Jun Li

Quest for World-Class Teacher Education?

A Multiperspectival Study on the Chinese Model of Policy Implementation

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A Multiperspectival Study on the Chinese Model of Policy Implementation

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For my beloved father and mother
        Qingfan Li and Guilan Sun

and

my dear godmother
                        Ruth Hayhoe

Series Editors' Introduction

Although many factors contribute to a high-quality education system, such as useful and relevant textbooks and other teaching and learning materials, and well-appointed schools and classrooms, ultimately the quality of any education system ultimately depends on the effectiveness of the interaction that occurs between learners and teachers. Since teachers are so important to ensuring a high-quality education system, the way in which individuals are prepared for the teaching profession is of paramount importance. It is for this reason that countries throughout the Asia-Pacific region are placing a great emphasis on how best to achieve high-quality teacher education programs.

The impetus to achieve quality education has always been at the forefront of government development policies globally, and this is particularly true for countries in the Asia-Pacific region. International assessment measures and university rankings have swung the pendulum back to emphasize how education systems are critical to ensuring the advancement of a nation. At the core of this lies the ever-persistent and significant role of teachers in making sure that students acquire the necessary critical skills to enable them to engage fully in what are increasingly becoming increasingly complex and diversified modern societies.

Teacher education reforms, as reflecting national policies, are crucial to best understanding how policy implementation reflects the complex cultural and sociopolitical realities of the local context within the ever-increasing race toward globalization.

In this book, Jun Li provides the reader with a perceptive critical account about how teacher education reforms in China reflect the aspirations of the country to promote qualitative education by institutionalizing world-class educators. The book traces teacher education reform in China since the 1990s and explores stakeholders' perception of, and involvement in, policy implementation. Institutional responses and challenges in the implementation of the national policy are also addressed. Jun Li reiterates the essential need to examine the dynamic implementation process in China, in line with teacher education policies, which he relates to as being a "complex jigsaw puzzle," where the often overlooked role of policy implementation can determine a program's success or failure. Given the fundamental, crucial role of

educators in achieving quality education, this volume provides a careful and well-argued presentation of what may be called a "China model," concerning effective pathways in the complex pursuit of educational excellence.

The Education University of Hong Kong, Tai Po, Hong Kong   Rupert Maclean
University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia   Lorraine Symaco
October 2015

Preface

Among four books I have authored thus far,[1] this volume has taken the longest period of research and preparation. It has been a long learning journey for me, over more than a decade that dates back to 2003. During that time, I had been puzzling over the selection of a topic for my second Ph.D. dissertation, as I was in the third year of my Ph.D. program in international education policy at the University of Maryland at College Park (UMCP). That year Professor Xudong Zhu from Beijing Normal University (BNU), an old and dear friend since I was teaching at the East China Normal University (ECNU) in the early 1990s, visited UMCP as a Fulbright scholar for a year. During his stay, we had plenty of opportunities again to chat together, almost daily as we had done years earlier, often discussing the choice of my dissertation topic. One day, during a break in playing tennis together, he asked me "why don't you focus on teacher education in China since you are so familiar with the context?" He had been passionate about China's teacher education over many years, and his encouragement inspired me to reflect deeply on what would interest me academically and what would hold my attention for decades to come.

It still took me some time to think over the option, and finally I decided to work on this challenging topic while at a conference in Tokyo in December 2003. There were four reasons behind this complex decision-making process. The first was due to my academic interest and experience in teacher education over the two decades since 1982. I was first trained as a teacher with a bachelor's degree in the field of school education at Anhui Normal University, an institution with a long tradition of preparing teachers. After having finished my master's and doctoral degrees in the history of education, I started my academic career in 1992 as a junior professor at ECNU, a prestigious institution for the preparation of teachers in China. My early background, interest, and experience have proved advantageous for me in completing this study somewhat later.

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[1]One of them was co-authored, i.e., *Portraits of 21st Century Chinese Universities: In the Move to Mass Higher Education* by Springer/CERC (2011) and its Chinese version by Guangxi Normal University Press (2015).

Secondly, I used to be and still am very keen on doing historical studies on China's education, especially about the interactions between education and Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism and education and culture more generally. Over the long journey of two decades, I realized that policy has a direct, immediate, and practical impact on socio-educational development, thanks to my visits to the University of Hong Kong in 1996–1997 and later to the University of Tokyo over a period of 3 years. My second Ph.D. in education policy at UMCP suited very well the shift in my academic interest and paradigm, and the dissertation on teacher education policy in China would greatly facilitate the change from historical to contemporary policy studies. Third, I always believed that research in social sciences and education is deeply contextualized and that the researcher's background is key to the discovery, understanding, and interpretation of research findings. As a native Chinese and a researcher in education and Chinese culture, I was familiar with the socio-educational environment where I grew up, was educated, and worked over a long time. The study on teacher education policy in China seemed to be a right choice for me. Last but not least, teacher education had great importance for me as a researcher and practitioner and for educational and societal development in China and internationally.

