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Challenges and Social Supports of Chinese Parachute Kids in a Canadian Secondary School: A Case Study


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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Education

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Abstract

This study investigates the experiences of Chinese parachute kids: secondary school international students who ‘parachuted’ to Canada without parental accompaniment, with a focus on the relationships between their faced challenges, social supports, and well-being. The researcher applied a qualitative case study by conducting face-to-face interviews with eight participants, aimed to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences through analyzing their narratives under the concept of Bourdieu’s capital theory. Compared to existing studies, the results indicate similar challenges faced by Chinese parachute kids. However, those who had participated in a higher standard ‘study abroad’ program enjoyed a higher degree of social support from peers and their school institutions compared to those that did not. Moreover, individual’s language skills, cultural competency, as well as social connection with peers and school were found to be positively related to their personal well-being. In the final section, suggestions for improving secondary school study-abroad programs are provided.

Keywords

Case study, Chinese parachute kids, social network, social support, cultural capital, social capital, the ‘2+1’ program, personal well-being

Summary for Lay Audience

This is a case study about the experiences of Chinese parachute kids. The term ‘parachute kids’ refers to Asian international students who have ‘parachuted’ to a new country or a new environment without parental accompaniment to seek a better education (Zhou, 1998). This study is built on existing knowledge about international students, their experiences, the challenges they face and supports they draw upon. This case study captures in-depth insights into Chinese parachute kids’ transnational experiences in a Canadian international high school. Given that less supportive structures are available for secondary students compared with those in higher education institutions, this study aims to focus on how Chinese parachute kids perceive their challenges and social supports. Findings show the distinct experiences of those who participated in a ‘2+1’ study-abroad programs (2 years in high school in China before they study abroad for 1 year) and those did not. Specifically, participants in a higher standard program experienced better cultural adjustment and social connectedness. A higher standard ‘2+1’ program not only incorporates advanced teaching material, technique, but is also equipped with supportive system that can facilitate students’ transition to Canada. Participants from the higher standard programs indicated positive well-being through greater social supports; whereas those who did not have such experiences faced greater pressures and negative well-being. This study provides an opportunity to hear the voices of these visible minority students and to provide recommendations to stakeholders such as teachers and other school staff about how to better support Chinese parachute kids while studying in Canada.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

When I was 17 years old, I was enrolled in a study-abroad program in my home city, Zhengzhou, called Sino-Canada. It is a program that includes two years of studying in the city of Zhengzhou and a year in Canada for grade 12. The two years of experiences in China prepared students with academic courses and cross-cultural activities, which well-supported my living and studying experience when I arrived Canada. After finishing grade 10 and 11 in China, I came to Canada with all my classmates in 2013 from my home city. When I first arrived in a high school in Canada, I was impressed about the multicultural environment in the school. There were many students from all over the world such as Japan, Mexico, Ukraine, Nigeria, even many other regions of China such as Shanghai, Guangzhou, etc. At first, I was timid to interact with other peers and would rather stay close with my old friends. However, there were two things that happened which totally influenced my thought. Firstly, the courses I took (English 4U class, computer science) in the first semester are different from my Chinese peers as they tend to take those courses in the second semester which motivated me to step outside of my 'comfort zone' and interact with peers of other countries in those classes. Other than discussing class materials and assignments, I got more opportunities to talk with non-Chinese peers about their culture while also learning their languages. After that, my personality became more open and outgoing while interacting with various students. Secondly, I proactively sought advice from the guidance office about other forms of Language Entrance Exams that were eligible to take other than the IELTS. The officer kindly provided guidance about the name of the exam, which saved lots of money, efforts, and time. This guidance counsellor successfully helped me apply for university without having an extra pre-year of learning English language. These two things enriched my first year of experience studying in Canada, thus positively shaped my well-being. Ultimately, it

informed me the importance of having broader connections with peers and school staff outside my own ‘social ties’ that may not have access to useful resources or information in the host country. Such experiences inspired me to actively build connection with school teachers, which well-supported my future path in higher learning.

In this current study, I will extend the use of the term ‘parachute kids’ to describe Chinese international high school students who came to study in host countries without family or parental accompaniment. Based on the above, myself, and the researcher’s interest in this topic flows from these years of studying and living in Canada. Such experience rise my desire to explore the experiences of Chinese parachute kids like myself and to better understand what forms of supports they need to help them through their time studying abroad in Canada. Before describing my study, the first step is to provide a contextual background of this study.

Context: Internationalization and Student Mobility

Internationalization, the process of making all things global, has influenced various domains of life and educational activities across nations. According to Jane Knight (2004), the internationalization of education “means a series of international activities such as academic mobility for students and teachers, international linkages, partnership, and projects; and new, international academic program and research initiatives” (p. 6). In the 21st century, internationalization has become a pervasive trend in the educational arena.

The internationalization of education is driven by multiple factors and perceived as the most common and effective way to produce modern and global knowledge. In addition, internationalization is a process undergoing continuous changes, not merely with more active partnerships and corporations between nations and government, but also with a growing number of international students who study outside their domestic countries. Indeed much of the research

on internationalization have focused on student mobility. According to Farrugia (2017), over 5 million students were studying worldwide in 2014, and the number of international students is still climbing.

The growing middle class with strong expectations for high-quality education helped to stimulate the large expanding number of the students in the United States, especially Chinese students at both secondary and post-secondary education levels (Farrugia, 2017; Krantz & Meyers, 2017). For example, the number of international secondary students surged by 48 percent in the U.S. from 2013 to 2016. Strikingly, Chinese international students enrolled in grades 9-12 made up almost 58 percent of all international secondary student population in the U.S. (Farrugia, 2017).

Similarly, internationalization trends have also taken place in Canada. For example, international education is highly promoted and recognized in the province of Ontario. According to the Association of Universities and College of Canada (AUCC, 2007), educational institutions have acknowledged the advantages of integrating international and intercultural elements as a core institutional strategy. “87% of the colleges in Canada have international students, and 65% of them have an international program for faculty and staff, such as exchange and oversea teaching” (Association of Colleges of Canada, 2010). In addition, universities in Canada have realized the importance of integrating internationalization into campus culture. By incorporating the notion of internationalization into practices (e.g. teaching, student services, recruitment, partnership), the universities feel they achieve the internationalization goal at all levels of activities on campus (Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2012).

In specific, the increasing number of international students is considered one of the highest contributing factors of internationalization on campus (AUCC, 2007). A total of 353,570

international students in Canada were enrolled in all fields of education in 2015 (CBIE, 2016). Up to 2019, the number surged to 642,480, which shows a growth of 13% over that of 2018 (Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2019).

While most internationalization initiatives have focused on higher education, there has been some progress in internationalization at the secondary level of schooling. In this increasingly interconnected world, “internationalization seems to be as intrinsic a quality indicator for schools as it is for universities” (Yemini, 2012, p.158). Yemini (2014), in her research on the internationalization of Israel schools, has shown how internationalization at the secondary school level has been embedded, mainstreamed, and expanded as an entrance stage for serving more international students into higher education. Traditionally, secondary schools have cultivated in students a sense of national loyalty and belonging. However, with today’s economic, political, sociocultural pressures and contradictions that arise from globalization, schools are called to shift toward greater internationalism in order to meet external forces (social) and students’ demand (Doherty & Dickmann, 2009; Hayden, 2011; Weenink, 2008; Yemini, 2014).

In light of such context, a boost in numbers of international students has emerged in Canadian secondary schools. In specific, the number of secondary students in Canada rose 9 percent from 2013 to 2016 (40,706 to 44,510 students) (Farrugia, 2017). Notably, the number of Chinese secondary students is the largest among those of all countries, accounting for 55 percent of the total.

We can see from these statistics that studying abroad in secondary schools has been a growing trend. International students enrolled in private secondary or primary schools usually come to the host countries on their own compared with early immigrants or students who live with their parents or relatives. There are several different terms describing such student populations at the

secondary education level. Most of these refer to students from East Asian countries as most secondary school international students come from that region. Some literature states that Asian children who study in English-speaking countries at an early age with no parental supervision are termed “unaccompanied minor international students” (Chung & Whiteley, 1994).

“Unaccompanied sojourners” (Kuo & Roysircar, 2006) is also applied to describe this student population. Since most Chinese students choose to study in foreign countries temporarily and intend to return to their home country after their degree is completed, “sojourn” is the word that often used to describe the student group staying in a place as a guest or traveler (Popadiuk, 2009).

The term “parachute kids” (Popadiuk, 2009; Mok, 2015), which I used in my study, is often used to refer to secondary international students who have ‘parachuted’ into a new environment with no parental accompaniment during their period of studying overseas. In recent years, there has been a trend with a growing number of “parachute kids”, especially Chinese who have come to study in secondary schools at a younger age to seek educational opportunities (Mok, 2015; Wu et al., 2016). Notably, such student populations who travel to a different part of the world are not only away from their families and familiar cultural environment, are most likely to encounter a greater level of stress and challenges, and they no longer can easily access to networks or social supports that can facilitate their adjustment in host countries (Zhou, 1998). In particular, this research will be focusing on Chinese parachute kids who enrolled in a Canadian secondary school.

Some previous studies have concluded that second language acquisition can be considered as a major factor that leads to the psychological stress of Chinese parachute kids (Allen & Herron, 2003; Krashen, 1985). Another common challenge they have to endure is emotional pressure,

such as loneliness and homesickness, as well as detachment from the host community. The latter two challenges can also be attributed to the linguistic barrier, as it may form a gap between the individuals who are from distinct cultural backgrounds (e.g. peers, teachers), shrinking the cohesion and integrity within the new community. The next section will continue to outline some previous literature on secondary school international students and then describe the rationale of my study.

Purpose and Research questions

One of the significances of conducting this study is to gain a deep understanding of this minor student population at secondary school level, and to highlight these participants' voices so that they can be heard by more stakeholders such as scholars, educators, and parents. Despite that most studies have systematically examined the post-secondary student populations in terms of their purposes, challenges, and psychological adjustment (Farrugia, 2017; Wu, Paik, Luschei & Poplin, 2016), little research has examined the interpersonal concerns and pressures of student groups in secondary schools. Some scholars stated that international education practices are more driven by the economic forces, while schools overlook the cultural diversities and distinct personal needs among Chinese parachute kids, thus failing to provide adequate supports to address international secondary students' concerns or consider the development of their personal well-being (Ware, 2010).

In light of these existing facts, the purpose of this research is to address the perspectives and experiences of Chinese parachute kids. It will also seek to understand the factors that have contributed to the different level of personal well-being of Chinese parachute kids. The following research questions guided my study:

- 1) What are the experiences of Chinese parachute kids studying at a private secondary school in Canada?
- 2) What are the challenges Chinese parachute kids encounter and what social networks and supports do they have while studying in Canada?
- 3) How have the challenges they have faced, and their social networks and social supports impacted their personal well-being?

This research applied a qualitative case study in order to obtain rich contextual information about a small population of Chinese parachute kids who have come to study in a Canadian private secondary school. Data collection focused on the narratives of the participants exploring their experiences, personal relationships, character development, and their emotions through conducting interviews.

My theoretical framework built upon Bourdieu's capital theory (1986), particularly cultural and social capital theory. These concepts helped me to understand the mechanisms that Chinese international students drew upon to receive international education through studying overseas in Canada. In addition, capital theory allowed me to examine the different levels of challenges they endured, as well as the skills (e.g. linguistic) and supports (e.g. financial, institutional, social) they obtained that may influence their overall experiences and well-being while studying abroad. Through addressing the concept of capital theory, this study explored how and to what extent Chinese parachute kids acknowledge the importance of having cultural and social capital and how these capitals are associated with the degree of support they had during their time abroad.

Overall, the intention of this study is to investigate Chinese parachute kids' experiences and faced challenges in Canada by incorporating the existing knowledge. Furthermore, through

addressing the concept of cultural and social capital theory, this study takes an important step to understand the relationship between the social support they perceive and the form of social networks they are involved in, as well as how their well-being may be affected. This study also examines the mechanisms that trigger differences in Chinese parachute kids' well-being through addressing an important factor: the '2+1' program, which I describe next.

The '2+1' Program

The '2 + 1' study-abroad program acts as a bridging program. It refers to spending two years studying secondary school courses in China and then one year studying in a Canadian secondary school. After finishing all of their mandatory secondary school courses in those two years, students in the program are guaranteed a place in a Canadian secondary school for another year for Grade 12. The emergence of the '2+1' program was closely tied to the implementation of the national Chinese policy: *Regulations of Chinese-Foreign Cooperation Running School (CFCRS)*, and it also relates to the wave of study-abroad trends taking place in many regions of China. This policy refers to the activities of the partnership between domestic higher education institutions with high-quality foreign educational institutions, in order to provide better education services to Chinese citizens (State Council, 2003). Indeed, a lot of top Chinese universities had already established corporations and exchange programs with oversea institutions since 1987. By the end of 2005, there were more than 1000 Chinese-foreign cooperatively-run higher education institutions and projects (Jiang & Feng, 2006).

Given these internationalization initiatives in higher education institutions, some public high schools in China decided to also established partnerships with Western private secondary schools, and integrated Western education into the Chinese high school curriculum for their

students who decided to study overseas. These partnerships between Chinese public schools and private secondary schools in countries such as Canada were first developed in the main cities of China (e.g. Beijing, Shanghai), but in recent years, have also grown extensively in other regions of China, such as city of Zhengzhou (Liu, 2016; Zhou, 2013). They are known as ‘2+1’ programs as students spend 2 years studying at a Chinese high school and then spend 1 year at a foreign high school. They are playing an important part of the experiences of the majority of the students in my study, and in my own experiences as a parachute kid, which I describe next.

Self-positioning

As a Chinese parachute kid myself who came to Canada in 2013 for high school without a guardian, such experience inspired me to conduct this research study focusing on the same student population as I used to be. The study-abroad program (‘2+1’ program) I participated also facilitated my learning and living adjustment in Canada. Meanwhile, examining Chinese parachute kids’ experiences and faced challenges, motivated me to critically reflect on my own experience throughout the years studying and living in Canada. Specifically, through participating in ‘2+1’ program as a Chinese parachute kid, I have gained a deep appreciation for the academic, emotional, and social supports I received from the school institutions and peers. My experience inspired me as a researcher to reflect on the results of having such supports on individual well-being and overall experiences compared with those students without such supports. To conduct this study, I situate myself as an outside researcher, but also an insider who had similar experiences with my participants as a Chinese parachute kid. Such a position helped to inspire a sense of empathy, which allowed me to form an in-depth understanding of the perceptions and thoughts of my participants throughout this study.

Structure of the Thesis

This study is organized into six chapters. Chapter 1 presented the contextual background and the rationale of this study, research questions, as well as researcher's self-positionality. Chapter 2 provides an overview of existing literature on the internationalization of secondary schools, international students, their motivations ('push' and 'pull' factors) for studying abroad, and experiences, including challenges and supports. In that chapter, I also present my theoretical framework, cultural and social capital, and review relevant health and education literature that draws upon that theoretical framework. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology used in this study. Chapter 4 discusses the research findings of this case study. Chapter 5 presents a critical analysis of the findings through engaging with the concept of capital theory, critically addressing how the participants' cultural and social capital influenced their experiences and well-being while studying in Canada. Finally, Chapter 6 provides a conclusion of this study, suggestions for improving the experiences of international students studying in secondary schools abroad, and some ideas for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I begin by providing an overview about internationalization in secondary schools and then turn my attention to reviewing literature on international students. I briefly note some of the main findings from the very large body of literature studied on international students in higher education. In addition, much of the existing research shed light on the common challenges that international students face while studying in high schools. The focus of my study and literature review is related to the experiences of Chinese international students in a Canadian private secondary school. I will review the experiences and challenges these students have faced, and social supports they need to draw upon, as well as their social integrity and well-being.

This review will show the existing gaps in the literature. Some scholars have pointed out the barriers for Chinese secondary students while studying in a US private high school, highlighted the significance for exploring such topic about Chinese parachute kids, including the important role of teachers and the absent parents (Fontana, Tucker, Kelly & Pena, 2015). Specifically, “insight into Chinese international students’ difficulties can be gained through the studying Chinese secondary students” (p. 25). In fact, research on Chinese parachute kids’ experiences still remains unexplored (Popadiuk, 2017).

Firstly, most of study abroad literature focused on the experiences of international students in the U.S school setting, whereas there is a dearth of studies about the lives of minor student populations such as Chinese parachute kids in Canadian secondary schools (Mitchell, Curtis, Block & Stranske, 2018; Popadiuk, 2010; Wu, 2018).

Secondly, the empirical research on the role of social networks and supports in the experiences of Chinese parachute kids remain scarce. Despite that there are a range of studies that have addressed the impact of language challenges on Chinese international students’ social

involvement and personal well-being, there is a lack amount of research investigating the supportive services in a Canadian secondary school. In particular, there is little research that either examines how the strength or density of social networks are related to the degree of supports and resources that Chinese parachute kids can draw upon while studying overseas. These deeper layers of their experiences and faced challenges have not been commonly addressed in the research literature.

Therefore, the current study is to fill the research gaps by building upon the existing literature. In addition, there is an urgent need to focus on the challenges faced by Chinese parachute kids' in Canada, explore what factors can contribute to different social network, the social supports, as well as the development of their personal well-being while studying in Canada. To this end, this chapter will firstly review literature regarding the motivations of Chinese students for studying abroad. Secondly, it will address some common challenges that Chinese international students face, social supports they need, as well as their social connections at secondary school level. And thirdly, I will provide an overview of the theoretical framework of my study, which draws upon Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) concepts of cultural and social capital theory. To highlight the significance of applying concepts from cultural and social capital theory to my study, I will explain the main concepts of cultural and social capital theory through reviewing related health and educational research that engaged with these concepts.

Reasons for Studying Abroad

With a growing flow of international students in the world today, there has emerged a lot of research literature on the topic of international students and study abroad, as outlined in the introductory chapter in this thesis. Much of these studies focused on the reasons on why students choose to study abroad. Many researchers have used the idea of 'push-pull' factors in their

research in this area. Below, I will focus on reviewing the scholarly literature on the ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors that primarily relate to Chinese international students.

Pull Factors

‘Pull factor’ is a term that describes how the host countries are pulling and attracting people to come. Pull factors include initiatives and policies within host countries to recruit international students. A good case in point is the Canadian immigration policy. The immigration policy potentially provides opportunities and supports for people who meet the qualification to apply permanent residents and subsequently become citizens of Canada. Canada’s immigration policy is also an essential factor that attracts Chinese students to come to Canada at an earlier age. As an easier path to immigration, long-term studying and working experience in Canada can be advantages for Chinese international students to pursue better life and benefits (Arthur & Flynn, 2011; Guo, Schugurensky, Hall, Rocco & Fenwick, 2010).

