided were dependent upon the individual institutions’ needs, goals and capacity; and
- A low level of flexibility of the institution’s internal processes and systems would lead to the departure of partners.

What are your thoughts on these?

Question 6: External factors

External factors also impacted on higher education institutions' decisions on choosing and sustaining international partnerships. Perceived external factors include:

- Monetary support or funding from their faculties/colleges/institutes, universities, governments or foundations;
- Time allowance for staff conducting partnership programmes;
- The political stability and economic status of the country;
- The effect of currency exchange rate on the cost of programmes; and
- The influence of the media –the negative publicity, biased propaganda, or narrow-scoped international agenda which was reported through the media.

What are your thoughts on these?

Question 7: Culture - East and West?

Leadership played a critical role in addressing and managing perceived cultural shock and cultural differences in cross-cultural partnerships. The emergent themes

include:

- East and West were perceived as a fluid and dynamic concept, or a continuum, rather than two separate concepts;
- Internationalisation in higher education had different meanings to different countries and to leaders involved in the phenomenon;
- Educational leaders' understandings of the national culture, thinking patterns, and ways of acting helped them overcome cultural differences; and
- A focus on shared or similar issues that partners had encountered in their own countries helped to reduce the cultural barrier and to solidify and sustain the relationship - for example collaborative research on educational reforms in the Asia-Pacific region.

What are your thoughts on these?

What are your final thoughts on the overall project and initial research findings?

Appendix C Profiles of Research Participants

ID	Gender	Ethnicity	Position	Discipline	Department / Faculty / Institution
NZ1	M	European	Retired, former senior management	Humanity	-
NZ2	M	European	Senior management	Sports Management	-
NZ3	F	European	Middle management	Education	School of Education
NZ4	F	European	Administrative staff	(Administration)	School of Education
NZ5	M	European	Administrative staff	(Administration)	International Centre
CN1	M	Chinese	Faculty, former senior management	Education	College of Education Administration
CN2	M	Chinese	Middle management	(Administration)	International Education Exchange Service Centre

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CN3	F	Chinese	Staff	(Administration)	International Education Exchange Service Centre
CN4	M	Chinese	Middle management	English Literacy	College of Foreign Languages
CN5	M	Chinese	Middle management	Education	College of Education
SG1	M	Chinese	Middle management	Education	Institute of Education
SG2	M	Indian	Middle management	Education	Institute of Education
SG3	F	Chinese	Faculty	Education	Institute of Education
TWC1	F	Chinese	Faculty, teacher association	Education	College of Education
TWC2	M	Chinese	Middle management	Education	College of Education
TWC3	M	Chinese	Middle management	Politics	Office of Research and Development
TWC4	F	Chinese	Former middle management	Business administration	Center of International Education and

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Chinese higher education institutions

					Exchange
TWT1	F	Chinese	Senior management	Education	-
TWT2	M	Chinese	Middle management, former senior management	Education	College of Education
TWT3	M	Chinese	Faculty, former middle management	Education	College of Education
TWT4	M	Chinese	Faculty, association	Future Studies	College of Education
TWT5	F	Chinese	Faculty	Education	College of Education

Appendix D Invitation Letter

[DATE]

Dear [NAME],

My name is Ai-Hsin Ho and I am a doctoral student of the Doctor of Education programme, University of Waikato, conducting research as a partial requirement of my doctoral degree. My research interest is in international partnerships in higher education between East and West. I have reached the stage where I am ready to carry out the research project outlined above to better understand the factors and issues that may influence the sustainability of the international partnerships between a New Zealand institution and its East-Asian partners. China, Singapore and Taiwan acted as representative of its Asian partnerships. This research project is NOT an evaluation of the partnership with the New Zealand institution. It aims to seek insights about international partnerships between East and West and perhaps uses some specific geographic areas as examples of Asian partnerships.