The present book is a product that reflects great effort made over the past decade since 2003, originating from my second Ph.D. dissertation entitled "An Analysis of the Implementation of Teacher Education Policy in China Since the 1990s: A Case Study" (University of Maryland at College Park, 2006). While the dissertation remains the core of this book, follow-up field trips were made in subsequent years after I had resumed my academic career, first at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT) (2006–2008) and later at the Education University of Hong Kong (formerly the Hong Kong Institute of Education, 2008–2012), the Chinese University of Hong Kong (2012–2015) and the University of Hong Kong (2015–present). Ongoing effort was given to updating and revising it over the past 10 years. Four journal articles have come out of this process, "The Idea of a Normal University in the 21st Century" (Hayhoe & Li, 2010)[2] and "The Chinese Model of Teacher Education: Retrospect and Prospects over a Century" (Li, 2012), both in *Frontiers of Education in China*; "China's Quest for World-Class Teachers: A Rational Model of National Initiatives and Institutional Transformations" (Li, 2013a)[3]; and "China's Reform of Teacher

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[2]The article was translated into Chinese and first published in *Jiaoyu Yanjiu* [*Educational Research*] and later collected by *Xinhua Wenzhai* [*Xinhua Digest*]. Please see: Hayhoe, R., & Li, J. (2009). Shijie jiaoshi jiaoyu de lishi bijiao [Historical comparison of international teacher education development]. *Jiaoyu Yanjiu* [*Educational Research*], *353* (6), 54–62; and *Xinhua Wenzhai* [*Xinhua Digest*], *21*, 120–125.

[3]The article was later translated into Chinese and republished in *Jiaohi Jiaoyu Xuebao* [*Journal of Teacher Education*] and collected in Gu, G. (Ed.), *The work and lives of teachers in China* (Routledge, 2014), 105–122. Also see: Li, J. (2014b). *China's dream for world-class teacher education: A rational analysis of national policies* (in Chinese). *Journal of Teacher Education*, *1* (1), 13–22.

Education Institutions: A Critical Case Study of Policy Implementation" (Li, 2016a, under review); plus two refereed book chapters, "China's Quest for World-Class Teachers: A Rational Model of National Teacher Education Reform" (Li, 2014a) and "The Chinese Model of Teacher Education: The Humanist Way for Chinese Learners, Teachers and Schools" (Li, 2016b); and three additional essays, "The Question Is: Are Our Schools Soft Enough?" (Li, 2015a), "World-Class Teacher Education for the Post-2015 Agenda? Critical Reflections on the Shanghai Miracle" (Li, 2014c), and "An Examination of the Chinese Model of Teacher Education" (Li, 2013b).[4] Gratefully, this monograph finally becomes available to fully present what I have studied and reflected on the topic over the past decade.

This book is an empirical yet theoretical response to the worldwide concern over the quality of teachers and teacher education reform. Since the radical expansion of school education in many parts of the world, along with accelerating global movements of individualization, decentralization, marketization, and digitalization at all levels and in all forms, teacher quality has been a central concern for educational leaders, policymakers, administrators, educators, students, parents, and researchers, as well as the general public. Teacher professionalism and more specifically new teachers' identities and roles have never become more important and critical than nowadays. Numerous debates address such key issues as how teachers' identities can be redefined at both macro- and micro-levels to benefit learners as well as a democratic society and how teachers are to be prepared and transformed into true professionals by teacher education programs at both pre-service and in-service stages.

In a time when almost all educators, students, and parents, as well as the general public, are experiencing various challenges of globalization, it is particularly helpful to compare how national policies may shape the quest for world-class teachers in ways that are distinctive and yet may also have elements in common. China has recently transformed its teacher education system by redefining teachers' roles, restructuring the system for the preparation of highly qualified teachers, and reforming the programs and teaching force for them. China's efforts have proven effective in bringing about significant, systematic changes and indeed a huge success in light of the superb scores of Shanghai students across all domains in the recent PISA results (OECD, 2013). Although caution is needed in interpreting their excellent performance and they are by no means typical of students throughout all the regions of China, worldwide attention has been drawn to the question of how Chinese teachers have been formed in ways that can make their students so competitive globally (Li, 2013a).