Another set of pull factors are the educational resources available to students once they arrive in the host country. Altbach (1998), for example, stated that the pull factors appeared in host countries, mostly are Western countries where advanced educational resources and supportive services are provided. For instance, U.S secondary schools have offered not only counseling and ESL(English as Second Language) program for international students, helping to promote their English proficiency and to deal with acculturation, but also academic training, assisting them to better transit to post-secondary institutions (Carber, 2009). In addition, Choudaha’s study (2017) about three different waves of student mobility presented multiple reasons for students to study abroad. Specifically, this study concluded that the ‘second wave’ of student mobility was shaped by the financial motivations among institutions to expand recruitment of international students. More host countries offered financial support (scholarship, internships) and educational

resources to attract more middle-class Chinese students who concentrate in business field instead of engineering or science. Such pathways can be considered as a ‘pull’ factor for Chinese students to study abroad.

There are other pull factors that attracting international students to study in Canada such as lower financial pressures and a safer environment (Education in Canada, 2014; Wu, 2018). From a high level point of view, parents who send their children to Canada to study abroad are more likely to make the choice based on these factors since the financial pressure and life expenses are lower in Canada compared to those in the U.S.

Having a transnational experience is an opportunity to accumulate valuable “cultural capital” (Ong, 1999) or ‘cosmopolitan capital (Doherty & Dickmann, 2009; Hayden, 2011). We can also consider this as a pull factor in terms of the benefits that students and their parents expect to obtain from studying abroad. Much of the literature on transnational mobility have put emphasis in relation to the mobility of privileged groups. For instance, Waters and Brooks (2011) stated that “international students are often defined by those advocating the internationalization of education as potential ‘global citizens’ who have mobility capitals cosmopolitans and ambassadors of inter-cultural understanding” (p.567). Overall, the effects of internationalization have been deeply embedded in Chinese people’s perspectives, as they believe that bilingual proficiency, Western culture, as well as global competencies, are essential forms of capital, which are ‘pulling’ them to study outside of their country.

Push Factors

Zhou (1998) has concluded that concerns with educational context in China provide the most important reason for student parachuting to U.S. In specific, ‘push factors’ can be attributed to the limited opportunity for secondary and post-secondary education and high expectations of

educational attainment. Such concerns have produced greater anxieties for Chinese young generations, pushed them to seek better education through studying abroad. One participant from Li's study (2014) indicated that she would like to escape from the intense Chinese education system and to study in a more relaxing and interesting environment through enrolling in a Canadian secondary school. Such students either fail to meet the academic requirement of the university entrance exam or expect to study in a more relaxing environment. In other words, studying abroad has become an easy 'short-cut' for Chinese students to achieve a well-esteemed university degree in a more relaxed learning environment with better quality of education (Wang, 2018). Thus, these factors above can be considered as 'push' factors for Chinese students to study abroad.

According to many scholars, they highlighted that study abroad is an opportunity for personal growth and development (Kent-Wilkinson, Leurer, Luimes, Ferguson & Murray, 2015; McKeown, 2009; Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut, & Klute, 2012). In other word, self-pursuit can also be considered as an essential 'push' factor. Given the initiation of 'Open Door' policy in China by President Deng, this economic policy opened up China to foreign businesses across the world (Li & Xu, 1990). As a result, the increasing integration and attraction to the outside world pushed more Chinese domestic students to absorb more knowledge and highly-skilled talent from other developed countries for self-improvement. Some scholars emphasized that the effect of international student mobility impacts on the outlooks, subsequent careers, and lifestyles of the students themselves (Li & Bray, 2007). The benefits of studying abroad relate to Chinese students' personal development, as they are more likely to obtain advantages and capital in terms of their academic achievements, language proficiency, as well as a global vision through immersing in a cross-cultural environment.

In addition, many overseas returnees also benefited from the Chinese government policy and enjoyed greater opportunities in education and in job employment when they are back in China (Falcone, 2017; Wang, 2004). Compared with the benefits and supports provided by host countries, such advantages and privilege offered by home country (China) could be considered as a ‘push’ factor that drive more Chinese domestic students to study abroad, with a purpose of receiving greater opportunities and priority after completing the degree as a returnee.

Given that the Chinese government has established supportive policies and greater employment opportunities for oversea returnees, Chinese parents have raised their expectations of their children’s future. For example, obtaining more international competencies and job opportunities through studying overseas (Wang, 2004). Interestingly, parental expectations for second language acquisition of their children has become a top priority (Hanban, 2007). “Students are here for good education, a good mastery in English language, and a bright future” (Yin, 2013, p.148) More families have realized that the earlier they send their children to study abroad, the better cultural adaption and language learning they can experience (Beiser, Barwick & Berry, 1988). Such benefits from studying abroad can be regarded as motivations and purposes, ‘pushing’ and ‘pulling’ more Chinese parents to send their children abroad.

Overall, the factors mentioned above could be considered as inevitable outcomes of the present situation in China, and highlight the multiple purposes and motivations that have led to increased student mobility. Through reviewing these previous studies, a contextual background was formed, which has paved the way for further investigation about Chinese international students’ experiences in the host country. Many previous studies have addressed several common challenges faced by Chinese international students, such as linguistic, cultural, and social challenges. I will address the literature on these challenges in the next section.

Linguistic Challenges

From the large body of literature on English language learners at the post-secondary level, the following review presents several existing findings in the studies on the learning experiences of Chinese international students. Most of the research literature focuses on the experiences and challenges of international students studying in U.S. Previous researchers have concluded that Chinese international students' experiences often perceive language learning as a major challenge and often are related to their overall performance and psychological development (Kuo & Roysircar, 2006; Ying, 1996). First, they need to qualify for the English proficiency test (e.g. IELTS & TOFEL) to be eligible for applying for schools or universities in the host countries (Soong, 2016). Despite that many Chinese secondary students have received English education, the findings indicated that Chinese secondary students who study abroad in US high schools were facing pressures from language proficiency. Such language disadvantage could contribute to the lack of properly understanding about the instructor's meaning and course contents, which in turn would affect Chinese parachute kids' academic grades, class participation, and psychological adjustment (Liu, 2016).

Previous research findings highlighted that linguistic skills could perceive as a major challenge for Chinese international students who study in the U.S (Snow Andrade, Evan & Hartshorn, 2014). Also, the findings from Wu's study about the experiences of Chinese international secondary students in Canada (2018) aligned with the previous studies: most participants presented great pressures from language barriers (e.g. speaking and understanding). Such pressures, in turn, could lead to a lack of confidence, stress on course contents, less class participation, as well as social networking problems with peers from other nations (Hayes & Lin,

1994). Next I will turn my attention to reviewing literature about some of the social challenges that international students face.

International Students' Social Challenges

Early studies about stress and international students have defined “social connectedness as an aspect of the self that manifests the subjective recognition of being in close relationship with the social world” (Yeh & Inose, 2003, p.17). Individual with more interactions with new environment or culture can lead to higher level of cultural adaption, also result in a sense of social connectedness (Sinicrope, Norris, &Watanabe, 2007). Such people can easily form relationships with other groups through participating in social events or activities, whereas people who lack social connectedness often present reluctance to engage in new environment, forming a negative personal well-being (Lee & Robbins, 1998).

Similarly, Chinese international high school students are facing social networking issues in the same way while studying abroad. To be noted is that distance emerged in maintaining the connection between students and their parents. Wu’s study (2018) on Chinese parachute kids’ transnational experiences concluded that most of the students tended to hide their emotions instead of sharing their panic or pressures with their parents or families who live far apart. In addition, the parachute kids may also face pressures from maintaining previous social connections in China, such as old friendships, since distance and different living environment can form an intangible gap in the midst of their interactions.

Earlier studies suggested that if international students form social relationships with host nationals (e.g. American students) or other nationals predicted better adjustment and self-esteem. In fact, close networks and friendships between international students and local peers do not easily form, and international students are the one who tend to remain exclusive among the

peer group (Furnham & Alibhai,1985; Mori, 2000; Thomson & Esses, 2016). Likewise, forming new connections is another challenge that Chinese secondary school students have to overcome on their own. For instance, Wu and other scholars (2016) stated that Chinese parachute kids were facing cultural mismatch and communication issues with American peers, which in turn limited their opportunities to build social networks or form alliances with local or other national peers. However, some scholars pointed out that Chinese parachute kids were more likely to be friends with their own kind than other foreign students. In other words, Chinese international high school students tended to share their experiences with other Chinese peers who shared similar culture, language, and expectations. Such similarities can form a social ties that could facilitate the process of the cross-cultural adjustment and social connectedness (English, Zeng & Ma, 2014; Wu, 2018). However, obtaining or lacking social relationships with others while studying in the host country can positively and negatively affect the development of students' well-being.

Well-being

Previous studies have examined the psychology constructs and how they associated with psychological well-being, pleasurable experiences, and meaningful social engagement (Jones & You & Furlong, 2012; Robitschek & Keyes, 2009; Schueller & Seligman, 2010). The researchers discussed multiple components of psychology constructs that are related to positive mental health: self-efficacy, hope, happiness, optimism, personal adjustment, and life satisfaction. Specifically, self-efficacy means one's belief in his or her ability to perform a specific behavior (Bandura, 1977). Personal adjustment means "a global indicator of positive adjustment, which consists of interpersonal relations, self-esteem and self-reliance" (Jones et al., 2012, p.513). Happiness, "is an important aspect of well-being that leads to beneficial outcomes with regard to interpersonal, professional, and societal circumstances" (p.514). As mentioned

above, the importance to apply the knowledge of three components of psychology constructs to understand how and what extent that Chinese parachute kids' well-being were impacted.

In Montt and Borgonovi's study (2017) about the educational assessment of students' achievement and well-being, the authors captured an in-depth insight into student outcomes, which go beyond the test scores. "Student has a right to well-being as children, and a healthy start to life will serve them well later on" (p.274). Students' well-being, as a non-academic dimension was adopted and evaluated in the educational assessment system. PISA (2012) measured students' well-being by examining their sense of belonging and connectedness at school context. It highlighted that school is an important social environment for students to perceive whether their needs are met, and whether they can be accepted or involved as a part of the school or a social group. Earlier studies shed light on the importance of having a sense of belonging as a key contributor to the overall well-being of students (Goodenow 1993; Osterman, 2000; Sheldon, Elliot, Kim & Kasser, 2001). In other words, having the ability to cope with new environment often result in a positive sense of well-being (Ordonez, Lima-Silva, & Cachioni, 2011). However, if students are not able to adjust themselves in a new environment, their well-being may be negatively impacted, resulting in depression, anxiety, and stress (Desa, Yusooff, & Abd Kadir, 2012; McGarvey, Brugh, Conroy, Clarke, & Byrne, 2015). Popadiuk (2009) also highlighted the acceptance of social support was associated with international high school students' psychological problems. That is to say social supports, such as peer friendships, can directly buffer the physical and psychological stress, whereas failure in accessing supports from peers and schools can shrink the social involvement and sense of acceptance. These previous studies emphasized the importance of understanding the key factors that may influence the adjustment of international students in the host country, highlighted the significance of having

social support for students' well-being. Based on the existing researches, it is seen that peer friendship is an example of a useful support for students to acquire a sense of belonging and social connectedness, whereas lack of social connectedness with friends may lead to feelings of loneliness, social isolation, which can further impact on students' overall well-being (Montt and Borgonovi, 2017). Besides, "the school system is responsible for not only providing academic knowledge, but also promoting students' well-being" (p. 286). Given above, the development of students' well-being is associated with peer friendships and school institutional support they could perceive. The next section will segue into the discussion regarding social supports (peer friendship) and institutional support that Chinese international students may perceive while studying abroad, and further impact their well-being.

International Students' Social Support and Institutional Supports

Social support refers to "the nature of the interactions occurring in social relationships, especially how these are evaluated by the person as to their supportiveness" (Mak & Kim, 2011, p.60). Having adequate and accessible social support is an essential factor for improving international students' adjustment in the host country, and building relationships and social connections are important steps for them to deal with the acculturative stress and develop positive well-being (Aldawsari, Adams, Grimes & Kohn, 2018; Sullivan & Kashubeck-West, 2015).

Peer friendship was primarily considered as a basis of social interaction, which can form fundamental support for international students during transitional experiences. There were existing study findings indicating that newly arrived international students participated in peer-mentorship programs from the host-national undergraduate tend to achieve better academic

grades and language proficiency, which potentially reflects better social and psychological adaption to university and friendship with host-national peers (Abel, Talbot & Geelhoed, 1998; Westwood & Barker, 1990).

Existing research also showed that having a beneficial relationship or network would affect the amount of supports that an adolescent can receive while studying abroad, particular emphasizing the relationship of the peer friendships and school institution attachment (Smith, 2006). Several scholars shed light on the significant role that school institutions play in implementing supportive resources such as student leadership programs or international student clubs to help international students adjust interpersonally, which may facilitate them to positively integrate into a new environment (Bean & Eaton, 2001; Glass, 2012; Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007). Similarly, with respect to the research findings of a US Christian high school, the researcher discovered that “the school provides supports such as dorms, host family training, orientation for international students themselves, designated international student liaisons on staff, and a spot for an international student representative to student council” (Mitchell et al., 2018, p.11). Thus, this knowledge could apply to understand that a conducive environment can contribute to more institutional attachment for Chinese parachute kids at secondary school level through inspiring them to actively seek assistance and supports from school staff and community (Antonucci, 2001; Takakura & Sakihara, 2001)

There was also an intangible link between school staff’s attitudes towards international students and the amount of culturally related training they have obtained (Ingerson, 2011). However, Yakunina, Weigold, and McCarth (2010) pointed out that “few international students seek individual counseling or assistance, despite the significant acculturation stressors they encounter” (p.68). Considering the challenges that Chinese international students particularly

face, researchers' focus on institutional supports was limited. One researcher, however, noted the urgent need for university counselors and school advisors to receive better culturally related training in order to work with students from different cultures, races, and social classes (Lago, 2006). Particularly for Chinese international students, the school staff, counselors, and teachers need to proactively reach out to this student population, offering counseling services, career advising, and do so with a basic understanding of their needs, greater flexibility and cultural relevancy (Yoon & Jepson, 2008).

However, secondary schools are often ill-equipped with supportive structures to meet parachute kids' demands and needs compared with the services provided in higher education (Kim & Okazaki, 2014). Many Chinese parachute kids still experienced extreme challenges without adequate social supports at secondary school level (Moore & Popadiuk, 2009). Given that counselling services in high schools were often under-used, as most Asian international students, especially young adolescents, were similarly reluctant to seek counselling services or helps from institutions (Mori, 2011; Yoon & Jepson, 2008). In light of such context, Chinese parachute kids may not have adequate supports upon their arrival to the host country, and a failure of Chinese parachute kids' incorporation into foreign society may result in negative emotions such as loneliness, homesickness, as well as a loss of a sense of belonging (Chiang-Hom, 2004; Popadiuk, 2009).

Thus, based on the above, the distinct social connections (relationships) that Chinese parachute kids obtained (e.g. peer friendships and institutional attachment) may influenced the degree of social supports and useful resources they can access from peers and local communities. Many of the concepts reviewed above in terms of the barriers and challenges (linguistic & social) international students faced, including the strength of their social networks and social supports,

could be understood through the lens of cultural and social capital theory, which form the basis of the theoretical framework for this study. Next, I will segue into reviewing relevant literature about Bourdieu's capital theory.

Theoretical Framework: Capital Theory

This study was informed and guided by a theoretical framework made up of Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) concepts of cultural and social capital. In the following section, I will explain the main concepts of both social and cultural capital theory. Also, I will review related health and educational research that engages with these concepts, justifying the significance of applying concepts from cultural and social capital theory to my study.

Cultural Capital

It is necessary to introduce what the term 'capital' means before understanding its theory. According to Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), there are three distinctive forms of capital: economic (wealth and income), cultural (knowledge, skills, and class) and social (the connections and network of people). Economic capital usually refers to the resources generated by labours, and cultural capital is defined as people's symbolic and information resources for actions. Cultural capital is distinguished in three forms: embodied (personal style), objectified (material goods), and institutionalized (degrees or diplomas). To be more specific, embodied cultural capital means the interactional style that a person demonstrates, it can be recognized in the use of language, walking, attitudes, and including some degrees of confidence. Objectified cultural capital means material goods that a person learned or gained, such as playing instruments, singing, and painting. Institutionalized cultural capital means the academic certification or credential diplomas that a person can obtain. These concepts, especially cultural

capital, are commonly used in educational or health research (Pinxten & Lievens, 2014; Veenstra & Patterson, 2012).

Cultural Capital Theory: Education and Health Research

Cultural capital refers to the operational skills, linguistic styles, values and norms, and it comprises people's social abilities and competence for action (Bourdieu, 1986; Lareau, 2003). In research on cultural capital and education, the notion of cultural capital firstly came to explain the interplay between the field of education such as unequal academic achievement and social class of a family (Bourdieu 1986). According to Bourdieu, the uneven distribution of cultural capital is dependent on an individual's social class. In specific, the cultural experiences in the home influence children's adjustment to school and their academic achievement. Children from upper or middle-class families are advantaged in gaining educational credentials and better academic performances due to their possession of cultural capital. Schools also play a role of distribution of cultural capital, but also of legitimization and reproduction of privilege and inequality.

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital has also been applied to health research to understand social inequalities in health. According to Abel (2008), the concept of cultural capital has become of key importance for identifying the mechanism that links social class, health inequalities and power dynamics. Abel highlighted that this concept is based on all cultural-based resources that are available to people in favor of their health, which are related to several forms such as health-related values, knowledge, skills, including behavior norms (Abel, 2008). For instance, health knowledge or resources are known to be unequally distributed across different social classes. In other word, people in upper or middle class are more likely to receive more health information or knowledge that may prevent diseases (Kickbusch, 2001; Paasche-

Orlow, 2005). Moreover, Khawaja and Mowafi (2006) also examined the relationship between cultural capital and psychological health, which shows that the attendance of cultural activities or the capacity for seeking information contribute to the explanation to the social class differences in patients' behavior. As more attendance of cultural events can be perceived as healthier lifestyle, which can promote feelings of belonging and other active mental support (Abel, 2008; Bygren, Konlaan & Johansson, 1996). Thus, the findings above from these studies demonstrated that cultural capital plays a significant role in the unequal distribution of educational achievement and health conditions.

Cultural Capital and Student Mobility

Nowadays, being increasingly mobile is viewed as a form of cultural capital as well. The importance of cultural capital in facilitating mobility is made clear by the flow of information, knowledge, economy, as well as people. In this globalized era, long-distance travel has become pervasive part of youth culture. In other words, studying abroad is connected with the accumulation of cultural capital (Heath, 2007). Conradson and Latham (2005) highlighted that a period living abroad is becoming taken-for-granted part of the lifecycle of young people, closely linked to a person's self-development and self-exploration. Given that there are a wide range of international research studies have explained student mobility by applying cultural capital as a theoretical framework, this present study will capture a deeper layer that embedded in this social phenomenon by applying social capital theory (Bahna, 2018; Holloway, O'Hara & Pimlott-Wilson, 2012; Lee & Claire, 2019; Kim 2016), with an aim to explore the meaning and influence of networks between individuals, but also across national boundaries. The following section will segue into the discussion about social capital theory, including how it fits well in this present research.