I now formally invite you to participate in this research project. The objectives of the research are:

1. To study key factors and issues that may influence the practice of distributed leadership in the New Zealand with East Asian Chinese HEI partnerships;
2. To inquire into the cooperative strategies used in the development and operation of international partnerships by the New Zealand university and its East-Asian Chinese partners;
3. To explore the leaders' perceptions of international partnerships and of their leadership roles in their particular partnerships, and how these perceptions

may influence the formulation and implementation of their cooperative strategies;

4. To contribute to the participants' future actions and decision-making regarding these international partnerships; and
5. To be attentive to a broader context of international partnerships in higher education while investigating the practice of international partnerships at the institutional level.

This research will be conducted based on an interpretive, qualitative, paradigm of inquiry, and will incorporate case study methodology and comparative research approaches. I would be grateful if you would agree to take part in this study. This study is divided into two phases and will involve you in the following activities as listed below:

1. First phase:

I will visit your institution to conduct face-to-face interviews with three to five leaders and collect any documents that you suggest within a two-week period. Each face-to-face interview will be conducted over about 45 minutes, and will be audio recorded. Each participant will receive this transcript and have the opportunity to make amendments to the content. The interview session will then be transcribed and analysed for developing themes of discussion in follow-up interviews in phase two.

2. Second phase:

All participants will be given the opportunity to choose to take part in a 30-minute individual interview. The New Zealand leaders will be interviewed face-to-face whereas the Asian counterparts will be interviewed by telephone. Each participant will receive this transcript and have the opportunity to make amendments to the content.

You will be asked to answer some questions regarding partnerships during semi-structured, guided, interviews, which I will conduct. A more definite schedule will be made and dates for these activities will be arranged at your convenience once your availability and consent to participate in this study have been confirmed.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You will have the right to withdraw from this research up until 1st June 2006 that is the end of second phase of data gathering. All the information generated will be strictly confined to the use of this research only and will be confidential. Further details about the project are included in this information package.

In order to follow School of Education, University of Waikato, ethical procedures, it is necessary for you to sign a consent form (see Research Permit). If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me (Mobile: 64-272402184 / e-mail: ah47@waikato.ac.nz) or my supervisors, Associate Professor Jan Robertson (Phone: 64-7-838 4466 Ext. 7839, e-mail: jan@waikato.ac.nz), and Associate Professor Jane Strachan (Phone: 64-7-838 4466 Ext. 6356, e-mail: jane@waikato.ac.nz).

Thank you in anticipation of your participation. I look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely

Ai-Hsin Ho

School of Education

University of Waikato

Appendix E Written Consent Form for Research Participants

(This form should be read in conjunction with the
'Information for Research Participants')

I understand that participation in this research project will involve me in the following:

- 1) I will be involved in a study on 'Distributed leadership for international partnerships between New Zealand and East Asian Chinese higher education institutions'. I will participate in two interviews and allow the researcher, Miss Ai-Hsin Ho, to audiotape them.
- 2) All information gathered for this research will be kept confidential and securely stored.
- 3) This research will be subject to the provisions of the New Zealand Privacy Act (1993) and will abide by the research guidelines of the University of Waikato.
- 4) My anonymity and that of anyone else involved in the research will be preserved.
- 5) I may withdraw from parts of this study, or decline to answer

particular questions in the study, and if I wish I may withdraw from the project completely by 1st June 2006.

- 6) If I have any concerns about my participation in this research project I may approach the researcher, Ai-Hsin Ho (Mobile: 64-272402184 / e-mail: ah47@waikato.ac.nz) or her supervisors, Associate Professor Jan Robertson (Phone: 64-7-838 4466 Ext. 7839, e-mail: jan@waikato.ac.nz), and Associate Professor Jane Strachan (Phone: 64-7-838 4466 Ext. 6356, e-mail: jane@waikato.ac.nz).