With a case study method and a multiperspectival approach, this book aims at a pioneering, in-depth study of China's policy of teacher education reform since

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[4]Please see: Li, J. (2015a). The question is: Are our schools soft enough? *China Daily* (*European Weekly*), 10, August 28; Li, J. (2014c). World-class teacher education for the Post-2015 Agenda? Critical reflections on the Shanghai Miracle. *Norrag News*, *50*, 90–91; and Li, J. (2013b). Jianshi jiaoshi jiaoyu de Zhongguo Moshi [An examination of the Chinese model of teacher education]. *Shehui Kexue Bao* [*Social Sciences Weekly*], February 7, *1349*, 5.

the 1990s. It critically investigates the rational, dynamic, and complex implementation process taking place at the micro-institutional level for the transformations of teacher education institutions (TEIs).

The volume first introduces the sociopolitical and cultural background of China's teacher education system and its challenges under the condition of globalization and illustrates major national initiatives for nurturing highly qualified teachers. It then explores the new identities of teachers in an era of enhanced professionalism, uncovers the ways they reflect China's new initiatives of teacher education reform, and distills the rationales behind these policies. This is followed by an analytic presentation of the findings of the case study of a provincial normal university, with a particular focus on such core pieces of the implementation jigsaw as policy flow, the dynamism of implementation, sociopolitical and cultural confluence, and institutional barriers in the complex process. Lastly, the book teases out key recommendations and implications for the studies of policy implementation from the China policy case and proposes a Chinese *Zhong-Yong* model of policy implementation, which sheds new light on implementation studies of teacher education reform in particular and policy studies more generally.

In China, there is a widely believed saying from 2000 years ago to the effect that "Stones from other hills may serve to polish the jade of this one" (*The Book of Poetry*, 2.3.10). This book is merely a tiny pebble garnered from China's policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s. I hope it will be helpful in polishing the jade elsewhere.

Education Policy Unit, University of Hong Kong   Jun Li (John Qi Lin Lee)
January 27, 2016

Acknowledgments

As I add the final touches to this manuscript, I feel all the more indebted to my family, mentors, colleagues, students, and friends who have encouraged and helped me in its long production. This monograph would not have been possible if it were not for their generous and continuous support over nearly a decade.

A deep bow goes to Professor Jing Lin, my advisor in the completion of my dissertation, from which this book has been developed. She has patiently helped this study not only with her constructive suggestions and informative understanding of the Chinese sociopolitical context but also with the significant time and energy she devoted to helping me finalize my dissertation at UMCP. Another deep bow goes to my other committee members, Professors Steven J. Klees, Hanne Mawhinney, Carol Anne Spreen, and Linda Valli, whose insightful suggestions helped me sharpen my focus and guided the conceptualization of this manuscript in its earlier stage. Meanwhile, I must thank very much the University of Maryland community, including Professors Robert Berdahl, Robert Croninger, Barbara Finkelstein, Sharon Fries-Britt, Dennis Herschbach, Meredith Honig, Francine Hultgren, Betty Malen, Jeffrey Milem, Carol Parham, Laura Perna, Jennifer Rice, Frank Schmidtlein, John Splaine, Judith Torney-Purta, Thomas Weible, and John Williams, as well as Mses. Clarissa Coughlin, Stephanie Goodwin, Lattisha Hall, and Jeanie Yerby, for daily opportunities of learning from or being kindly supported by them. I am particularly grateful to Professor Betty Malens for her two enlightening courses offered in 2003, i.e., Education Policy Analysis and Case Study Method, where this study has been unfolded. I must also thank very much the Harold. R. W. Benjamin National Memorial Fund Fellowship of the University of Maryland (2001–2003) and the Hong Kong Institute of Education Faculty Research Support Scheme (2008–2010), which made this study financially possible.

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in the field, he is more than a dear mentor to me, providing strong support for my academic career over many years, in addition to my intellectual work on this specific topic.

I am also deeply grateful to Professor Hidenori Fujita, the former dean of the Graduate School of Education at Tokyo University, with whom I worked on a comparative study of citizenship education in Japan and China for around 3 years from 1997 to 2001, sponsored by the *Asahi Shimbun* Foundation and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). It was he who opened the window for this research in December 2003, when he invited me to deliver a keynote speech at the International Conference on Teaching and Teacher Education in the Twenty-First Century, which was held at the International Christian University in Tokyo. I am also grateful to Professors Mark Bray, Kai-ming Cheng, Yue-ping Chung, Kwok-keung Lau, Leslie Nai-kwai Lo, and Mark Mason, who either gave me their professional advice or shared with me their experiences as senior researchers when I paid a special visit to Hong Kong in 2004 for the collection of related literature. I would like to thank Professor Mei Li, a former student of mine at ECNU, for her kind assistance. I would also like to thank Professor Xudong Zhu, a close colleague of mine at BNU, who has continuously provided his insightful comments and help for this research.