Social Capital

The term 'social capital' has been increasingly used in research literature, particular in the social science, education, democracy and public health (Bourdieu, 1985; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993). According to Bourdieu, the concept of social capital theory was defined as “the aggregate of actual or potential resources linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (p.249). He also stated that “the network of relationships is the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in short or long term” (Bourdieu, 1986, p.52). Generally, social capital in Bourdieu's concept consists of all factors that are linked to a network and create beneficial exchange between public relationships. Notably, Bourdieu claimed that both social and cultural capital can be reproduced which involves time and money, both can be considered as an expense of economic capital. In other words, people can gain economic capital such as higher salary and great investment through having stronger cultural and social capital. Thus, the volume of social capital that a person can access depends on the size of their connections, and the amount and quality of economic and cultural capital that an individual has.

Most definitions of social capital include two aspects: structural and cognitive. It also comprises three main elements: social networks, norms and trust (Ferlander, 2017). Social networks can be considered as social structural aspect, whereas norms and trust are more cognitive. Nevertheless, although social capital shares common properties of other forms of capital, it is still different in some aspect from other forms of capital. Unlike cultural capital, social capital implies an expenditure of time and effort to build mutual relationships and durable networks between and amongst individuals. Based on Bourdieu's definition of social capital, he

has examined the social capital in a social structural perspective. Putnam (1993) and many other scholars addressed another dimension of social capital, with a particular focus on the significance of norms and trust within a group or an organization. For instance, Larsen and Tascón's study (2018), they highlighted that "social capital is characterized by mutual recognition, common norms, and trust, and it is created through and exists within durable networks, relationships, and exchanges" (Larsen & Tascón, 2018, p. 5). These definitions imply that social capital is strongly associated with investment strategy involving exchanges. Specifically, it can provide tangible advantages to those major individuals, families or groups who are closely connected to build connections, coordination, and corporations between (bridging) and within (bonding) different groups, which allow them accessing information and using beneficial resources (Lin, 2002; Putnam, 2000).

Forms of Social Capital

Social capital has been conceptually distinguished in several different forms, such as: weak and strong, formal and informal, and vertical and horizontal. In this present study, I will dive into vertical and horizontal social capital. Putnam (1993) identified that vertical social capital refers to hierarchy and unequal power, whereas horizontal social capital comprises equality within an organization or a group. Horizontal social capital, on the other hand, "encompasses a diverse group of people and it serves to establish a connection and a common goal among community members through civic engagement" (Bhandari & Ysunobu, 2009, p.21). This notion of horizontal social capital fits well to explain the situation of the Chinese parachute kids in Canada.

At this stage, the peer network is considered as a horizontal social capital, as students are mostly situated in the same status with similar goals. This horizontal social capital may

positively influence Chinese parachute kids' personal well-being and supported their social involvement. On the other hand, the vertical social capital refers to a connection with those who are beyond one's current status, such as alumnus or communities. This form of social capital can facilitate Chinese parachute kids to access to more capitals through building connections outside the existing group. Nevertheless, the new and independent living experiences in Canada in which Chinese international students were "parachuting" to could be a challenge for them to access to unfamiliar networks. Meanwhile, the physical absence of parents, and missing social relationships or connections with local peers and teachers could be understood as shrinking of social capital for Chinese parachute kids who have just arrived in a new country (Wu et al., 2016; Zhou, 1998).

Overall, Chinese parachute kids were more likely to face negative influences without having strong social capital. Due to this fact, they may have greater pressures forming friendships with peers, as well as integrating into the new campus community. Therefore, this theoretical framework will shed light on the significance of obtaining social capital for Chinese parachute kids such as building trustworthy networks (e.g. peer friendship), seeking supportive assistance and resources from school institutions (counseling services, application guidance). I hypothesize these factors will have a significant impact on their personal well-being. To expound what I hypothesized, I will draw upon the concept of social capital, focusing on horizontal and vertical social capital in my research to highlight their experiences and reflections of studying in Canada. More importantly, using this theory to interpret data that I have collected with the integration of theory and practical experiences, enriched my understanding on how the cultural and social capital that Chinese secondary parachute kids have or lack of may shape their social connectedness and personal well-being differently while studying in a secondary school in

Canada. I contend that it is of particular importance for all parachute kids to have a positive feeling of social involvement and personal well-being during high school. This study sets out to understand the relationship between social capital and the well-being of Chinese parachute kids at secondary school level. A more informed understanding of the implications of social capital for my participants offers the potential for more stakeholders (scholars, educators, parents) to provide more supportive strategies to help Chinese parachute kids to produce and reproduce social capital during high school. Next, I will review the methodology for my study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study utilized qualitative research as the methodological approach. It is based on a case study with in-depth interviewing sessions with eight participants. The focus of the study was to examine Chinese ‘parachute kids’ faced with social challenges and supports, including their impacts on their personal well-being. This chapter outlines the definition of the qualitative case study, narrative inquiry, and provide details about the participants, recruitment procedures, methods of data collection, limitations of the study, as well as ethical considerations.

Qualitative Research

Many scholars have defined the qualitative research as an approach that produces a wealth of detailed information about a smaller population of people and cases, including personal experiences, behaviours and emotions (Patton, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Apart from that, Wu (2018) stated her own definition about qualitative research that she believes it was an interpretive practice based on interpretations from authentic settings, aims to draw deeper insights into how meanings and actions work together in different situations. This present us with a qualitative study that aims to explore deeper layers of challenges faced by Chinese international secondary school students. With an in-depth discussion about their social networks with local peers and school community I can capture a deeper insight into their experiences at a secondary school level.

Case Study

Yin (2014) highlighted that case study is a popular research design that emphasizes exploring a phenomenon in a real-world context. Before knowing what case study is, it is necessary to have a better understanding of what a ‘case’ stands for. Creswell and Poth (2018) claimed that, “the entire culture-sharing group in ethnography is considered as a ‘case’, with a particular focus on

developing an in-depth understanding of a single case or explore an issue or problem”. Yin (2014) highlighted that a case study research involves “a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (p.13), and often based on the reality that is constructed by human interaction. In research studies, case study is often viewed as a methodology or an approach in qualitative research studies.

To put a case into practical study, Stake (1994) first distinguished three main types of case study, they are intrinsic case study, the single instrumental case study, as well as the multiple or collective case study. The first two are called single case study, where the focus is within the case itself. The following section will provide more detailed descriptions focusing on single instrumental case study and intrinsic case study.

In a single instrumental case study, the research starts with a specific issue, and then select specific individuals or groups that can represent this issue and capture common themes from it for this case. On the other hand, intrinsic case study emphasizes more on the case itself, with more extensive description of the case details and settings. The reasons for using single case study as a research methodology for my study is because it also aims to discover new meanings, extend the readers’ knowledge, as well as to confirm what was unknown (Merriam, 1988). Therefore, it is worthwhile to conduct a single case study focusing on what is unique about a particular case, and what is common with other existing studies. At this stage, this present study utilizes a single, instrumental case study as a research method aiming to “give insight into a wider issue, giving secondary interest to what it maybe typical” (Stake, 1994). Given that there is not much literature focused on the Chinese international students’ faced challenges and social supports they need at secondary level, a single instrumental case study fits this present study. As case study allows for an in-depth investigation about the experiences of a specific group of

Chinese “parachute kids” at a Canadian secondary school, it can build upon what has been explored in other existing literature about this student population. In specific, the single instrumental case study can explore the embedded issues and add more insights into the questions by studying this student population.

Limitations and Criticisms of Case Study

Although there are many scholars whom state that generalizing is considered as a major critique for case studies, Punch and Oancea (2014) has stated otherwise. They argued against this critique by stating that “it is not the main intention to and of such a case study to generalize, but rather to understand this case in its complexity and its entirety, as well as in its context” (p.151). Despite that this particular case was initiated in an interview form with a small group of participants, it contained complexities and varieties in the experiences and contexts of each individual. In my view, to address this limitation of this case study, it is necessary to confirm how the research plans are organized such as knowing what and how the data will be collected and analyzed with clear research questions and purpose. Through the continuous exploration, researchers will be able to develop new insights and concepts to explain what has been or has not been investigated.

Apart from that, it is fundamental to be aware of the boundaries of conducting a case in terms of the time and process as researchers may have unclear time limitation when studying a case. In this research, myself, as a researcher, aim to explore how daily cultural and educational practices shape the participants’ experiences, personal well-being and perspectives in different ways while immersing in a cross-cultural setting. Additionally, I aimed to control the duration of the case study with a specific beginning and ending date written on the research schedule.

Narrative Inquiry

Given that the intention of this study is to explore each individual participant's perspectives and experiences, this study also used narrative inquiry as a research approach. In terms of the definition of narrative research, Creswell & Poth (2018) have explained that "'narrative' might be the phenomenon being studied, and it usually begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individual" (p.67). A number of published articles and journals have generalized the common features on narrative inquiry. For instance, narrative stories often occurred within specific places or situations which include descriptions of the physical, emotional, and social situations. Researchers usually collect stories as data resources from individual's lived experiences, and "these stories may emerge from a story told to the researcher, a story that is co-constructed between the researcher and the participant" (p.68).

Applying narrative research fits and supports the nature of this study as it was aimed to capture an in-depth layer of each participant's experiences and perspectives through a form of storytelling and communication between the researcher and the participants. In addition, some scholars highlighted that the function of a narrative can serve from telling stories for individual is to have the marginalized groups' voices heard and initiate political action (Plummer, 1983; Riessman, 2008). Thus, narrative inquiry would facilitate the researcher to have a deeper understanding about each participant's voice and thought.

Types of Narrative Study

There are four types of narrative study for collecting stories: biographical study, auto ethnography, life history, and oral history. This present study utilizes biographical study, which means that the researcher wrote and recorded the experiences of a person's life and experience in a specific situation or context. After comparing and analyzing each participants' narrative, new

insights into roles and reflections on the Chinese parachute kids' transitional experiences at the secondary school level could be discovered.

Power relations are particularly important to consider when using narrative inquiry, as power dynamics are deeply and intangibly embedded within the larger social, cultural, political, and institutional dimensions, which allows for a more complex and insightful understanding (Clandinin, 2013). Notably, it is important for the researchers to be conscious of the relationship with their subjects and participants when interpreting their subjects, and to discover the “figure under the carpet”, which refers to the subjects' private mythology (Edel, 1984). In other words, the biographer (the researcher) has his or her own point of view from outside of his/her protagonist, and they tend to reconstruct interior emotion and sympathetic understandings to replace the authentic participant' self. It is noteworthy that the researcher needs to be aware of the distinct context and have a clear understanding about individual's life while building the connection with the participants. In this present study, the interview questions started by exploring the background and experiences of each participant as a parachute kid. In doing so, it has put them at ease and highlight the similarities with the researcher's experience. I also asked the participants about their own place of origin and their studying background, with an aim to address the issue of interpreting narratives through arranging proper interview questions.

Overall, this research study utilized both case study combined with narrative inquiry to examine Chinese parachute kids' experiences and personal well-being while studying in Canada. These two approaches fit well together to support this study. In specific, narrative inquiry can examine each participant' perspectives and life experiences through conversation; the case study can be an approach to highlight the transitional experiences and faced challenges of the selected Chinese parachute kids as a unique and representative case. In order to put these methodological

approaches into empirical practice, the following section will segue into the discussion on data collection methods.

Data Collection Methods

Documents

Case studies often involve the collection of multiple forms of data. In this study, there were two main forms of data collected: documents and interviews. In specific, documents played an important role in data collection and data analysis process, as they are an efficient and effective way to provide detailed background and meanings of a topic (Bowen, 2009). In this present study, analyzing existing documents and policies supported me to capture detailed information and background in order to better understand the context of this case study. The documents I examined in this study included a detailed introduction about ‘2+1’ program in city of Zhengzhou and its policies. The analysis of these documents helped to provide background information about the programs the students were enrolled in, which provided a deeper understanding about this case study.

Semi-structured Interviews

A number of scholars defined that an interview is considered to be a social interaction based on a conversation (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Warren & Karner, 2015). Interview is a way to build knowledge based on establishing relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. According to Punch and Oancea (2014), they have stated that interview is the most prominent data collection tool in qualitative research, and it is a good way of exploring people’s perceptions, meaning, definitions of situations and constructions of reality” (p.182). Thus, in order to understand the participants’ point of view and, to unfold the meaning of their life experiences, interview is a good fit for collecting data in this research.

The interview as a research tool is can be divided into three different categories: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured (Fontana & Frey, 1994). This case study applied a semi-structured interview as a central data collection tool. It required a series of planned and standardized interview questions. All the participants received the same interview questions in the same order, but in a semi-standardized manner. Participants were provided with specific period of time for the interview with the researcher. Prior to the interview, I provided a hard copy of the letter of information and consent form to participants to ensure their willingness to participate in this interview and allow the researcher to use direct quotes in the study. (See Appendix 1 for a copy of the Letter of Information and Consent form.) Due to a limited timeframe, the interview was initiated after they finished school. To protect each participant's privacy and confidentiality, the interview was conducted in a private classroom chosen by participant so each of them can share their stories with the researcher in a safe and discrete location. The length of each interview session was between 30 to 45 minutes. Participants were given the choice to speak in a language which they feel more comfortable (English or Mandarin). All the participants decided to speak Mandarin, their first language with the researcher. This study utilized both audio recording and note taking as data recording method. The researcher also took extensive and detailed field notes while communicating with each participant during the interview. After the interview was complete, the recorded and written data were translated by the researcher.

From the researcher's perspective, I've also reflected on my own experience in a narrative form as a former Chinese parachute kid at this high school. I shared multiple overlapping challenges and pressures with the participants such as the linguistic barrier, social networking with peers and new communities, as well as the high expectation from parents and teacher to

achieve high academic attainment. I've also discussed how the transnational experiences shaped their understanding and personal well-being. At this stage, both the researcher and participants were informed about a collaborative nature of how the authentic stories were collected, and how the trustful relationships were built between the researcher and participants.

Usually the researchers should start with a set of interview questions and propositions, which will facilitate the researcher to concentrate on the research topic (Yin, 1994). Prior to the interview, the researcher defined the terminology in the study title as “parachute kids”, in order to provide a base level understanding of this study and informed them about their own status.

To apply the concept into empirical practice, this interview sessions contained several interview questions as core framework. In specific, this semi-structured interview was comprised of several sections: basic background such as places of origin, purpose of studying abroad; common faced challenges and pressures; comparison of experiences between Canada and China; received supports while studying in Canada such as peer support, teacher support; the changes of their personal well-being; and suggestions or recommendations for future improvement. The interview protocol contained a number of ‘how’ questions, as “how” questions are a suitable way to encourage participants to provide in-depth descriptions regarding their experiences (Marriam, 1988; Yin, 2002). The interview questions were comprised of open-ended questions and prompts, which provided opportunities for each participant to elaborate further on their experiences and perspectives. Having open-ended questions also facilitated the researcher to discover more in-depth understanding about Chinese parachute kids’ perspectives through communicating with participants (Wang, 2017). See Appendix 2 for a copy of the interview protocol.

Participants and Recruitment

After getting ethics approval from Western University's Research Ethics Board (see Appendix 3), the researcher contacted the head of the high school, explained the procedure and purpose of this study, and scheduled a specific date for recruiting participants. There were eight Chinese parachute kids were involved in this research study. There were five male students and three female students between the ages of 17-18 participated in the study. Participants who were willing to participate were all officially enrolled at a Canadian, Ontario international private high school, which I call Bao College in this thesis. Pseudonyms have been used for the school and the participants in order to keep their anonymity. The chosen participants all met the inclusion criteria of the study. There were four specific criteria for selecting participants: students were born in mainland China; no parental guidance while in Canada; officially enrolled in a Canadian secondary school; are the age of 18 or older. See Table 3.1 for a summary of the participants.

Table 3.1 Study Participants

Student Name	Place of Origins	Sex	2+1¹ Program
Thomas	Hangzhou	M	No
Vincent	Zhengzhou	M	Yes
Rolan	Zhengzhou	F	Yes
Lin	Zhengzhou	F	Yes
Dong	Shanghai	M	Yes
Jace	Shanghai	M	Yes
Cao	Hangzhou	M	Yes
Kris	Kunming	F	Yes

¹ The 2+ 1 program is a program in which Chinese high school students spend two years studying their high school courses in China and then one year studying in a Canadian high school.

Overview of Participants

Thomas is a male Chinese student from the city of Hangzhou, China. Hangzhou is classified as a sub-provincial city and forms the core of the Hangzhou metropolitan area, the fourth-largest in China. Thomas was the only student who completed his three-year high school and *GaoKao* in China before he came to Canada alone for Grade 12. The motivation of studying abroad was driven by the studying pressures in China, such as peer competitions and the college entrance exam. Despite that he has achieved high marks that were eligible for application to a good university. However, his marks were still not good enough to enter one of the top universities in China. Through the past few months, he gradually got used to life in Canada, although he continued to struggle with multiple challenges while studying in Canada.

Vincent is a male Chinese student from the city of Zhengzhou, the same city as the researcher's hometown. Zhengzhou is a developing city that located in central part of China. It has the largest population of the four cities from which the participants in this study came from. Vincent was enrolled in the '2+1' program that was established by the partnership between Zhengzhou Number Seven High school, a senior public high school, and a Canadian high school. The '2 + 1' program in Zhengzhou that Vincent and two other participants came from was a high standard one, which I describe in detail in the next chapter. Vincent has fewer pressures on social networking as he has established friendships over the previous last two years in China.

Rolan and Lin are roommates. They are both female Chinese students and like Vincent were from Zhengzhou Number Seven High School. Both Rolan and Lin had diverse motivations to study abroad. Rolan came to Canada because she failed to achieve high marks in High School Entrance Exam in China. on the other hand, the reason that drove Lin to Canada comes from social context in China was due to the fact that her relatives and friends had all studied overseas.

They both have fewer challenges with social networking. Both their psychological condition and personal well-being were positive.

Dong and Jace are both Chinese male student from Shanghai. Shanghai is one of the four municipalities of the People's Republic of China, and it symbolizes the “booming economy” of China. Dong and Jace were both enrolled in a ‘2+1’ program at a Shanghai International high school. Given their narratives, they have similar background in terms of studying and living environment. Nevertheless, they indicated distinct personal characteristics and perspectives during the interview session. Dong highlighted his pressures mostly can be attributed by his parents. On the contrary, Jace has little pressure from his parents but more from his academic performance.

Cao is a Chinese male student also from the city of Hangzhou. Cao was also enrolled in a ‘2+1’ program in Hangzhou. Notably, English is his third language, and German is his second language. He aims to apply to universities in Germany, which explains why he has fewer pressures to pursue higher education in Canada. He shared several positive experiences in terms of peer networking and volunteering opportunities. He also presented constructive suggestions on school supports for Chinese parachute kids at the end of the interview session.