Name (in print):

Signature:

Date:

E-mail:

Appendix F The Research Design

The Study

The research on ‘Distributed leadership for international partnerships between New Zealand and East Asian Chinese higher education institutions’ is part of my doctoral studies. The main focus of this study is to inquire into the issues and key factors that may influence the distributed leadership practices between a New Zealand university and some of its East-Asian Chinese partner HEIs. Specifically, this study aims to explore key stakeholders’ perceptions of international partnerships and of their leadership roles in the partnerships, and how their perceptions may influence their cooperative strategies. This research project is NOT an evaluation of the partnership with the New Zealand institution. It aims to seek insights about international partnerships between East and West and perhaps uses some specific geographic areas as examples of Asian partnerships.

This study will provide an opportunity for leaders to reflect on issues and factors that have a bearing on the sustainability of partnerships, on their leadership roles in these particular partnerships. It will also allow key leaders or stakeholders from both sides of the partnership to rethink the meaning of international partnerships, and to promote mutual understandings.

The research will be divided into two phases as below:

1. Phase I:

I will visit your institution to conduct face-to-face interviews with three to five leaders and collect documents within a two-week period. The interview session will then be transcribed and analysed for discussion

themes.

2. Phase II:

I will present initial research findings from the first phase to the participants and obtain their feedback in follow-up interviews. The themes for discussion in the second phase will be based on the emergent findings from the initial interviews. The feedback from the second phase will be analysed with the initial research.

Your Contribution

Being part of the research, your participation will involve providing documents, and participating in an individual face-to-face interview in the first-phase, and a follow-up interview in the second-phase:

1. Phase I: Each face-to-face interview will be conducted over about 45 minutes, and will be audio recorded.
2. Phase II: All participants will be given the opportunity to choose to take part in a 30-minute individual interview. The New Zealand leaders will be interviewed face-to-face whereas the Asian participants will be interviewed by telephone.

Research Questions

The main research question is:

- What are key factors and issues that may influence the sustainability of international partnerships between East and West?

The following questions serve as the supplementary questions:

- What are the key leaders' perceptions of international partnerships and of their own leadership roles in these particular partnerships?
- How do these perceptions impact on the formulation and implementation of their cooperative strategies?

Ethical Guidelines

The research will follow the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Regulations 2000. If you participate in this study, you have the following rights:

a) Confidentiality

I am committed to respecting your privacy and confidentiality. The information collected from you will be treated as strictly confidential. A pseudonym will be used in the report so that your identity will not be revealed.

b) Informed consent

Your informed consent will be obtained in writing. You have the right to withdraw from the research up until 1st June 2006 or choose not to answer any particular question. You can direct any questions regarding the research to me or to my supervisor (contact details above).

c) Ownership of data or materials produced

You will have the ownership of any data contributed by you whereas I will have sole ownership of the results and analysis of the information produced in the course of the research. You also have the right to access the data collected from you. Summaries of your interviews will be made available to you for checking the accuracy as well as approving its usage in the research. All information collected from you in any form will be kept in secure storage for.

d) Use of the information

The findings on this research will be strictly confined to academic use only, such as this study and any academic publication arising from this research, such as conference papers or journal articles.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Appendix G Criteria for Selecting Participants

[DATE]

Dear [NAME],

Please help me select some ‘key players’ of international partnerships if you would. The following are the guidelines for you to nominate suitable participants for this study. The target participants may include faculty or staff members who have involved in roles of supporting, planning, implementing, and/or monitoring international exchanges and co-operation with Western higher education institutions. Please follow the criteria listed to select *three to five* participants from these institutions.

They may be academic and administrative leaders, including:

- Senior management roles: pro vice-chancellors, presidents or equivalent;
- Middle management roles: heads or deans of departments / faculties / colleges / schools and co-ordinators of partnership programmes within HEIs or equivalent;
- Staff members within departments / faculties / colleges / schools / support units in HEIs or equivalent; or
- Staff or middle managers of local government bodies who are in charge of international academic exchanges and co-operation.