I am more than indebted to Professor Ruth Hayhoe, who is a blessing to my life and career. She encouraged me at the very beginning when I started to work on my research proposal on this topic and spared a lot of valuable time to carefully go through my proposal and send me three full pages of comment before I could move on in the summer of 2004. In the years since then, she has continuously supported my work on this topic in any possible ways she could. Shortly after having successfully defended my dissertation on November 16, 2006, I began to work as her postdoctoral fellow on a project entitled "China's Move to Mass Higher Education: Implications for Democratization and Global Cultural Dialogue" sponsored by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Over a decade, she has inspired me with a genuine heart and many ideas for my ongoing work on the topic, helping me to publish some parts of it on several occasions, in addition to assisting in the final preparation for the publication of the manuscript. Of the various efforts she gave in supporting me over so many years, the ways in which she encouraged my spiritual growth have been most important, making me strong enough to overcome all the challenges in my life and career development. She has set a perfect role model for my life and career. This manuscript could not have been eventually completed without her blessings, renowned figure as she is in comparative and Chinese studies in education, as well as my dear godmother.

My deep thanks go to all participants of this study, especially the 17 interviewees. They contributed to this book either by their consent to participating in my fieldwork or by other ways of facilitation. They helped this study obtain richer empirical data than would otherwise have been possible. Unfortunately, the ethical requirements of the research do not permit me to reveal their real names here, but my hearty appreciation to them must be expressed. My special thanks also go to Miss Jingwen

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I must acknowledge the permission from Taylor & Francis Ltd., on behalf of the Australian Teacher Education Association, which allows me to adapt some materials from my earlier journal article published by it (i.e., Li, 2013a). Meanwhile, the permission from Brill, Emerald, and Springer grants me to use some sources, respectively, from my earlier publications: Li (2012), Li and Lin (2008), and Hayhoe and Li (2010). I am also grateful that the Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong allows me to use a few texts from my journal article (Li, 2015b) published by its *International Journal of Comparative Education and Development*.

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January 27, 2016

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Acronyms

BNU	Beijing Normal University
CCE	The Central Council of Education
CES	The College of Educational Sciences
CPC	The Communist Party of China
CPCCC	The Communist Party of China Central Committee
CTE	The College of Teacher Education
DTE	The Department of Teacher Education
ECNU	East China Normal University
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GRP	Gross Regional Product
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICDE	The International Commission on the Development of Education
ILO	The International Labour Organization
MOE	The Ministry of Education
NCEE	The National College Entrance Examination
NCER	The National Council on Education Reform
NCRBE	The New Curriculum Reform for Basic Education
NEBPP	The National Evaluation of Baccalaureate Programs Project
NPC	The National People's Congress
OISE/UT	The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBE	The Provincial Bureau of Education
PISA	The Program for International Student Assessment
SCE	The State Commission of Education
TEI	Teacher Education Institution
WTO	The World Trade Organization
YNU	The Yangtze Normal University
YPBE	The Yangtze Provincial Bureau of Education

About the Author

Jun Li (**John Qi Lin Lee**) is Deputy Director and Associate Professor of the Education Policy Unit at the University of Hong Kong, Chairman of the Hong Kong Educational Research Association, and Past President of the Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong. He is a research fellow of the OECD Program for International Student Assessment Hong Kong Centre at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and of the Centre for Governance and Citizenship at the Education University of Hong Kong. He also serves as an associate editor of *Education Journal* and an editorial board member of *Chinese Education & Society* (Taylor & Francis), etc.

Having studied education since 1982, Dr Li was originally trained as a historian of Chinese education and later as a policy analyst of international education and development, each with a PhD. He has accumulated wide experiences in China, Canada, Japan, and the USA, in addition to Africa and Hong Kong. As Principal Investigator, Dr Li is currently leading two ear-marked research projects on "China-Africa University Partnerships in Education and Training: Students, Trainees, Teachers and Researchers" (The Research Grants Committee General Research Fund, Ref.: 842912H) and "World-Class Universities, Publication and Research Assessment: Rethinking the Mission of Higher Education in the Global Age" (The Research Development Fund of Worldwide Universities Networks, Ref.: 4930217). He has been also active in large-scale, international research projects, such as UNESCO and World Bank's System Assessment and Benchmarking for Education Results (SABER), UNESCO's Lifelong Learning and Employability: Analytic Research of Eight Countries and Regions in Asia and the Pacific, the IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study China Pilot, and the OECD Program for International Student Assessment (PISA Hong Kong).