Kris is a Chinese female student from Kunming located in South West part of China. This positioning makes it an important trade centre in this region of the nation with other Southeast Asian countries. Kris was also involved in a ‘2+1’ program. Yet, she encountered greater challenges and pressures compared to other Chinese parachute kids in this study, such as academic performance, language, as well as lacking social networks with peers and teachers.

Data Analysis

Data analysis allows for the use of many flexible formulas that can greatly assist researchers (Wang, 2017). Qualitative research in education arena contains complexity and richness, which leads different ways of analyzing social phenomenon. Therefore, the focus is on multiple perspectives and practices in the analysis of qualitative data (Punch & Oancea, 2014). In terms of the methods for the analysis of qualitative data, memoing and coding are the two basic operations that get the analysis going.

This study utilized coding, in combination with narrative analysis together as main analytic strategy to analyze collected data. These types of analyses explain the nuanced and detailed narratives of each participants and led to an in-depth understanding of the case within a holistic context. The following section firstly explains memoing and how this process has been used in qualitative research studies.

Memoing, which is the basic operation of qualitative data analysis, often happens at the beginning of the analysis, along with the coding. Several scholars describe that memos are usually short phrases, ideas, or key concepts that occur to the reader, rather than a summary of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). Memoing refers to a write-up of ideas in a form of sentence or paragraph. Agar (1980) suggested that “researchers need to read the transcript in their entirety several times and trying to get a sense of the interview as a whole” (p.103). In other words, memos are used to reflect a unit of collected text and assist in sorting data.

There are three different level of memos can be used in data analysis: segment memos, document memos, and project memos (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this present study, the researcher applied segment memos to capture key ideas by taking notes on paper at the

beginning of the interview session. Given that segment memos are helpful for identifying initial codes, the research aimed to synthesize several key concepts and ideas through identifying code categories.

Coding is central to all analysis. Coding is a process of making sense of all the text collected from interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018). It also involves segmenting and reassembling data in light with reflection and interpretation (Boeije, 2010). Forming codes or categories for collected data represent the core in qualitative data analysis, as it segments the text and information collected from interviews, observations or documents into small categories of information, assigning a label to the code (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, after reviewing the database, I started the first step of coding called ‘lean coding’. This step requires the researcher to develop a short list of codes, concluded the larger pattern of the information and end up with synthesizing them into explicit themes. In specific, Creswell and Poth highlighted that “themes in a qualitative study usually comprise broad units of information with several codes aggregated to form a common idea” (p.194). Thus, the goal of using coding was to synthesize the ideas, reduce them into nuanced themes to write into the final analysis. In this present study, I listed some key codes: purpose of studying abroad, faced challenges, personal well-being, and suggestions, which aimed to examine the relevance of data gathered from the interview to see the common themes related to other existing literatures.

Narrative Research Analysis

The narrative structure for narrative research includes several key elements. There are several approaches in a narrative study. First, the researcher can incorporate different dimensions of framework in a narrative study. Several scholars have concluded three elements to analyze data: interactions while collecting stories, retelling the stories to keep the continuity, and reporting the

stories by incorporating the specific situation or setting of the participants' experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Ollenrenshaw & Creswell, 2002).

Apart from that, a chronological approach can also be applied in the analysis of the narratives. This approach combines a nuanced description of biographic analysis about each participant at the beginning point for analysis. In this study, I aimed to capture common themes from each participant's narratives in order to deal more holistically with qualitative data. I used interviews to collect stories as data resources in order to capture larger patterns from the narratives. At this stage, this present study utilized a chronological narrative analysis as an approach to analyze collected data as each participant gave their stories as narratives responses to the interview questions.

With respect to the reason for using narrative analysis, a number of scholars discussed its advantages (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994; Punch & Oancea, 2014). Narrative research analysis is valuable in studying lived experiences, which enables to capture rich and subtle understanding of life situations. In addition, it leads to the understanding of the unique and general features of individual's life and differences in experiences. Apart from that, storytelling is perceived as the most common way in everyday human interaction. This present study's focus is on exploring deeper layers of Chinese parachute kids' transnational experiences in Canada, investigating their point of views and own perspectives in a form of storytelling. To apply narrative research analysis in this study, it well-facilitated the researcher to report what participants said, and shed light on how the participants convey their perspectives, ideas, and meanings through proactively engaging in the activity and interacting with the researcher (Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 2008).

Ethical Considerations

Many scholars have discussed the difficulties and importance about the relationship that exists between the interviewer and the interviewee, as the nature of interview sets up unequal power dynamics, which may be controlled by the interviewer (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Nunkoosing, 2005). The fact that I was a parachute kid myself meant that I had similar experiences and faced some of the same psychological pressures as these participants. Many of my own experiences resonated with the experiences of my participants. These shared experiences helped to contribute a trustful relationship in relation with the participants in my study. Sharing with my participants that I had been a parachute kid (at the same private school) myself, effectively helped to put them at ease during the interview and strengthened the collaborative relationship between researcher and participants.

Nevertheless, underneath the similarities, there are potential risks for imposing my own experiences and interpretations to understand and reconstruct the stories of my participants. In order to have in-depth understanding of her participants, Wu stated her positionality in her study, “as a researcher, I not only paid attention to how daily cultural and educational practices became meaningful to my participants and their self-making, but also understood how these practices became meaningful to me” (Wu, 2016, p.59). Bracketing is an important step when analyzing narrative data. It is a process where the researcher suspends bias and assumptions to ensure data are known only through the subjective experiences of the participants (Given, 2008). As a researcher, it is important to put my own experience on the side, and to avoid my personal bias to influence collected results. Thus, having overlapped experiences is a good way of forming trustful relationships with the participants. Yet, it is essential to be aware of my role, biases and prejudices as the researcher in reconstructing other’s individual stories.

Moreover, it is important to conduct a research “with” participants including their perspectives, behaviours, and narratives instead of “on” and “about” them through a trustworthy and equal relationship with the participants. To protect the privacy and safety of the participants, the research was proposed after receiving verbal consent from the school principal and the student participants. Each participant’s data was reported in the thesis using pseudonyms and de-identified descriptors. Their real identity was kept private and I promised to maintain their anonymity throughout the study. Direct quotes from the participants were used if they gave permission to do so on the consent form. After all the interview sessions were completed, the participants’ data were stored electronically on the researcher’s computer with a secure passcode.

Research Limitations

This research only focused on a specific group of self-selected participants. Therefore, there was a possibility of overlooking the experiences of the student population who did not take part in this study. In addition, the sampling selection may not be representative of the experiences of other parachute kids who enrolled in public high schools, and eight Chinese parachute kids may not be representative about all the Chinese parachute kids’ experiences or perspectives, therefore, they cannot generalize all the parachute kids across worldwide. However, case study research does not aim to generalize about the experiences of groups of people, but rather to provide a nuanced and detailed analysis of a phenomenon with a smaller group of participants.

Firstly, data were collected only from the students in Grade 12, most of them having just arrived in Canada for a few months. This situation may have neglected other students who came to Canada for Grade 10 and 11. Second, most of the student participants in the interview were enrolled in the ‘2+1’ program. However, the ‘2+1’ programs in different cities may be distinct in terms of the course setting and politic system, which also influenced participants’ experiences

and thoughts. On the contrary, the participants in this study might only symbolize a minority of the overall Chinese parachute student populations, those enrolled in the '2+1' program. In the next section, I will review the findings from my study.

Chapter 4: Research Findings

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. These findings are drawn from multiple data sources including the semi-structured qualitative interviews conducted with eight Chinese participants officially enrolled in a Canadian international private high school, and a variety of documents related to the program, '2+1' program description, student recruitment details and senior students' feedback about the program on the school website. Due to the nature of the study, many direct quotes from the interviews will be used in this chapter to provide the reader with in-depth understanding of their experiences through their narratives.

There were three topics derived from collected data, which well framed this study: 1) what are the supports that Chinese parachute kids draw upon while studying in Canada; 2) what are the challenges and pressures Chinese parachute kids face while studying in Canada; and 3) how do their supports and the challenges and pressures they face shape their personal well-being? Each topic also includes detailed descriptions about the differences of their experiences, and how their experiences were associated with the amount of received social supports, which further shaped their personal well-being differently.

There are a vast number of studies that have discussed the language and cultural adjustment that this student population has encountered. However, there are very few studies capturing the insights into these issues by drawing upon the concepts of social capital and discussing the forms of social supports that this student population might need. That is the focus of this study.

It is also essential to address '2+1' program in this study as an important factor in order to understand how the program which the participants in my study were enrolled in shaped each of their experiences and personal well-being differently. Therefore, in the next section, in addition

to the background information about the '2+1' program provided in the introductory chapter to this thesis, I will offer some further contextual information about the program, as well as the participants' motivations for studying abroad through such a program.

The '2+ 1' Program

Given the background of this program have been provided in the introductory chapter to this thesis, the following section will provide a detailed description of the program structure, course syllabus, staff, etc. of the '2+ 1' program. This contextual knowledge is important to know as it provides readers with a holistic understanding about the program, including the purpose and benefits for Chinese students to study in Canada through participating in this program.

I focus on the example of the '2+1' program in a high school in the city of Zhengzhou for two reasons. First, most of the documents I was able to obtain were about this program in particular. These documents include the program documents, as well as the curriculum setting, teacher resources, and support services. These documents provided useful information to understand the rationale for establishing the program, its main goals and benefits. Second, the Zhengzhou '2+1' program is a higher standard program compared to others. Below, I will explain what I mean by 'higher standard' and how this influenced the experiences of the three participants who attended this particular '2+1' program. On that note, it is important to point out that while there are many similarities between the '2+1' programs the participants were in, there were also differences between the Zhengzhou program and the '2 + 1' program in other cities (e.g. Shanghai) where other participants came from. We will see later that participants who enrolled '2+1' program in other cities indicated different experiences and personal well-being, and I will further discuss this in the next chapter.

The establishment of the program in city of Zhengzhou represents the trend of educational internationalization outlined earlier in this thesis. It was formed in 2011 and officially authorized by the Ministry of Education in the province of Henan. This program consisted of a long-term partnership and cooperation with a public high school in city of Zhengzhou and a private boarding high school in Canada.

There are several benefits of attending this ‘2+1’ program. One of the advantages is achieving two diplomas from each high school in both China and Canada. In specific, this program enables bridging students from China to Canada for Grade 12, with double high school diploma after its completion (e.g. the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSG)). Through two years of studying in China and one year in Canada, students are required to complete mandatory courses and then eligible to apply for post-secondary program abroad. Thus, the bridging system is perceived as the greatest advantage for studying abroad through ‘2+1’ program.

This program is not merely aimed to develop in students’ cross-cultural global competencies where they learn to value difference, but to provide them with skills to compete in the global marketplace. Such objectives are recognized in how Chinese high schools build up global education through establishing cross-nation partnerships with high school in Canada. The program integrates international education resources and activities into the Chinese curriculum, which helps to prepare the students for their year of study abroad, and to be engaged in today’s global competitive market with higher intercultural skills and international knowledge (See Appendix 4).

In terms of the course syllabus, the program combines both Chinese and Canadian course content and educational concepts. Students who enrolled are required to complete all the mandatory courses in both China and Canada. All the courses that Chinese students take during

the first two years of '2+1' program comprise not only Chinese mandatory courses such as Mandarin, Mathematics, and Chemistry, but also Canadian English literacy, International Business, Marketing, as well as an IELTS course (International English Language Testing System).² Once the student has successfully completed the courses in China, they need to complete six credits of Canadian courses before they graduate.

The teacher resources in '2+1' program also indicate the integration of international education resources in the classroom. A number of Ontario certified English-speaking staff were recruited in this program as main instructors to support the international learning in China. Students could have classes such as English Second Language (ESL) course, English-speaking class, and English writing class with English teachers throughout those two years of preparation in China. As a result, students in this program had more opportunities to improve their English proficiency through interacting with native English speakers before they even arrived in Canada. Overall, all of the courses are conducted and designed in English for Chinese students to help them better adapt to an English-speaking environment.

Extra-curricular activities are considered as essential part of the '2+1' program in Zhengzhou. This is comprised of several supportive activities and events outside the classroom, which fully prepared students for their studies abroad. Students are encouraged to participate in cross-cultural activities such as English debates and presentations. There are also alumni meetings, admission guidance, as well as counselling services in addition to several classroom activities. For example, the alumni meeting was established for Chinese students to build connections with senior students while sharing personal experiences through attending this program.

² IELTS is an international language exam for non-native English speakers. It is comprised of speaking, listening, reading, and writing sections, with an aim to help international students to prepare for the English assessment test before applying to post-secondary institutions.

Overall, Zhengzhou ‘2+1’ program is representative of a higher-standard study abroad program compared to other 2 + 1 programs that exist in China. In the first two years of the Zhengzhou program, students have the opportunity to be taught by native English speakers and teachers who are familiar with the Ontario school system. They are introduced to foreign education resources and content to help familiarize themselves with foreign content and pedagogy. Thus, students have many opportunities to develop their English language skills as well as cross cultural competence.

According to Tan (2009) who has written about higher quality of foreign education resources, such resources “should be useful and practical to the introducing party” (p.170). Thus, a higher quality ‘2+1’ program is not only comprised of advanced teaching materials, techniques, and course set ups, but also provides students with practical skills and useful knowledge that brought advantages and supports to the students after arriving in the host country. The Zhengzhou program did just that.

There are other reasons why the Zhengzhou ‘2+1’ program was higher standard compared to other ‘2 + 1’ programs. Students in this particular program were provided with adequate social supports before their departure for the host country. All the curriculum setting and activities they are able to engage in focus on addressing common challenges and issues that the Chinese students and parents were concerned about. And finally, the overall goal of the program is to balance the students’ growing educational demand with the shortage of education resources supply. In other words, the program helps students to escape the competitive straitjacket of the Chinese education system and the college entrance *GaoKao* examination. In this way, the program diversifies the education choices and resources for students, and prepares them with the foundational knowledge and supports to apply to and transition to the Canadian education mode.

Together these components of the Zhengzhou ‘2 + 1’ program set the stage for the Chinese students to be more academically and culturally prepared for studying in Canada for Grade 12. The next section explicitly discusses various reasons and purposes that drove each participant to study abroad, as well as their transnational experiences in Canada.

Students’ Purposes and Motivations for Studying Abroad

Understanding the motivations and purposes for studying abroad is the first step to start the conversation with these participants. Through reviewing data from the participants that came from various cities of China (Shanghai, Zhengzhou), most of them (n=7) came to Canada through the ‘2+1’ program. These findings indicated various motivations and channels for studying abroad, also provided the researcher with knowledge into the experiences of Chinese parachute kids before their departure in the host country. They also built on insights into the reasons that lead to the differences in each participant’s faced challenges, social supports, and well-being after arrival in the host country through participating different ‘2+1’ program.

The semi-structured interview allowed the participants to reflect on their transnational experiences and engage in face-to-face conversation to help build a trustful and natural relationship between researcher and the participants. Based on that, it helped the research gain an insightful understanding of each participant’s motivation to study abroad, the reasons for participating in ‘2+1’ program, and how the program shaped each participant with different experiences and personal well-being.

Academic performance

These participants’ motivations for studying abroad shared several overlaps. Specifically, over half of the participants (n=5) were motivated to study abroad through participating in the ‘2 +1’ program due to the high level of pressures they faced in China, and previous lack of

academic success in middle school. In China, students who fail the *Senior High School Entrance Exam* may have fewer opportunities to enroll in a better high school, which lead to fewer opportunities to apply for top-ranking universities. In this study, 5 students highlighted higher level of stress in Chinese high school, and they were worried about *College Entrance Exam (GaoKao)* due to their poor academic performance.

For instance, one of the participants from Zhengzhou enrolled in ‘2+1’ program because of the pressures from parental expectation and competition from his peers that he experienced while in China. Vincent, explained his reason for studying abroad:

I am always a person who don't enjoy studying. Meanwhile, my parents still tried to force me to study something that I don't enjoy at all. It is so much pressures living in China, especially with peers, also my parents. They tried to control your mind, force you to do something that they believe it's correct. I hope the learning and living experiences in Canada can shape myself as an independent person so that I can be responsible for my future.

Another participant Rolan who were from Zhengzhou ‘2+1’ program also shared similar thought. She presented her motivation for studying abroad was due to peer pressures and competitions in Chinese schooling, and her academic performance was not ideal enough to support her to apply for better schools. In addition, she stated that participating in the ‘2+1’ program is a ‘short-cut’ or a ‘backdoor’ as it allows students to skip the *College Entrance Exam (GaoKao)* and apply for overseas high-ranking universities.

Learning Environment

Besides the enormous pressures in China, there were also some other motivations for studying abroad were given by the participants. For instance, participant Jace, a student from Shanghai pointed out that he was not satisfied with the learning environment in Shanghai, as his

personality was not adored or accepted by teachers or peers. Thus, his parents including himself believed that Canada would be a more open and welcomed country to stay. Jace stated:

My personality is very outgoing, and I love sharing different thoughts with teachers and classmates. Sometimes people don't understand me, and my opinion or behaviors can't be accepted. Everyone was so competitive on getting high marks, any other thoughts or behaviors are hard to be accepted by teachers or peers.

At this stage, we can see the purposes and motivations of each participant for studying in Canada share several similarities. From their perspectives, studying in Canada is a path that characterized with better learning condition (less pressures from peers, parents, and schools). However, from the review of data, the experiences of these participants demonstrated a various of challenges they have encountered after they arrived upon Canada. The following section provides a review of the common challenges that each participant encountered after they arrived upon Canada.

Challenges and Pressures

In this present study, collected data from all participants in this study corresponded with the findings from existing literature about the common challenges faced by international students. The next section will focus on three types of challenges the participants in my study faced: academic, language, and social networks, which are all intertwined and influenced their personal well-being.

Academic Challenges

From the review of the findings, academic challenges were one of the key challenges faced by these participants. Notably, many (n=5) participants strongly indicated they faced greater challenges in their academic work while studying in Canada compared to studying in China. Kris, a girl from city of Kunming, indicated that she struggled with reading long titles of exam

topics, especially in her data management course. She stated that this challenge influenced her overall academic performance. Additionally, participant Jace also expressed an essential point about his academic challenges, as he highlighted the distinctions between the course subjects in China and Canada. He said:

Canada's subjects are harder to learn at first because it is not in my first language. Besides, international students, like me have to take much efforts to build social network, to deal with cultural and language differences, so it is hard to concentrate on academic work; In China, it is different, as the only thing Chinese high school students need to focus on is their academic work and marks. There are teachers and parents to supervise your study, homework, exam, and daily routine from day to night. In Canada, most of the time, we only deal with it by ourselves.

Most of the participants expressed confusion about their academic prospects. In specific, over half of the participants stated that they were not clear about either university admission requirement or application procedures. They did not know how to submit documents and search university program information. The lack of understanding university admission requirements and program selection was one of these participants' greatest academic concerns.