Please nominate three to five leaders, provide names on the nominee list overleaf, and email to ah47@waikato.ac.nz.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Appendix H Nominee Form

Title	Name	E-Mail / Telephone

Thank you very much for your timely response!

Appendix I A Letter of Thanks

[DATE]

Dear [NAME],

It has been a long time since we did the interview last year on international partnerships in higher education. Thank you once again for taking part in my research. With your kind assistance, I was able to complete the first phase of data gathering. After the New Zealand interviews, I travelled through to Singapore, Taiwan and China to conduct interviews with leaders who have experiences of international co-operation, or are in positions of managing international partnerships. It has been a great and insightful journey.

I have now transcribed all the 22 interviews, and would like you to kindly read your own transcription before I continue with further analysis. You may correct, amend or delete any parts of the content, as you wish. If you wish to make any amendments to the transcription, the corrected version will be sent to you for further approval. Please also advise me your preferred name for me to cite in my thesis. Thank you very much.

Please let me know within a week after you receive the transcription if you wish to make any changes. If I do not hear from you by 1st June 2006, I will assume that you are comfortable about my use of this information.

I look forward to your feedback.

Yours sincerely

Ai-Hsin

Doctoral candidate

Doctor of Education Programme

School of Education

University of Waikato

Appendix J Grounded Theory Research Process

Initial Understanding of HEI partnerships	Research Question	Phase 1 Data Collection & Analysis	Phase 2 Data Collection & Analysis	Refine Theories and Judging Theoretical Saturation	Suggestion, Limitation, and Conclusion																																							
Research Proposal	Ch. 2, 4	Ch. 1, 3, 5, 6	Ch. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Ch. 2, 5, 6, 7	Ch. 8, 1																																							
Reflecting on my prior knowledge	From broad questions to narrow questions	Open to all interview and document data, and identify concepts and categories	Filling gaps Deepening and broadening the findings	Closure of Analysis	Identifying and discovering areas for future possibilities																																							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorming concepts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - higher education - educational leadership - internationalisation - international partnerships - globalisation - higher education institutions - culture - middle management - perceptions - issues - factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research question: what are the issues and factors that may impact on the leadership in HEI international partnerships Interview questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature review on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational leadership - Research contexts - Methodology Developing data collection procedures Convenience sampling Interviewing <table border="0" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>Data collection</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>Analysis</u></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">NZ</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Using</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Singapore</td> <td style="text-align: center;">open</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Taiwan</td> <td style="text-align: center;">axial</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">China</td> <td style="text-align: center;">selective</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Taiwan</td> <td style="text-align: center;">coding</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">↓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Comparison</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> Points of departure (flip-flop close-in far-out) Write initial research findings and interview questions in Phase 2 	<u>Data collection</u>	<u>Analysis</u>		NZ	Using		Singapore	open		Taiwan	axial		China	selective		Taiwan	coding			↓			Comparison		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature review on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bourdieu - Constructive Realism - Distributed leadership - Sustainability in HE - Community of practice - International HE partnerships Theoretical Sampling Interviewing <table border="0" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>Data collection</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>Analysis</u></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">↔</td> <td style="text-align: center;">↔</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">↔</td> <td style="text-align: center;">↔</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">↔</td> <td style="text-align: center;">↔</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">⋮</td> <td style="text-align: center;">⋮</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> Write additional findings Exploring conflicting or similar findings in Phase 1 and 2 	<u>Data collection</u>	<u>Analysis</u>		↔	↔		↔	↔		↔	↔		⋮	⋮		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing and rewriting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Final draft No new categories, concepts or incidents emerge 2 models 5 Key elements of distributed leadership The learning and practice of distributed leadership in HEI international partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations for future leadership practice Recommendations for future research Limitations
<u>Data collection</u>	<u>Analysis</u>																																											
NZ	Using																																											
Singapore	open																																											
Taiwan	axial																																											
China	selective																																											
Taiwan	coding																																											
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