Linguistic Challenges

According to the responses from each participant, there were significant linguistic challenges faced in terms of their academic work and social networking. Half of the participants (n=4) indicated that they had no problem communicating in English with peers and teachers, but that their academic performance was hampered by their weak English proficiency (e.g. reading, listening). On the contrary, the other four participants stated that they were doing well in their academic performances, but their limited English skills negatively affected their ability to engage in social events or activities. Participant Dong indicated his linguistic challenges and concerns,

which influenced their social networking and academic work. Here is the direct quote from participant Dong:

My parents contacted a homestay firstly when I arrived upon Canada, they expected me to immerse in an English-speaking environment. After that, I came to this high school, my parents kept forcing me to network with foreigners in order to improve my English proficiency. There is a Halloween party tomorrow, I personally don't want to go, I don't like networking in this way, because foreign students won't understand my English speaking or accent, either I won't understand what they are saying. I don't feel confidence when I speak English, so I assume the party is going to be very awkward, and it is a waste of my time.

Apart from that, linguistic challenges also influenced the participants' academic performances and class participation. For instance, Dong also stated that:

When the teacher talked in front of the classroom, I was having hard time understanding what he tried to say. Even though I have clues on solving questions on the paper, still, if the teacher talked to fast or having strong accent, it can be very distracting, which made me upset.

From above, we can see that both academic and linguistic challenges faced by these participants were intertwined. The academic challenges were attributed to the lack of university application guidance, also were attributed to the lack of language skills that can affect participants' academic understanding and engagement. Apart from that, language challenges also influenced participants' social integrity and a sense of connectedness with other foreign peers and teachers. On the other hand, such challenge can result in other challenges, such as social challenges.

Social Challenges

A wide range of literature has examined the challenges Chinese international students have, whereas fewer studies have focused on Chinese parachute kids' social challenges and pressures,

particularly related to the social networks around them. Such networks can be considered as peer, teacher-student, as well as the alumni-student networks. In terms of the peer friendships, each participant indicated how they built relationship with their peers. Most of the participants expressed that they felt more comfortable staying with friends who are from the same Chinese city. When it came to interacting with students outside of China, they faced greater challenges. Notably, there was only one participant who was not in '2+1' program. Participant Thomas indicated higher level of stress in his social networking comparing with other participants. He explained the emotions he was feeling living and studying in Canada by himself:

This is my first time being in a foreign country by my own, sometimes I feel very lonely, and homesick, even afraid of being in a new environment. I tried my best to make new friends and to extend my network, especially with non-Chinese students, but students I knew from here cannot be called "friends", they are like "acquaintances". Everyone came here with diverse expectations and goals. Such like, some students from Mexico or Russia, they are not expecting to get Canadian higher education or to immigrate here, but most Chinese students here are expecting for higher education from universities and get better job after they graduate. So, it is very hard to have deep conversations with them.

It is worth noting that social pressures also come from existing peer network in China.

Participant Kris highlighted her loss of connection with her old friends and the school teachers of her '2+1' program in China. She stated that:

My friends who did not study overseas always show their jealous and misunderstanding about me. Due to the 12-hour time zone, and different living environment, it is hard to express my emotions or feelings to them. I can feel that I am losing my friendship with old friends, and I have no friends in Canada either.

On the other hand, other participants demonstrated relatively fewer social networking stresses compared with participant Thomas and Kris who came to Canada without having experience in higher standard '2+1' program. It may attributed to the established friendships they built during

the two years of living in China before departure. Most of the participants expressed that they had difficulties making long-term friendships with other foreign students, even students who are from different regions of China. Nevertheless, these participants have advantages in terms of maintaining friendships with peers who are from the same city. Thus, social networking challenges of these participants still persist, whereas some concerns and pressures were eliminated when they spent time with friends who were from the same '2+1' program.

Social Supports Received and Needed

Social support refers to “the nature of the interactions occurring in social relationships, especially how these are evaluated by the person as to their supportiveness” (Mak & Kim, 2011, p.60). In this study, finding out what kinds of social support that each participant received or needed is an essential step to better understanding their experiences in Canada. In academic words, social supports are in three forms: instrumental, information, and emotional supports (House, 1981). Instrumental support involves the behaviors that can directly help the person in need, such as services or money. Information support involves providing a person with information that can use in coping with personal and environmental problems, such as student receiving advice from a friend to solve faced challenges. Emotional support involves empathy, caring, love and trust, which is considered as the most important component of social supports (House, 1981). The next section draws on feedback from the participants regarding the social supports they have received or felt they needed from the school institution and peers.

Instrumental supports

Through analyzing data, there are two participants stated that teachers provided detailed instruction and guidance on student's academic works, such as assignment and course contents.

Notably, three participants who were in '2+1' program of Zhengzhou demonstrated positive feedback regarding the academic supports provided from both schools in China and Canada. One of the participants articulated that several tutorials and ESL courses were also hosted, aimed to support students' academic works and language proficiency. Despite the fact that teachers were patient and supportive while assisting students' questions and concerns, students felt the need to reach out to these resources proactively to acquire useful resources, (seeking aids to solve questions about assignment or course contents). Thus, it is clear to see that these instrumental supports were provided as a form of service for those participants who were more active to seek supports.

Nevertheless, the school doctors failed to provide adequate instrumental support such as physical and psychological aids. Thomas's narrative indicated that the school doctors were absent for two weeks during his sickness, and he suffered from his sickness by his own without telling any friends or teachers. Apart from that, both Thomas and Vincent highlighted that school should hire a supportive and professional psychological counsellor to deal with international students' adjustment difficulties and personal emotions.

According to the participants, various of extra-curricular activities were added in this school's program (basketball, dance club, soccer, badminton, and student council). The school provided multiple forms of social supports for better adjustment in their new environment. However, the collected data demonstrated otherwise, as major participants claimed that extra-curricular activities in high school were not significantly supportive. In other words, the participants did not feel that they were receiving direct social supports through extra-curricular activities from school to eliminate their faced challenges and pressures. Concretely, there was only one student stated that these extra-curricular activities were helpful and supportive, which provided positive effects

on her personal well-being as well as social adjustment. On the contrary, well over (n=6) of the participants were not willing to participate in these extra-curricular activities. In order to explain this phenomenon, most participants indicated that their reasons for not participating were that they felt that the school provided less considerations about the diversities between Eastern and Western culture. One participant, Jace, discussed how he felt about the extra-curricular activities at the school. He pointed out the main reasons for not participating in these extra-curricular activities:

The school hosted lots of events, such as sports, art show, and parties. For example, the school and student council are hosting a Halloween party tomorrow, but this is a Western festival. We have no idea about this festival, we don't celebrate it either. Also, students need to pay if they want to participate. I feel that the school didn't take much efforts to learn different culture, especially the diversities between Chinese culture and Western culture. We never get a chance to celebrate our own culture here, so it is hard to feel the sense of belonging or supports from school.

In addition, when all the participants were asked about their greatest received instrumental support in Canada, none of the participants indicated financial pressures, as they were well-supported by their parents and families throughout the years in Canada.

From a review of the results, all the participants received direct financial support from their family to fund their learning experiences in Canada. Apart from that, the findings suggest that the lack of instrumental support result from school factors. Despite that the school provided social events and activities for students in a form of instrumental support, most of the participants presented low motivation or enthusiasm to engage in such social events. Based on Jace's narrative, it is unforeseen that extra-curriculum activities for most of the participants were not considered as a useful instrumental support from the school institution. In other word, these Chinese parachute kids were not benefitting from this type of social support.

Information Support

Given that these participants were all in Grade 12, their greatest concerns were mostly related to university applications. Notably, six participants strongly indicated that they received little academic support from the high school, particularly in the field of university admission guidance. Despite that teachers and staff were concerned about student' current academic work, they failed to provide further supports that go beyond student's academic demand, such as providing useful guidance and information about university application. Participant Cao, who came to Canada through '2+1' program in Hangzhou, discussed his unique experience, and asserted that the school overlooked the needs of students such as himself:

I believed that each international student here has distinct background and expectations. I believe that school did not consider about the diversities, including the various expectations of students who are from different countries and regions. Like me, my second language is German, and I am going to Germany for university after I graduate. I am not going to apply to universities in Canada, but the application was only limited in universities of Ontario. Then what about the students who want to apply for schools outside of Canada such as Europe?

In order to capture an in-depth insight into each participant's experience, it is imperative to take the standard and quality of the '2+1' program into consideration. For instance, participant Kris who enrolled in a '2+1' program in Kunming presented greater depression and dissatisfaction. She asserted that neither school in China nor Canada provided adequate information supports in introducing universities features, application procedures or course selection for students in Grade 12. Meanwhile, the sub-standard of her '2+1' program discouraged her confidence to pursue post-secondary education in Canada.

The worst is, my program in China is very irresponsible for taking care of students' experiences or future path in Canada. They don't even care about our lives after sending us abroad. No supports, no guidance were

provided at all. My English level is not high, and I have no clear clue about which program or university to choose after I graduate.

In contrast, three participants (Vincent, Rolan, Lin) who were from Zhengzhou '2+1' program asserted that their experiences in Canada were optimistic, as they all highlighted that they were well-prepared (e.g. course material, university information, living guide) throughout the two years of experience of the '2+1' program in China, which were transformational in assisting them to feel that they were physically and mentally supported by the schools and other stakeholders. Besides, they also highlighted that school in Canada also hosted extra presentations for students who were from Zhengzhou '2+1' program, provided them with extra informational guidance.

Overall, it is clear to see that there is a necessity for school to not only focus on student's academic performance, but to look beyond the students' concerns within different circumstances, especially in year of Grade 12. These findings have offered a picture about the supports the participants received and those supports they felt they needed, but did not receive, while studying in Canada. Firstly, the results show that all the participants in this study presented their extra need for acquiring guidance of university application and program introduction, which is the gap that school have overlooked. Secondly, three participants who enrolled in the '2+1' program in Zhengzhou were more likely to receive more informational supports from school institutions.

Emotional Support

The data show a significant influence of peer support on the personal well-being of these participants. Given that these participants were currently in Grade 12, and they all faced similar challenges and concerns, peers are seen as the most effective and helpful way supporting these

participants while studying in Canada. The significant influences of peer supports can be seen in two different circumstances: students' academic work and social networking.

In terms of academic work, the participants tend to seek advice from peers rather than teachers. As I mentioned above, institutional supports were more difficult for the participants to reach out compared with seeking help from peers. Based on that, all participants stated that they were more willing to seek academic aid from their peers, which was a good way to build friendships and collaborations with other peers and foreign students.

In addition, peer support is an essential component that influences the participants' social networks. When I talked with the participants about social network, most of them felt more engaged to share their experiences and could also provide many examples of how their peer friendships supported and influenced their life in Canada. Most took more time to share their positive experiences about spending time with their close friends. For instance, participant Dong's experience perfectly demonstrated the positive influences from peer support:

Whenever I feel lonely or stressful, the best way is to talk or hang out with my friend. He is always supporting me, giving me lots of ideas and suggestions. For example, I am struggling whether I should go to the Halloween party tomorrow, and if I go, what kind of outfits should I wear. My friend and I can always understand each other's thoughts and opinions. Even sometimes he disagrees with my idea, he still respects me and accompanies by my side. He is my biggest emotional support while studying in Canada.

Participant Cao also provided his feedback about the peer support:

The best experience since I came to Canada was working as volunteer. It was similar as an outreach activity outside of school. During this experience, I built more friendships with peers, also I improved my English speaking, expanded my sociability. This experience was not provided by the school. Instead, I contacted the senior graduated student groups and they always recommended amazing events and volunteers for Chinese students to participate outside of high school. I

don't feel the school was supported for Chinese students, as most of my supports came from peers, and also students from senior class.

Thus, it is evident that peer support is playing a significant role in these participants' experiences, as it is a way for them to express emotion. The excerpts above are from the participants who enrolled in '2+1' program from different cities. They demonstrated that peer friendship was a great source for supporting their academic work and social connectedness. However, among all the participants, only one participant was not enrolled in '2+1' program that indicated fewer supports from peers. Participant Thomas discussed that friendship was not an important component during his transnational experience in high school. According to his narrative, he would not be willing to participate in social events, stated that there is an intangible barrier between students' relationship, which hindered him to expand his social network while studying in Canada. Meanwhile, he explained that he was sick for an entire week without any friends noticing or supporting, as he had no established friendships before arrived upon Canada like other students.

Kris who also enrolled in '2+1' program indicated she had fewer supports from peers compared to other participants from other cities:

Even I came here with lots of friends, it is still a little bit hard for me to seek helps from them. I realized that Chinese students tend to be in small groups that have similar traits. Such as, people only hang out with those who are good at English speaking, or they like spending time with those who are good at studying, or they like being together with similar goals. It is hard for me to get good mark; the course contents are hard to understand. So, most of the time I stayed alone.

Based on above, we can see here how the lack of a strong peer network could negatively influence participants such as Kris both in terms of her personal well-being and her academic progress.

At this stage, peer support is an essential component of social support, which attributed to the differences of participants' emotions, feelings, and personal well-being. In short, most participants provided positive feedback about the supports they received from their peers. Specifically, the two years of experience in the '2+1' program and its standard can be considered an important factor that influences the social connectedness and well-being of participants. Specifically, the findings show that the participants who enrolled in better quality '2+1' program received more academic and social supports from peers (e.g. doing group assignment, participating in school events, asking for advice from close friends). In specific, they more actively sought academic and emotional supports from their friends. Based on that, those participants who were in higher standard '2+1' programs such as the one from Zhengzhou had greater opportunities to seek more social supports and guidance from both schools in China and Canada. On the contrary, the participants who were not in a high-standard '2+1' program received fewer supports from peers and institutions, which led to them not participating in social events, and working on their course assignment alone.

In short, this section addressed the different forms of social supports (e.g. instrumental, information, emotional) that these participants received or need through interpreting their narratives. It is evident that all participants indicated various experiences and perspectives regarding each form of their social support in Canada. Meanwhile, the '2+1' program and its standard was also relevant in determining the level of social supports that they can receive while in Canada. Therefore, the next step is to understand how the social supports they received or lacked shaped their personal well-being differently.

Students' Personal Well-Being

During the interview session, all the participants were asked about their personal well-being while in Canada compared with their life when they were in China. The findings indicate that they still felt positive about their personal well-being despite facing significant challenges in their life in Canada. For example, Cao, from '2+1' program in Hangzhou, indicated that his outreach and volunteer experiences in Canada have positively motivated himself to establish social connections, which supported himself to live with a happy and independent personal well-being. He highlighted that such volunteer experiences meant a great deal for him, which were valuable and helpful in shaping his personal well-being more optimistically, especially when he was immersed in a multicultural environment. Additionally, three participants (Lin, Rolan and Vincent) from Zhengzhou '2+1' program shared similar thoughts about how different their life experiences in Canada were compared to China. These three participants who were enrolled in Zhengzhou '2+1' program shared their narratives, implied that there are embedded advantages for enrolling in a high-standard '2+1' program. The advantages can be seen in their personal well-being, given that all of them believed that the experiences while studying in Canada alone provided more opportunities for them to be more independent and more responsible for their own business. Furthermore, participant Vincent asserted that he started to be more independent in time-management, which positively shaped his well-being and personality. As for participant Rolan's perspective, she believed that the experience in Canada helped her to be stronger when encountering challenges and loneliness. Despite of the various pressures and struggles, she has learned to overcome these challenges by herself. Rolan also discussed the benefit of enrolling in Zhengzhou '2+1' program, which assisted her academic work, social networking with peers, as well as extra supports from high school in Canada. She stated:

Studying in Canada facilitated me to be brave, confident, and independent when facing pressures. Participating in different kinds of clubs and events with friends help me to express pressures and emotions; Meanwhile, the school also hosted meetings especially for students who came from Zhengzhou '2+1' program to provide extra academic guidance.

On the contrary, some participants (n= 2) expressed negative feelings about their personal well-being, particularly those who came to Canada alone or in sub-standard '2+1' program. For instance, participant Thomas shared his negative experiences, especially his loneliness and helplessness. He highlighted the time period when he was sick that nobody noticing and caring. Similarly, participant Kris who also enrolled in a poor '2+1' program, indicated her loss and dissatisfaction with her life in Canada. Based on her narrative, her experience in the '2+1' program provided little supports before or after students studying abroad. As mentioned above, she was also facing the loss of social networking or communicating with friends in Canada or China, which negatively influence her expression of emotion. At this stage, it is clear to see the significant influences of receiving accessible social supports on individual's well-being.

The findings from this study show that each participant's well-being varied, and the factors that contributed to these gaps were distinct. For instance, participants Kris and Thomas exhibited passive personal well-being particularly due to the lack of attachment with peers and school institutions. Beyond the social relationships that affect the participants' experiences, the quality of the '2+1' program also shaped participants' personal well-being differently. In specific, participants from Shanghai '2+1' program received greater emotional support from close friends who enrolled in the same program. Meanwhile, participants from Zhengzhou '2+1' program also demonstrated positive well-being, as the preparation works within two years in China facilitated these participants to be more culturally and physically adapted to the new environment in Canada.

Conclusion

Overall, this chapter has reviewed the main findings of this qualitative study, including the document analysis with a detailed explanation of '2+1' program in city of Zhengzhou. In addition, the main findings focus on discussing each participant's experiences, with an extensive exploration on their faced challenges, social supports they need and received, as well as their personal well-being. From the findings, it is clear to see that these participants' experiences and personal well-being vary, which result from the limited academic support, lack of access to information and peer networks, as well as the distinct program quality. To be more detailed, there are three main findings emerged through analyzing the data. Firstly, most of participants exhibited greater needs of academic supports from high school, such as providing university information and program guidance. Secondly, participants' personal well-being were greatly affected by the level of their social supports (e.g. peer friendship, emotional support, academic guidance). Last, the standard of '2+1' program they came through to Canada determined the degree of social supports they could receive from peers and school institutions.

In the end of the interview session, all the participants were engaged in providing insightful thoughts, shared many suggestions in improving student support services in high school, which were all based on their own critical-reflection and personal experience. Specifically, they suggested that there were spaces for school to improve the instrumental supports they provided (e.g. social events and clubs), which can inform more stakeholders such as the principal, teachers and parents to acknowledge the diversities between culture and race, with a deeper understanding of Chinese parachute kids' social needs and concerns. In the next chapter, I will analyze the findings through the lens of the theoretical framework, drawing on Bourdieu's capital theory, with a particular emphasis on cultural and social capital.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Based on the review of the collected data, the findings will be analyzed under the concept of capital theory offered by Pierre Bourdieu (1986). This chapter will offer a critical discussion about the experiences of the eight participants in this study including challenges faced, social supports received, and their personal well-being by drawing upon cultural and social capital theory.

The purpose of this study is to capture new insights into Chinese parachute kids' experiences and challenges they faced while studying in Canada with a critical investigation of how their social supports and networks (connectedness) shape their perspectives and personal well-being differently. I do this in this discussion chapter by addressing social capital theory. In addition, the '2+1' program is also an important factor in shaping the density and strength of the social network that Chinese parachute kids have, which in turn can contribute to different degree of social supports (e.g. peers or institutional) they had. By considering these factors, they represent a new exploration of the differences among Chinese parachute kids' transnational experiences.

This chapter will shed light on several main ideas that emerged from collected findings in the following sections. Firstly, I will review the participants' experiences under the frame of capital theory, with a more detailed discussion on the challenges they faced and the different levels of accessible supports they possessed, obtained or lacked. Then, I will address the ideas of horizontal and vertical social capital. Such discussion will inform readers that having horizontal social capital is crucial. However, expanding vertical social capital is also an important step for Chinese parachute kids to acquire more useful supports outside of their own 'social ties'. These include more accessible resources from schools, senior students, and local community. Lastly, I

will provide a discussion about the relationship between cultural and social capital, the transferability of one form of capital to another, and the personal well-being of my participants.

Capital Theory and Participants' Two Years of Preparation in China

Many studies have argued that studying in Western countries has become a way for Asian international students to increase their educational opportunities through obtaining academic credentials, advanced English language proficiency and exposure to cosmopolitan culture (Fong 2011; Kang & Abelman 2011; Kim 2011; Lee & Koo 2006). Studying abroad can thus be viewed as a process of gaining capital. However, it also requires a financial base, so-called economic capital to fund the high costs associated with studying abroad. Back in the 1980s, study abroad programs were considered luxury, as they were only offered to people who were situated in the upper class due to the elite status and high cost of participating in such programs (High, 1998). In the past few decades, enrollment in study abroad programs became more prevalent for people not only in the upper class but mostly in middle-class families to respond to the rapid development of globalization and internationalization in education. In China, enrolling in the '2+1' programs has become a channel for parents in the upper and middle class who have accumulated capital (e.g. cultural, economic and social) to send their children to study abroad to receive a better education (Choudaha, 2017).

In this present study, each participant obtained a form of economic capital, as they had financial aid from their parents to support all the living costs in the host country. The participants provided a critical reflection on their experiences, stating that they were able to study in Canada through participating in a study abroad program such as the '2+1' program was due to the results of having a strong financial aid from their family. Specifically, among all the participants, only one participant indicated some anxiety about the high living cost in Canada; most of them stated

that they had no economic or financial pressures during their transnational experiences. Thus, it is evident that the economic capital accumulated in a family was a significant factor in terms of the participants' opportunity to study abroad and their experiences while abroad as this economic capital provided more resources and positive effects for their children's education.

Besides economic capital, addressing cultural capital in this study is important, as it is related to the transnational experiences of the participants in this study. Cultural capital includes behavior, experience, cultural background, knowledge, and skills and encompasses three forms: embodied, objectified, and institutional. Embodied cultural capital includes linguistic-cultural capital, a person's communication and self-presentation. Objectified cultural capital refers to material and individual property; and institutionalized cultural capital refers to a degree or a diploma with a professional qualification. All can be transferred into economic capital (Bourdieu, 1985).

Embodied cultural capital is gained by studying abroad as transnational experience is a process of obtaining international knowledge since some courses are not taught in China. Students can also gain embodied cultural capital through learning English while abroad. It is also a process of accumulating institutionalized cultural capital, such as a secondary education diploma, a university degree, and bilingual proficiency. All of these forms of cultural capital can then be perpetuated and reproduced into better results and returns in the future. According to Simon and Ainsworth (2012), knowledge can be considered as an embodied cultural capital, which can successfully yield rewards and benefits to the individual's experience. In other words, students' knowledge and personal skills can be regarded as a form of cultural capital, as it involves useful skills and behavior that can bring perpetuated advantages in cross-cultural

environment. Building on Bourdieu's cultural capital theory, a discussion of the impact of enrolling in a '2+1' program on participants' experiences in Canada will be presented next.

The first-two years of the '2+1' Program as a form of Cultural Capital

According to Bourdieu (1985), cultural capital is also gained through experiences. For this study, participants who came to Canada through participating in a study abroad program (e.g. 2+1 program) reflected upon their experiences back in China and in Canada. Based on that, it is seen that the first two years of studying in a higher standard '2+1' program in China could be considered an advantage for the participants when facing academic challenges while in Canada. For instance, participants who enrolled in the '2+1' program had more opportunities to preview the course content, having awareness of international education during the pre- two years in China. These participants also were more likely to have heavy English language training from qualified English teachers provided throughout the two years of their '2+1' program, which supported their further learning in Canada. For instance, participants from Zhengzhou '2+1' program discussed how international education and the course structure that taught in China during those two years positively shaped their learning experiences in Canada. Specifically, the structure of the courses in China integrated Canadian education resources and content, such as marketing and international business, paved their way for further academic learning in Canada. Apart from that, one participant from Zhengzhou also explained that all the students from this program were provided with extra guidance from school in Canada and China in terms of program counseling, university applications, as well as extra supports from the principal of the Canadian high school. Therefore, we can see how the participants from Zhengzhou came to Canada with additional forms of cultural capital accumulated during their two preparatory years

of studies while in China, and how these forms of cultural capital (knowledge and skills gained) helped them with their transnational experiences in Canada.

Tan's (2009) study on higher quality of foreign education resources also helps to shed light on what made the Zhengzhou '2+1' program a better or higher standard program for their students. Tan highlighted that high-quality foreign educational resources are comprised of good "concepts, systems and policies, managements, courses, teaching materials, teachers, education features and styles, and other education materials" (p.168). Given this definition of higher-quality of education resources, we can see the curriculum in the first two years of the '2 + 1' program in Zhengzhou incorporated such benefits and high-quality resources, as forms of cultural capital which then provided the students who enrolled in this program with further benefits while studying abroad in Canada.

Academic and Life Support

Given the discussion above, it is seen that having an experience of particular '2+1' programs (e.g. Zhengzhou and Shanghai) can be considered as form of cultural capital, as students with these '2+1' program experience were able to actively apply what they have learned from the '2+1' program to support their academic performance while in Canada. In addition, Lin, who was from Zhengzhou's '2+1' program also highlighted how the preparation work and academic learning in first 2 years of '2+1' program facilitated her adjustment in Canada. Such experience can be regarded as embodied cultural capital, which shaped her way of behaving and thinking. Another two participants (Rolan and Vincent) from Zhengzhou's '2+1' program also indicated how their perception about cultural diversities between Canada and China, such as distinctive lifestyle and behavior manner were shaped through alumni meetings and presentations.

The above suggests that students' motivation for studying abroad symbolized the accumulation of their economic capital, which well-supported their overseas learning experiences outside of China without having financial pressures. Furthermore, the first two years of preparation in the higher standard '2+1' program becomes a new setting for growing embodied cultural capital for Chinese parachute kids. According to the data, some participants indicated a holistic development in terms of their academic performance, linguistic skill, cultural adjustment, and mindset. It is seen that a higher quality program in which participants enrolled (i.e. in Zhengzhou), the more they could convert their cultural capital into a privileged status. Given that such study abroad programs in Zhengzhou provided participants with adequate contextual knowledge and information before studying abroad. Therefore, students from this program were more aware of self-adjustment (e.g. emotional, cultural, learning, living) when studying in Canada. They also learned how to make informed decisions with their university application and program selection. Such experiences were perpetuated during their transnational experience, helping the participants to better adapt to the new environment (e.g. way of talking, thinking and behaving). The finding above aligns with previous findings from other studies (Bracht, Over, Engel, Janson, Schomburg & Teichler, 2006) as participating in such program can improve students' 'soft-skills' such as problem-solving skills, learning ability under-pressure, and flexibility when encountering challenges in a new environment. It is clear to see the benefit that these participants bring from their participation in the first two years of the '2+1' program in China to the last year of study in Canada, as it fostered the notion of international education, and supported them to be culturally and academically adapted to the new environment.

Emotional Support

Reviewing collected findings, it shows that students who have more cultural capital often regard study abroad as a way to improve and express themselves. Specifically, participants (Jace, Dong, Cao) from Shanghai and Hangzhou '2+1' program indicated that their experiences in the preparation years of the '2+1' program positively shaped their personal character. Such benefits were shown in their experience in Canada, as they were willing to express personal thoughts, and to present confidently in class discussions with peers from other culture. Apart from that, the pre-established friendships formed during the first two years of the '2+1' program acted as an essential form of support for these participants, as they could perceive helpful and trustful emotional support from each other. According to Bourdieu (1997), a long-lasting disposition of mind, e.g. the embodied state, is a form of cultural capital that develops international students' appreciation and embracement of different culture. Thus, it is evident that the experiences in the pre-years of the '2+1' program not only increased Chinese parachute kids' intercultural skills and contextual knowledge, also providing them with more sense of security and confidence during their transnational experiences in Canada.

Linguistic Capital

In addition, having advanced language capacity is regarded as another form of cultural capital, which refers to a better understanding and use of international languages like English. Learning another language is considered as an important skill, which can be valued and transferred into greater opportunities and rewards for Chinese parachute kids, such as building confidence and networks. According to some previous studies, studying abroad is an opportunity for students to develop personal skills if they can adapt to a new environment and language at a younger age (Huang, 2003; Wu et al., 2016; Zhou, 1998). Kim (1992) found that intercultural communication

promotes environmental mastery or “the individual’s capacity to suspend or modify some of the old cultural ways to manage the dynamics of cultural difference/unfamiliarity, intergroup posture, and the accompanying stress” (p. 377). The next section will discuss how language proficiency is regarded as a form of cultural capital in Chinese parachute kids’ experiences and differently shaped their personal well-being while studying in Canada.

Cao reflected upon his advanced language proficiency, which included Mandarin, German, and English. This language talent can be considered as his embodied cultural capital, which facilitated him in further social networking and academic performance while in Canada. Through reviewing the results, he indicated greater confidence and happiness when discussing how his language advantage supported him to gain more social experiences, establishing relationships with native English speakers as well as people outside the school. Thus, there is a high probability that he was able to interact with people from other cultures, and also help him to live in Canada with an open mind and positive personal well-being.

At this stage, it is clear to see that the possession of embodied cultural capital helped to enhance their personal well-being while in Canada. As noted above, this study found that participants who had experience in a higher standard ‘2+1’ program received various forms of support and guidance, which can be considered as part of the rewards converted from their cultural capital. Such accumulation of cultural capital positively shaped these students’ well-being. Particularly influenced their self-efficacy, as they indicated greater confidence or belief in their knowledge and skills that could outperform and stand out in specific circumstances while studying abroad. Linguistic capital (embodied) not only provided efficient supports, but also shaped these participants’ self-efficacy, personal adjustment, and happiness. This has profoundly

facilitated Chinese parachute kids to be interpersonally behave and interact with people in different ways.

Chinese Parachute Kids' Faced Challenges

Lacking Cultural Capital

This finding captured a critical insight as cultural capital can separate people into categories, reflecting the inequality and privilege among these participants. There were gaps in academic achievements, cultural adjustment, and personal well-being among these participants from the '2+1' program of different cities, which may relate to the participants' previous experiences in different '2+1' programs and the varying standards of the programs. The truth is, students who had less cultural capital considered it as a challenge they must encounter. Firstly, Kris's response confirmed the importance of the standard of the study abroad program, as an experience in a sub-standard '2+1' program resulted in a passive perception and lack of attention paid to personal well-being. She reflected upon greater stress on academic work and linguistic competence due to the lack of preparation work that should be done for students before studying abroad. A study about the effects of cross-cultural competence on international students' psychological adjustment (2018) suggested that "efforts to develop students' cross-cultural competence and social support may begin well before their departure for the host country[...]while in their home country, students may be encouraged to participate in cultural diversity classes and engage in cross-cultural activities (e.g. presentation, events)" (Aldawsari et al., 2018, p. 917). The absence of such experience negatively also shaped Kris' well-being, as it shrank her ability to adapt to the new environment (e.g. classroom and school events). Such experience limited her opportunity to access useful resources and aids from school institutions and teachers, which could in turn

contribute to greater academic concerns, cultural social pressures and negative psychological consequences.

Linguistic Challenge

The majority of participants presented their experiences as examples of lacking particular forms of embodied cultural capital (such as English language competency), which gave them disadvantages. The result aligned with previous findings and highlighted that linguistic barriers could be a major challenge for Chinese international high school students. From the participants' narratives, most of them reflected on how the lack of advanced English-language skill formed gaps and pressure throughout the interaction with other national peers. Kris suggested that it is frustrating and discouraging when interacting with other national peers, as their spoken-English could not be understood by any of them. Apart from that, Kris indicated her linguistic pressure often takes place in classroom, and it was challenging for her to proactively interact with teachers face-to-face or in classroom when facing academic problems. Other participants also indicated similar circumstances, despite getting high marks in the exam or assignment, the little engagement or interaction in class still impacted teachers' impression of them and shrank the participant's interpersonal skills. Thus, it is seen that English language proficiency directly influenced the participants' academic performance, class participation, as well as social networking opportunities. In other word, inferior language skills reduce cultural capital, which also hinder the opportunities for Chinese parachute kids to gain other form of capital, such as social capital.

Social Capital Theory

Social capital usually refers to the social network or durable relationships between an individual that potentially can derive supports and additional knowledge-based resources (Bourdieu, 1997; Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995). There are existing studies connecting overseas studies and international education to the concept of social capital theory in order to examine what extent and how social capital influence international students' experiences while studying abroad. Nevertheless, international students' development of social capital and social psychological consequences has remained largely unexplored (Glass & Gesing, 2018; Lee, 2010). Chinese parachute kids who arrived in Canada as their host country were more likely confronted by a new cultural, institutional setting, but more importantly by new social relationships that may have been hard to access. As a positive network can provide opportunities with academic and personal support, whereas the lack of a network or an unfamiliar network is a major challenge faced by most of the international students while studying in a host country. At this stage, this section will not only discuss Chinese parachute kids' networks with co-nationals as satisfying their emotional needs, it will also highlight the significance of obtaining social capital for Chinese parachute kids. Specifically, this section will make comparison between participants who have strong social capital and those who do not, and further examine how social capital contributes to different degrees of accessible resources that can provide supports and advantages for these participants. According to collected results, the amount of social capital that the participants were able to access while studying in Canada are also associated with their development of well-being. Thus, it is necessary to examine Chinese parachute kids' transnational experiences and faced challenges under the concept of social capital theory, and to

capture critical insights into how the degree of access to social capital differently shape Chinese parachute kids' social networking and well-being.

Social Challenges

An existing study about students studying abroad in post-secondary education highlighted that there were differences in the overall composition of the social network between international students, and those who participated in campus events or organizations have more social capital than those who did not (Glass & Gesing, 2018). Notably, the results of my study support such existing studies, showing that the kind of study abroad program in which the participants enrolled acted as a form of social capital, and bridged the Chinese parachute kids to transit to Canada with greater supports as well as connections with peers and the school institution. Apart from that, the '2+1' program with higher standard also enriched the composition of their social networks, and positively influenced their experiences and network strength.

Through a critical analysis of the collected data, not all the participants took advantage of their pre-established social capital. To explain this, some scholars also pointed out another important concept of social capital in their studies (Chen & Wellman, 2009; Lampe, Ellison & Steinfield, 2007). They highlighted that international students in the host country may encounter more challenges and pressures from maintaining old social ties and interpersonal network, which refers to the pre-existing network and connections they built in their home country. For instance, Kris who had a '2+1' experience reflected on her loss of connection with old friends in China and felt distant among people in her new environment. Such a loss of social connection implies a shrinking of social capital, which is presented in many aspects such as social networking, academic performance, as well as the expectation for the trajectory of a career and life in Canada. Thus, it is seen that interpersonal networks accessible to Chinese parachute kids are

influenced by the study-abroad program they enrolled, as well as its standard. Notably, participants from the Zhengzhou '2+1' program took more advantages from their pre-established friendship and peer network that shared similar experiences. On the contrary, participant from other '2+1' programs indicated a loss of connection with existing peer network and institution in China, which further hindered the development of social capital while in the host country.

As noted above, participants who participated in the '2+1' program took advantages of their pre-established networks compared with the participant (Cao) who had no experience in such a program. Also, the standard of the program played an essential role in the strength of social networks between these participants who enrolled in a high-standard '2+1' program and those who did not (e.g. Kris). Specifically, the former received relatively greater supports and interactions with their existing networks, whereas the latter experienced pressures maintaining connections with peers, and also faced a loss of attachment with other national peers and the school institution after arriving in Canada. In other words, Chinese parachute kids may fail to take advantages of peer and institutional supports if they did not participate in a higher standard '2+1' program. Thus, it is seen that the '2+1' program acts as a form of social capital that bridges Chinese parachute kids in their transition to Canada, and its high standard works as a form of useful social capital that provides more benefits for Chinese parachute kids to exceed compared to others who have no opportunity to participate in such a high standard program. This is also the case in terms of the social supports they were able to draw upon, which I discuss next.

Social supports

International students may perceive different forms of social support while studying abroad. However, social support may carry different meanings for international students from various

cultural backgrounds (Chirkov, 2007; Gurung, 2010; Ryff, 1989; Sawir, Marginson, Deumert, Nyland & Ramia, 2007; Tang, 2008). The participants in this present study who came from different study-abroad programs received different levels of social support from peers and their school institutions in China and Canada. However, social supports from school institutions are not good fits for international students across the world. Notably, the findings showed that most of the Chinese participants were unable to take advantages of the social supports provided by the school in Canada due to the lack of consideration regarding the cultural diversity between Chinese culture and Western culture. In other word, the support from school has failed to address or meet Chinese parachute kids' social needs and concerns. All the participants presented their urgent needs for receiving information support (e.g. university application, counseling), while school institutions failed to provide them with such useful support and guidance. Apart from that, most of them noted that it was challenging to take advantages from other form of social support provided by the school such as networking events (e.g. sports club, Halloween party). It is seen that Chinese parachute kids' social needs were focused on obtaining a credential diploma and applying for prestigious universities. To be noted, participants from Zhengzhou '2+1' program received extra social support from the school institution in both China and Canada, and these participants indicated relatively fewer concerns for seeking institutional support, also greater cohesion and attachment to their peer network.

Peer-friendships

Early findings indicated that social support exists in the form of relationships with one's family, old and new friends from the same or different ethnic and cultural group, as well as significant others (Şener, 2011). Firstly, the formation of friendships among Chinese parachute kids is considered an essential form of social capital formation, contributing to a sense of

belonging while studying in Canada (Mikhaylov & Fierro, 2015). The findings from this study shows that participants' networks are usually motivated by shared learning motives and similar goals. Participants who enrolled in Zhengzhou and Shanghai '2+1' program mostly relied on their old friends or roommates for emotional and academic support, showing greater willingness to be engaged in a peer network that shared similar local culture and habit, and developed greater sense of belonging and attachment to their own network. For instance, participants who are from Zhengzhou and Shanghai indicated much closer relationships and cohesion with old friends who can provide more emotional and academic support. Along with the established friendship, these participants more proactively engaged in school activities (e.g. clubs and festival parties). Apart from that, Kris's experience has suggested that maintaining relationship with old friends and families in the home country was a crucial way to acquire a sense of connectedness while studying abroad. Thus, it is of particular importance for Chinese parachute kids to maintain old relationships as well as to develop their social support networks in the host country in order to access more social support and useful resources in the new environment and develop positive well-being.

Building Vertical Social Capital

Students with more social capital are also better able to open doors and build a social connection beyond their old established network and new networks. This is referred to as building vertical social capital (Putnam, 1993), which reflects ties of hierarchical or unequal individuals or groups who have different access to resources and power. In this study, Cao's narrative is consistent with the study of Soria and Troisi (2014), highlighting that the students' social connections built when interacting and developing friendships outside the classroom can lead to accumulating more social capital and greater comfort through interacting with others

from different cultures. Based on Cao's experience, he expressed great satisfaction with opportunities to meet and interact with peers from diverse backgrounds. His volunteer experience acts as a sufficient investment of his existing cultural capital (linguistic), resulting in more social capital as a return. Such voluntary work with people outside of his own network embodies access to valuable resources, which contributes to an improved understanding of local culture, strong sociability and positive personal well-being, character, and global vision through local community contact. It also presents the vertical social capital formed between senior students who can offer more useful information and opportunities.

Interestingly, Kim (1992) indicated that interpersonal skills can promote individual capacity to modify some of the old cultural habit to manage dynamics of cultural unfamiliarity, social integration, and psychological adjustment. In specific, it is seen that Chinese parachute kids, when immersed in a more open environment with opportunities for further connections with other networks outside their own, can compensate for other challenges they encountered and address emotional needs, such as loneliness and homesick. Apart from that, having advanced cultural capital (e.g. linguistic skills) is also a major factor that can increase social capital and establish a vertical social capital outside of their existing peer network through reaching out to people from other cultures. Therefore, such positive reflection implies the embedded convertibility between cultural and social capital, and the embodied cultural capital is the base on which social capital is built and available to individual (Bourdieu, 1997; Botas & Huisman, 2013; Montgomery, 2000). Cao took advantage by having both cultural and social capital, which enabled him to be more engaged in a broader network with a more independent and confident personal well-being. This is an example of how vertical social capital can be used to link people to new social networks and then develop even more social capital.

Institutional Attachment

In this regard, collected findings in this study illustrate that having more social capital is an essential part of the students' transnational experience, as it manifests the potential benefits from having supportive peer-friendship but also an institutional attachment for Chinese parachute kids to achieve their goals while studying in Canada. However, having cultural and social capital also determines the degree of access to useful resources from peers and school. This study shows that the degrees of access to cultural and social capital resources varies among these participants, and those who come from different city cultures or type of study-abroad program demonstrate various levels of academic performance, social network, and well-being. In specific, participants with closer attachment to school institutions in China and Canada were also considered as having strong social capital, as they had greater opportunity to access information from schoolteachers in China and Canada, as well as their classmates that they were familiar with.

Given that some of the participants in this study shed light on how the first two years of studying in the high-standard '2+1' program in China supported them in establishing relationships with high school alumni through hosting meetings, web-pages, lectures, and presentations. Such support can be regarded as 'value-added', which created network relations and networks for Chinese parachute kids before study abroad. It can be seen as a development of their cultural capital in its embodied and objectified state, e.g. disposition of the mind and cultural goods (Bourdieu, 1997). As a result, participants from Zhengzhou's '2+1' program in this study indicate fewer intercultural and social pressures after arriving in Canada. This is possible due to the useful resources and information guidance they accessed from their program. Furthermore, the finding shows that participants from Zhengzhou's '2+1' program demonstrate a higher degree of access to useful resources from school in Canada, having priority on receiving

extra supports and guidance from schoolteachers and staff about university application and program information. Consequently, in this study, participation in a higher standard '2+1' program had a huge impact on participants' peer network, accessibility to useful resources, as well as their wellbeing. Thus, it is seen that participants who have strong social capital perceive their interpersonal relationships as providing them with access to certain advantage and potential benefit that can offer extra guidance and support from school institutions in China and Canada to enhance Chinese parachute kids' academic achievement and knowledge acquisition.

Lacking Social Capital

In their study about the development of social capital through international students' social involvement in the host country, Glass and Gesing (2018) stated that "the type of organization in which the students participated affected the size, density and composition of their network" (p.1288). Notably, participants who shared similar cultural background tended to form a tighter group with stronger cohesion, which can fight against multiple challenges that often attributed to a lack of assimilation to the host country and new environment. However, participants who had no experience in a better standard '2+1' program reflected less cohesion or attachment with local community. Despite the fact that all of the participants had come from China, the distinct experiences and standard of the different '2+1' program they had experienced prior to coming to Canada mean that the group, as a whole, was less cohesive than they might have been. Given by Kris' experience in lower standard program, such experience negatively shrank the institutional attachment and cohesion with peers who came from other higher standard program, further lead to a loss of her social capital. Apart from that, Thomas, who had different experience from the two years of the '2+1' program, instead, he came to Canada without enrolling any study-abroad programs that may render possible assistances throughout the transition. The fact is, he indicated

even less engagement in other peer networks and larger pressures on social networking and academic performance compare with other seven participants (all enrolled in the '2+1' program). Specifically, he also highlighted that he would overcome his faced challenges on his own such as sickness, homesickness, as well as challenging academic work instead of seeking aids or expressing emotions with others. It was evident that participants who have no experience in a '2+1' program have experienced greater constraints to participate in school activities or to interact with peers from other culture, and lead to a loss of social capital. Therefore, the experiences in the '2+1' program that most of the participants were enrolled worked as a form of social capital, which may exchange distinct degree of the accessible social support for Chinese parachute kids while studying abroad.

Well-being

Many existing studies have examined the strong influences of forming close friendships and networks in adapting to high school life. According to previous studies, international students who develop friendships with co-national and international peers have access to more resources that support their adjustment to transnational experience; whereas international students who are exclusive in school activities continue to be outsiders in the host country. The results of this study align with these previous findings, showing that only a minority of students forged relationships with peers from other cultures or countries, or sought advice about university applications from school staff or senior students. They were less involved in school events or in the local community that might have provided them with a broader network (Glass, Gómez & Urzua, 2014; Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006; Zhao, Kuh, & Carini, 2005). The reasons can be attributed to the fear of cultural diversity, linguistic barriers, and dependence on familiar social

ties. However, the results show that it is not enough to have strong social ties with only Chinese peer networks. While horizontal social capital can ease pressures from interacting with unfamiliarity through creating a comfort zone where Chinese parachute kids can seek emotional support and sense of belonging from people who share similar cultural background, collected finding highlighted an important result that building vertical social capital can also create self-esteem and confidence. For instance, such vertical social capital facilitated Cao to acquire helpful resources and valuable experiences, and to a great extent, developed and shaped his well-being.

Based on the discussion above, Chinese parachute kids' faced challenges and patterns of adjustment and personal well-being were affected by the embodied cultural capital and social capital they had before coming to Canada and obtained while in Canada, as well as the lack of it. This section suggests that positive well-being is not only related to existing cultural and social capital but also the ability to develop further cultural capital and social connections while abroad. Such findings align with previous studies, showing that the impact of investing social capital and connection across Chinese parachute kids is not only related to academic success but more associated with increased happiness and independence in personal well-being (Neri & Ville, 2007).

Overall, most participants in this study benefited from the cultural capital (e.g. foreign course content and English language instruction) and social capital (e.g. peer friendships and institution attachment) that they accumulated throughout the first two years of their experiences in a higher standard '2+1' program. They were more likely to build upon their existing capital to access greater supports, particularly from their peer groups who provided emotional support and a sense of belonging at a time when they were most needed. Therefore, the participants in a higher

standard '2+1' program received benefits through forming and maintaining their existing peer networks. Having such an existing network helped those students gain more cultural capital, which further improved their well-being, interpersonal skills and problem-solving capacities.

On the other hand, such horizontal social capital creates a comfort zone, constraining the possibility of expanding their vertical social capital, as most of the participants indicated their reluctance to go beyond their existing network. Thus, such hesitation can also lead to a loss of social capital, which also may further decrease the accumulation of their cultural capital (e.g. linguistic skill, confidence). In this study, although there was one participant who had built vertical social capital with local peers and community, most of the participants still experienced challenges seeking assistance and support from the school or teachers who were in 'upper level' while studying in Canada. They also indicated a reluctance to engage in school events (e.g. festivals) with peers outside of their culture or existing social networks. Thus, for some students, the two years of experiences in the higher standard '2+1' program acted as a process of forming horizontal social capital, which brought some benefits and supports to the participants during their transnational experiences. Yet, they were unable to use their social networks to bridge to other social networks that may have expanded their connections beyond their own group to the local community and beyond. Moreover, the loss of these opportunities may have also impeded the further development of embodied cultural capital for these Chinese parachute kids while studying in Canada. (e.g. way of talking, intercultural skill, learning capacity).

Based on the results, it is evident that one form of capital can be transformed to another. In this study, the families of these students had economic capital that enabled them to enroll in a 2+1 program and study abroad. Their economic capital was exchanged for access to better educational resources and broader opportunities, such as enrolling in a higher standard '2+1'

program. These can be considered as a form of cultural capital (e.g. oversea diploma, advanced linguistic skills), which enabled the students to build social capital through peer networks. In a few cases, upon arriving in Canada, some students were able to build further networks with other national peers and local community. In specific, cultural capital and social capital can be intertwined with each other, as a continuous development of social capital is dependent on accumulated cultural capital. For instance, students expanded their network and connections with others if they had advanced linguistic skills and intercultural capacity. Similarly, students may produce greater cultural capital through accumulating both horizontal and vertical social capital. For instance, students can develop their self-efficiency, advance their interpersonal skills, improve the ability to access useful resources and supports from people beyond their existing networks (teachers, the principal). Such benefits illustrate the exchangeability of cultural and social capital. However, in this study despite that most of the Chinese parachute kids had accumulated cultural capital, they failed to transform it into useful social capital during their transnational experiences. Based on the discussion above, it was evident that developing a positive well-being and successful experience are dependent on personal capacity, as well as the existing social supports and social connectedness. In other words, having both cultural and social capital.

Chapter 6: Implications and Conclusion

In this final chapter, I will start off by summarizing this study. Then I will shed light on the implications for future improvements of secondary schools in Canada that host international students by integrating participants' suggestions with my own ideas based on the findings of this study. I will also highlight the space and direction for future research in this research field. Lastly, I will discuss my personal thoughts as a final conclusion for this study.

Summary of the Study

In this study, I aimed to explore the challenges faced by Chinese parachute kids' and how their cultural and social capital may have influenced their well-being while studying Canada. The following research questions played an important role in guiding my research.

- 1) What are the experiences of Chinese parachute kids studying at a private secondary school in Canada?
- 2) What are the challenges Chinese parachute kids encounter and what social networks and supports they have while studying in Canada?
- 3) What is the impact of the challenges, social networks and social support on their personal well-being?

Before concluding this study, it is necessary to overview some key points in this study, including the rationale for conducting the study, participants, the methodology and theoretical framework utilized. Then I will discuss research gaps and ideas for future research, as well as implications for future improvement.

Firstly, the purpose for conducting this study was inspired by my own experience as a Chinese parachute kid studying in Canada at Bao College for Grade 12. As a researcher, I was inspired and passionate about the experiences of Chinese parachute kids in this study year (2019-2020). I aimed to have a better understanding of the type of challenges they face and how they overcame these challenges. Also, given my own experience, I know the importance and significance of expanding social networks for Chinese parachute kids while staying and living in a host country. This set the stage for my study to critically analyze the experiences of a group of Chinese parachute kids studying at a private secondary school in Canada. Specifically, the

challenges they faced, their social network and social supports, and how these influenced their personal well-being. Thus, this study set out to focus on the different life experiences of Chinese parachute kids who come to Canadian secondary schools through examining their faced challenges, social relationships and supports they obtained or lacked during their transnational experiences. It aimed to further explain what kind of factors facilitate or hinder Chinese parachute kids' social networks and how the absence of social networks and supports negatively shape their personal wellbeing and psychological adjustment while studying in Canada.

A qualitative case study was used to examine parachute kids' experiences and perspectives by conducting face-to-face interviews in a Canadian high school. After getting ethics approval from Western University's Research Ethics Board, the researcher contacted the head of the high school to explain the procedure and purpose of this study. After all the approval and preparations, I scheduled a specific date for recruiting participants. There were total 8 participants involved in the interview session who meet all the inclusion criteria. In this study, I used pseudonyms for the school and the participants in order to maintain their anonymity.

Given that most of the participants (n=7) came to Canada through the '2+1' program, I provided a detailed description of this program in order to give readers the needed background to better understand Chinese parachute kids' different experiences. The standard of the '2+1' program is also an important factor that shaped the experiences of most of the participants during their time studying in Canada.

The findings from my study showed that most of the participants (n=7) came to Canada through the '2+1' program. The 2+1 program includes 2 years of studying in China and 1 year in Canada. Only one participant came to Canada on his own without participating in any study-abroad program. Generally, participants who were from a higher standard '2+1' program (e.g. in

Zhengzhou) experienced less stress and a more positive well-being. They obtained more accumulated cultural and social capital that facilitated them to actively seek greater support from peers and school institutions in China and Canada.

This study demonstrated the experiences of some participants who were rewarded by having existing cultural and social capital (e.g. living guidance and existing friendship), which were considered as the most effective supports on their academic performance and emotional adjustment. Still, not all the participants took advantage of these supports due to the different levels of cultural and social capital they could access. As for those who had no experiences in a higher standard '2+1' program, they lacked both forms of cultural capital and social capital that would have helped them in terms of their academic success, social networking, and personal well-being.

Notably, despite the distinct experiences among these participants, they all faced linguistic, cross-cultural and social challenges. These included maintaining relationships with old friends in the home country, and building connections outside their social ties. Although such perceived challenges may differ depending on their individual experience and capacity, these challenges existed and impacted Chinese parachute kids' overall transnational experiences.

In this study, there was one participant who could speak three languages, a form of cultural capital, which in turn contributed to building further cultural capital, including his confidence, interpersonal skills, and positive social adjustment. Besides, he successfully formed relationships outside his own network and proactively interacted with members in the new community. Other participants, however, indicated their reluctance and fear when interacting with other national peers, foreign teachers, and social events (e.g. party, festival) due to limited language skills and acculturation. Such faced challenges can profoundly shrink Chinese parachute kids' cultural and

social capital, influencing the social support and degree of accessible resources they can receive from peers, schools, and local community. Such challenges emerged in the secondary school level aligned with the previous findings regarding the challenges that international students are facing at the post-secondary school level. However, it is of particular importance to recognize the importance of having strong cultural and social capital that can bring accumulated rewards for Chinese international students at secondary school level, which also can be perpetuated when transitioning to post-secondary school level.

According to the findings, the participants' well-being varied, which was associated with the challenges they faced, but also the amount of cultural and social capital they obtained. In specific, their cultural capital refers to the experience in the '2+1' program, including all the English language teaching, course content, information guidance and educational support they received during their two years of studying in China. Participants who had such experiences were considered as having more cultural capital than those who did not. This developed self-efficacy and personal adjustment, which meant positive well-being. Cultural capital also refers to having more advanced linguistic skills that could facilitate individual interpersonal skills and cultural adjustment. One participant who had more linguistic capital demonstrated not only self-efficacy and intercultural competence, but also happiness and self-satisfaction regarding his own transnational experience in Canada. Apart from that, social capital refers to the level of social support from peer friendships, the school institution, and local community, which directly impacted Chinese parachute kids' social connectedness and personal well-being. In this study, most of the social support came from peer friendships which eased the pressure and stress students experienced when facing challenges. Yet they also faced challenges maintaining old friendships or connections from their home country, as these social networks provided a comfort

zone and prevented them in some degree from accessing other social networks in their host country. Moreover, the school institution did not fully address the participants' needs and concerns to provide adequate tangible or informational support such as psychological counseling, university application guidance or instruction. As a result, despite the fact that peer friendship facilitated these participants' well-being, the lack of social support from the school negatively impacted their well-being. Without such institutional support, most of the participants still experienced loss, anxiety, and stress in terms of their university applications and future trajectories.

Overall, given the discussion above, Bourdieu's capital theory not only enriched our knowledge of Chinese parachute kids' motivation and different experiences, but also provided an in-depth understanding of the challenges they faced while studying in Canada. My research findings highlighted the importance of having all forms of capital, especially cultural and social capital for Chinese parachute kids studying in host country. In addition, the findings pointed out the impact of having different forms of cultural and social capital on Chinese parachute kids' overall experiences such as social networking, academic performance, and well-being. Specifically, this study puts more emphasis on the students' social capital, including how and what extent their social capital influenced the degree of accessible resources, guidance, and supports from peers and the school. Students with more cultural and social capital were more likely to receive more supports from peers and schools, also indicated a positive well-being. However, most of the participants still highlighted their challenges and pressures on gaining more social capital while living in a new environment.

Research Limitations and Future Research Ideas

This study focused on Chinese parachute kids' experiences in a private Canadian secondary school. Data sources for the qualitative case study included documents about the 2+ 1 program participants had been enrolled in and documents about the private school itself, as well as interviews with students. There are some limitations to this study, which I will outline here. Firstly, there were only eight participants in the study. Although they have reflected their own thoughts and shared some of their experiences, they cannot be representative all the Chinese parachute kids who study in Canada or for Chinese parachute kids who study in countries other than Canada (e.g. the United States). Thus, in a future international study, the sampling selection could be expanded, and larger numbers of participants could be involved. Secondly, as all data were collected from participants who came from different places of China, their social-economic status and family background varied, which may have increased the complexities of collected findings. Thirdly, gender is also another important variable that need to be taken into account. Although this study did not highlight gender differences, still, this could be a dependent variable that could distinguish between the experiences of male and female Chinese parachute kids in a future study.

In this sample selection, over half of the selected participants (n=7) came to Canada through a similar program, '2+1' program,. Only one participant did not enroll in such program. Instead, he came to Canada for another year of Grade 12 after finishing three years of high school and the *Gaokao* in China. There are more opportunities to explore other channels that Chinese parachute kids use to come to Canada, and to explore their experiences, faced challenges, and well-being. Finally, another possible area for future research would be a comparative study either comparing the experiences of Chinese parachute kids in different secondary schools or comparing the

experiences of Chinese parachute kids with international students from a country other than China. Overall, in terms of future research, these ideas could be worthwhile to consider.

Personal Reflections and Recommendations

In this final section, I would like to present my self-reflection regarding the purpose of conducting this research project, what I have learned through this study and some recommendations for improving the experiences of parachute kids. I participated in an international program called Sino-Canada in my home city, Zhengzhou, China in 2011. This program was first established and promoted in the same year. All of my classmates including me were the first group of students who enrolled in that program. Students who enrolled in this program were able to skip the *Gaokao* (College Entrance Exam), and instead, they were able to receive a Western education in Canada in the last year of high school. Prior to the Grade 12, the two years of studying in China enriched my understanding of Western education. The course structure, content, as well as classroom settings that were different from the Chinese education mode that I was used to. The courses I took were integrated with Canadian courses such as International Business, Marketing, and ESL, which motivated me in terms of my expectation of studying in Canada and communicating in English with people from other cultures. During those first two years in my '2+ 1' program, I tried to build close connections with the foreign English teachers through actively participating and engaging in their English class. However, I noticed that not all my classmates were willing to participate with the foreign teachers or proactively build connection with them; instead, they were silent for most of the time and passively received knowledge from the teachers.

In the following year in Canada, I enrolled in a private international high school in Canada. The cross-national collaboration and partnership between the '2+1' program and the school in

Canada helped students like me to transition to Canada with a better academic and cultural adjustment. Specifically, the two years of studying in China prepared students' academic courses and cross-cultural capacity. Students benefited from participating in diverse classes, and multicultural activities (presentation, events) to establish valuable social networks. Students, like me, benefitted from such programs that provided opportunities for them to culturally adjust and receive greater social support after arriving in host country.

However, it is also of particular importance to encourage students to venture into a new community to expand relationships and connections with other national peers in the host country. Notably, social networking played a major role in Chinese parachute kids like me when studying in a foreign country, which is also a factor that people tend to overlook. My established friendship network, developed during the first two years of my '2+1' program in China, provided emotional support at the time when needed. Homesickness and loneliness were less likely to happen to me during my high school year in Canada as I always knew that I could seek help and emotional support from my friends. On the other hand, such friendship/peer network can be a double-edge sword, as it can also hinder students' ability to expand their social networks with people from other places or cultures. Interestingly, Chinese parachute kids tend to form an exclusive group that shared similar cultural background, even they were all from China, different city cultures and idiom can form an intangible barrier among Chinese parachute kids to proactively interact with each other. In my experience, Chinese parachute kids are more likely to focus on academic performances, and the truth is, they usually can get higher academic ranking scores and achievements when compared to other national peers. Nevertheless, there was little improvement in terms of their sociability and interpersonal skills with other national peers or

new community members. Such disadvantages can perpetuate and bring negative influences when they transition into university campus life.

My own observations and reflections inspired me to conduct this research project focusing on Chinese parachute kids who were enrolled in the same high school I attended through examining their social networks. I was curious about what type of social supports they had from peers, teachers, and the community. My research findings indicated that most Chinese parachute kids are still facing similar challenges and issues as mentioned in the literature such as linguistic barriers, cultural differences, and loneliness. Apart from that, this study pointed out the differences between Chinese parachute kids who participated in a higher standard '2+1' program and those who did not. Such type of study-abroad program acts as a form of cultural capital, and to a great extent helped Chinese parachute kids develop more academic, emotional, and social supports from their peers and school institutions (e.g. course work, university application guidance). However, there were Chinese parachute kids who did not have an opportunity to participate in a good standard '2+1' program. They had fewer supports from peers and the school, resulting in the negative development of their well-being. Students with more cultural capital such as participating in the '2+1' program or advanced language skills took advantage of their background experience, encouraging them to build on their cultural and social capital even further. However, most of the Chinese parachute kids in this study stills had challenges building social networks or connections with other peers from other cultural groups as they found it difficult to go beyond their existing network, or comfort zones to engage with new people while studying in Canada.

Based on the findings, Chinese parachute kids' experiences varied, but many of them have not yet realized the importance of building vertical social capital through actively interacting with

people from different countries and cultures. While it is necessary for Chinese parachute kids to critically reflect their own experiences and psychological development in order to overcome the challenges they face; the responsibility for this is not only theirs. It is also essential for school staff to enrich their knowledge and understanding about Chinese parachute kids' experiences and their unique faced challenges so that they can offer counseling services and useful assistance that match Chinese parachute kids' social needs to release their adjustment pressures.

Here, drawing upon my own reflections after having conducted this study, and the voices of the students in my study, I will present some suggestions for what private secondary schools outside of China could do to improve the experiences of parachute kids from China. Existing studies highlighted that high schools are often under-equipped in providing social supports and services for students such as Chinese parachute kids. Participants shared multiple perspectives in my study and offered insightful suggestions for the school staff to understand their faced challenges so they could be provided with the supports they need. There is a strong aspiration among these participants for receiving more support and understanding from the school. Their expectations were related to receiving university guidance, mental health supports, as well as cross-cultural communication. Specifically, some students expressed their need for receiving more consideration and understanding of the embedded diversity between Eastern and Western cultures. Such suggestions could inform school staff and the principal to critically understand a variety of perspectives of Chinese parachute kids and provide supports that may motivate more Chinese parachute kids to be inclusively involved in a multicultural environment with strong intercultural skills and positive well-being.

Most of the participants highlighted the need to receive more support and broader connection beyond their current knowledge and network. Such suggestions necessitate an in-depth

understanding of Chinese parachute kids' experiences and the challenges they face while studying abroad. Thus, the findings from this study can go a long way in helping scholars and school staff to critically analyze how and to what extent the possession of cultural and social capital can impact Chinese parachute kids' personal well-being and their overall experiences while studying in Canada. The findings also inspired stakeholders and Chinese parachute kids themselves to reflect what can be done to ease the faced challenges, while studying in a host country. Thus, in closing, hopefully there will be changes within secondary schools in Canada where parachute kids study to improve their experiences while studying abroad, as well as future research that would address similar topic about this type of student population and offer critical suggestions and implications for future improvement.

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Appendix 1: Letter of Information and Consent Form

Project Title: Understanding the Challenges Chinese Parachute Kids Face and Social Supports they draw upon while Studying in a Canadian Secondary School: A Case Study (114237)

Document Title: Letter of Information and Consent - Student

Principal Investigator: Dr. Larsen, PhD, Western University, X 80159, mlarsen@uwo.ca

Student Researcher: Yueyi Su, ysu265@uwo.ca

Invitation to Participate - You are being invited to participate in this research study about Chinese secondary international students' transnational experiences while studying in Canada because it is important to hear the voices of Chinese students about their experiences studying in Canadian secondary schools, the benefits and challenges they have faced, as well as their ideas about how we can improve the experiences of students like yourselves.

Purpose and Length of the Study - Students who are studying abroad for secondary schools unaccompanied by their parents or legal guardians are known as 'parachute kids'. The purpose of this study is to hear the voices of Chinese parachute kids like you, and to better understand the challenges and pressures they face from their own perspectives while they are studying in Canada without parental supervision. Thus, the purpose of this letter is to provide you with information required for you to make an informed decision regarding participation in this research. It is expected that you will be in the study for approximately 30-45 minutes during the time you participate in a face-to-face interview.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria - Individuals aged 18 years or older; born in mainland China and currently enrolled at a Canadian secondary school with no parents or legal guardians accompanying them in Canada are able to participate in this research. Individuals who have parental or legal guardian accompaniment will not be able to participate in this study.

Activities of Participants - If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in a semi-structured interview. You will be asked to talk about your own experiences as a parachute kid focusing the challenges and pressures you have faced while studying in Canada, the impact of those challenges and pressures on your social and emotional well-being, the supports you feel parachute kids need while studying in Canada and any recommendations you have for improving the experiences of parachute kids like yourself. It is anticipated that the entire task will be approximately 30-45 minutes in length. Audio-recording is mandatory during the entire interview session, and the interview will take place at a location of your choice. There will be a total of 6-8 participants involved in this research study.

Possible Benefits, Risks and Harms - Participants may receive possible benefit such as:

- 1) A trustful relationship with the researcher who has also been a 'parachute kid' studying in Canada and thus may have similar transnational experiences to the students in this study.
- 2). An opportunity to be self-reflective about your own experiences studying in Canada, the supports you have and any challenges you have faced.
- 3). You can gain a sense of confidence and self-value throughout the interview in expressing personal emotions and perspectives.
- 4). You may benefit by contributing your ideas about what could be done in the future to improve the experiences of future students.

There are also larger benefits for the school and society from this study. For example, some stakeholders such as parents and educators will gain more attention and awareness about the personal well-being of a parachute kids like yourself, and it will also provide an opportunity for 'parachute kids' to talk what they feel they and other parachute kids need to support them during their time studying abroad.

There are no known or anticipated physical, psychological, or emotional risks or discomforts associated with completing this study.

Compensation and Voluntary Participation - You will not be compensated for your participation in this research. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your future (e.g. academic status/graduation). You can choose to withdraw from the study at any time and if you do, the information that was collected prior to you leaving the study will NOT be used. You can choose to withdraw from the study at any time and if you do, you may request that the information that was collected prior to you leaving the study be deleted. No new information will be collected without your permission. We will give you updated information that is learned during the study that might affect your decision to stay in the study.

Confidentiality - The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor information will be used in any reports, publications or presentations of the study results. All data collected will remain confidential and accessible only by the principal investigator and student researcher of this study. If the results are published, your name will be de-identified during the research process and after its completion; only with consent, de-identified quotes obtained during the interview may be used in the dissemination of research findings. Assigned codes will be used to replace all participants' names and the names of any places or events. A list linking your assigned code for the research study with your name will be encrypted and kept in a password-protected file, separate from all other files, in the hard-drive of UPDATED CHANGES, 30 SEPTEMBER

the researcher's laptop, which is encrypted and has personalized lock system. Any personal information about you in the form of a hard copy will be kept for 7 years in a locked cabinet at the researcher's locked office. Representatives of The University of Western Ontario's Non-Medical Research Ethics Board may contact you or require access to your study-related records to monitor the conduct of the study.

Contacts for Further Information - If you require any further information or have any questions regarding this research project or our participation in the study, you may contact (Dr. Larsen, mlarsen@uwo.ca) for further information. If you would like to receive a copy of any potential study results, please contact (Dr. Larsen). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Research Ethics (519)-661-3036, email: ethics@uwo.ca If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Human Research Ethics (519) 661-3036, 1-844-720-9816, email: ethics@uwo.ca. This office oversees the ethical conduct of research studies and is not part of the study team. Everything that you discuss will be kept confidential.

Publication - If the results of the study are presented or published, your name will not be used, but rather a pseudonym (fake name). The researcher will inform you when a result of the study is published through a notice on the school website with a link to the final thesis on Scholarship Western's thesis depository and on the school's website as well.

Consent – If you are 18 years of age or older, complete the next page to indicate your consent to participate in this study. You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by responding to the following questions on the next page(s). Please bring this signed consent form to the interview. . You do not waive any legal right by signing this consent form.

If you are interested in participating in the study, please respond by email (ysu265@uwo.ca) indicating your interest and we will schedule an interview day and time that best suits you. I will come to the city where you live for the interview and it will take place at a location of your choice. At the start of the interview, you will be asked if you have any questions about participating in the study and if you agree to participate, you will be asked to sign the consent form indicating your understanding and willingness of the participate in this interview

Consent Form

Project Title: Understanding the Challenges Chinese Parachute Kids Face and Social Supports they draw upon while Studying in a Canadian Secondary School: A Case Study

IF YOU ARE 18 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER, COMPLETE THIS CONSENT FORM

Principal Investigator's Name: (Dr) Marianne Larsen

Student Researchers' Name: Yueyi Su

I have read the letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explanation to me, and I agree to participate in this research. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Participant's Name (please print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date (*DD-MM-YYYY*): _____

Please check the appropriate box below and initial:

- I am 18 or older **YES NO**

-I consent to the use of personal, identifiable quotes obtained during the study in the dissemination of this research. **YES NO**

My signature means that I have explained the study to the participant named above. I have answered all questions.

Person Obtaining Informed Consent (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date (*DD-MM-YYYY*): _____

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

Background Questions

- 1) Can you tell me a little bit about your background?
 - What part of China are you from?
 - Are you the only child in your family?
 - When did you arrive in Canada?
 - Why did you decide to study in Canada for your secondary education?
 - How and where did you hear the information about this school?
 - Do you have any connections with the international agency in China?
 - How long have you been studying at Bao College?
 - What grade are you in?

Struggles and Pressures

- 2) Can you tell me about some of your struggles, challenges or pressures that you have faced as an international student studying in Canada?
 - Please tell me the ways in which you have struggled with or faced challenges while studying in Canada.
- 3) Do you know what the term “parachute kids” means? [If not, I will define it for them.]
 - Do you believe parachute kids like you will have more struggles, challenges or pressures compared to other kids from China who have their parents or guardians here? Why and Why not?
- 4) How do you think these challenges and pressures can impact you? (Relate with your own experiences)

Social Networks and Supports

- 5) What kinds of social networks or supports do you have while studying in Canada?
 - Can you tell me some positive experiences while studying in Canada? (prompt: Tell me about a class or activities you’ve really enjoyed while being here)
 - How has it been studying in Canada compared with studying in China? (prompt: Do you think it’s more relaxed or harder studying in Canada?)
 - Do you have a group of friends who have helped you while you are here in Canada?
 - Do you have any other forms of supports helped you while you are in Canada?

Recommendations

- 6) What do you think could be done to improve the experiences of Chinese parachute kids like yourself studying in Canada?
 - What could the school do?
 - What could teachers and the principal of the school do?
 - What could the international agency do?
 - What could the government do?
 - What could your parents do?

The End

- 7) Do you have anything else you would like to share with me about your experiences as a Chinese international student studying in Canada, or any suggestions and ideas on how we can improve the experiences of students like yourself?

Thank you very much for participating

Yueyi

Appendix 3: Ethics Approval Letter



Date: 8 October 2019

To: Dr. Marianne Larsen

Project ID: 114237

Study Title: Understanding the Challenges Chinese Parachute Kids Face and Social Supports They Draw upon while Studying in a Canadian Secondary School: A Case Study

Short Title: Chinese Parachute Kids' Challenges and Social Supports in Canada

Application Type: NMREB Initial Application

Review Type: Delegated

Full Board Reporting Date: November 1 2019

Date Approval Issued: 08/Oct/2019

REB Approval Expiry Date: 08/Oct/2020

Dear Dr. Marianne Larsen

The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the WREM application form for the above mentioned study, as of the date noted above. NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the expiry date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

This research study is to be conducted by the investigator noted above. All other required institutional approvals must also be obtained prior to the conduct of the study.

Documents Approved:

Document Name	Document Type	Document Date	Document Version
EMAIL SCRIPT, CLEAN VERSION. SU. 30 SEPTEMBER	Recruitment Materials	30/Sep/2019	
Interview questions - Yueyi Su	Interview Guide	31/Jul/2019	Interview Guide
LOI AND CONSENT FORM, CLEAN VERSION. SU. 30 SEPTEMBER	Written Consent/Assent	30/Sep/2019	

No deviations from, or changes to the protocol should be initiated without prior written approval from the NMREB, except when necessary to eliminate immediate hazard(s) to study participants or when the change(s) involves only administrative or logistical aspects of the trial.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario. Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB. The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Kelly Patterson, Research Ethics Officer on behalf of Dr. Randal Graham, NMREB Chair

Appendix 4: Document of the ‘2+1’ Program

郑州七中中加高中教育项目 2019 年招生简章

中加国际班简介：郑州七中中加高中教育项目是河南省教育厅批准的高中双文凭课程项目，学生入校同时获得郑州七中录取通知书和外方加拿大多伦多宝迪学院的高中注册通知书。经过三年学习，完成中加两国高中课程，成绩合格者取得中加两国高中毕业文凭。本项目开设加拿大安大略省教育厅教学大纲，由具有加拿大教师资格的加拿大国籍教师用英文小班授课。所有合格学生可获得郑州七中的高中毕业文凭和加拿大安大略省教育厅颁发的安大略省中学毕业文凭（OSSD），毕业后可直接申请加拿大，美国及英联邦国家顶尖大学。

项目优势：

在中国攻读具有国际水平的加拿大高中，毕业后可自由选择北美及英联邦国家高等院校，获得加拿大安大略省高中文凭，中外教育优势的完美结合，拥有先进的国际教育体系。

办学优势：

坚持中西教育结合，实施素质教育，为学生搭建平等一流的教学平台。吸引国内外优质教学资源，提供高质量师资保障，为学生搭建原汁原味的语言环境平台。合理配置国内外课程，为学生搭建进入世界名校的平台。

Appendix 5: Curriculum Vitae

Yueyi Su (Vilma)

Education and Professional Development

Master of Arts in Education (MA) September 2018-Present
Western University, London, Ontario

Bachelor of Music Performance (BMus) September 2014-June 2018
University of Toronto

Project / Research Thesis

MA thesis: *Understanding Chinese High School International Students' Challenges They Faced and the Social Supports They Need to Draw Upon While Studying in a Canadian Secondary School.*

Work & Volunteer Experience

Translator and Observer **May-August 2018**
Buttonwood Academy of Music Award

- Assisted other students and teachers in the Language translation (English vs. Mandarin), provided better understanding and communication between students and teachers
- Observed young kids' behavior and daily performance with teachers while taking high level of attention to teachers' music teaching method and strategy
- Analyzed the changes of youth behavior through interacting with instruments and music; ensuring the youth behavior patterns and musical enlightenment expectations are addressed and discussed.

Operations Analyst **January 2018 – June 2018**
Henry Trading Company, Scarborough

- Support operations by reviewing, analyzing, and reporting on inventory valuation and overhead costs
- Redesigned spreadsheets to more accurately forecast short term demand and provided ad hoc financial analysis report to management as needed
- Performed monthly inventory counts to identify any variances

- Supported accounting department in inventory related journal entries such as costs of sales and allocation of indirect costs.

Front Desk Assistant

May-August 2017

Wang Jing Beauty Surgery Company

- Scheduled over 10 appointments and customer consultations for the clients daily, meeting their satisfactions
- Ensured the documents and equipment are organized and prepared.
- Kept social media updated through various channels and social platforms while attracting and informing new customers regarding the company's operations, price charge and professional levels.

Volunteering Experiences

Alumni-Meeting Presentation, July 2019

- Providing ideas and suggestions about the central theme, procedures, and planning details for the Alumni meeting.
- Articulating the definition and practice internationalization of education with high school students and teachers
- Sharing transnational experiences, direction, as well as suggestions for the audiences

Career Profile Advisor

September 2019 -Present

- Assisted clients' resume, cover letter and CV instructions and format editing through a face-to-face communication as well as E-advising service, ensuring their questions and needs are addressed and solved in a welcomed and professional manner.

CSSE Proposal Reviewer

October 2018-Present

- Created quality peer-reviewed feedbacks on other scholars' literature and study works; Gained knowledge and resources from other scholars' work who have overlaps in research topics.

Alternative Spring Break (Western University)

Jan-Feb. 2019

- Completed intercultural and social equity projects in London Ontario communities
- Developed group collaborations and critical analyzing
- Engaged in empirical and experimental learning experiences
- Developing sense of social justice, responsibility, and global citizenship