Dr Li has extensively published since the late 1980s, with four single-authored academic books and over 80 journal articles, book chapters, and other articles in English, Chinese, and Japanese. In addition to this authored book on teacher education policy in China, his new publications include "The Chinese University 3.0 in a Global Age: History, Modernity and Future"; "The Chinese Model of Teacher Education: The Humanist Way for Chinese Learners, Teachers and Schools", both in

Chinese Education Models in a Global Age (Springer, 2016); "The Global Ranking Regime and the Reconfiguration of Higher Education: Comparative Case Studies on Research Assessment Exercises in China, Hong Kong and Japan" (accepted for publication by *Higher Education Policy*, 2016); and "Ideologies, Strategies and Higher Education Development: A Comparison of China's University Partnerships with the Soviet Union and Africa over Space and Time" (under review).

Chapter 1
Introduction

The Topic

The highest performance of Shanghai students in all domains of recent PISA results (OECD, 2013) has astonished the globe again. Although caution is needed in interpreting their excellent performance and they are by no means typical of students throughout all the regions of China, worldwide attention has been drawn to how Chinese learners are capable of achieving such a highly competitive edge over top students from the rest of the world. One of the key factors, as identified by Liu Jinghai, a well-known principal in Shanghai, rightly points out that the world-class teachers are the key to the success of Chinese students and education as well (OECD, 2012).

The term *world class* was originally used to describe those who are capable of performing at an internationally competitive athletic game, such as the Olympic Games or the FIFA World Cups. But it has been extended in recent decades to more broadly characterize anything that is first rate globally. While still vague and contested varying from one context to another, world class often refers to top quality with all the earmarks of excellence that are recognizable internationally, usually in the form of large-scale, benchmarked standards.

Although there is no precise and universally agreed definition of what a world-class teacher means, it is clear that almost every country in this world has endeavored to explore how to nurture a better teaching force. Since the 1990s, various national initiatives have been launched in China to nurture world-class teachers by reforming teacher education institutions (TEIs) into a world-class system, as also observable in many other contexts such as Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, South Africa, Singapore, the UK, and the USA (e.g., Akiba, 2013; Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012; Furlong, Cochran-Smith, & Brennan, 2009; Karras & Wolhuter, 2010; Morris & Williamson, 2000; Shin'ichi & Howe, 2010, etc.).

Although recent studies have emerged on China's reform of teacher education, the rationality, dynamism, and complexity of the implementation process in TEIs still remain mysterious. How have Chinese teachers been professionalized in ways that can make their students so competitive globally? What institutional transformations have taken place? How has the reform of TEIs shaped the daily work and life of teacher educators and their administrators? What are challenges arising from this process? And what are the lessons that can be learned from individual contexts in a global age? With these puzzles in mind, the core concern has been how China's TEIs have reshaped their institutional missions and strategies to respond to the national reform for a better teaching workforce.

With a case study method and a multiperspectival approach, this book aims at a pioneering, in-depth analysis of China's quest for world-class teachers by reforming its TEIs. It critically investigates the rational, dynamic, and complex implementation process taking place at the micro-institutional level in TEIs since the 1990s. It is the first study of its kind on this topic in recent decades. The volume first introduces the sociopolitical and cultural background of China's teacher education system and its new challenges under the condition of globalization and illustrates major national initiatives for nurturing world-class teachers. It then explores new teachers' identities in an era of professionalism, uncovers their impact on China's new initiatives of teacher education reform, and distills the rationales behind these policy actions. The book moves to an analytic presentation of the findings of the case study of a provincial normal university, with a particular focus on such core pieces of the implementation jigsaw as policy flow, the dynamism of implementation in complicated situations, culturally patterned behaviors, and institutional barriers in the complex process. Lastly, the book teases out key recommendations and implications for the studies of policy implementation from the China policy case and proposes a Chinese *Zhong-Yong* Model of policy implementation, which sheds new light on policy studies of teacher education reform in particular and public policy more generally.

What Is This Book About?

Implementation is part of policymaking (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984, pp. 196–218). Gerston (2004) holds that implementation is a "follow-through" component of the policymaking process and "represents the conscious conversion of policy plans into reality" (p. 94). In this sense, policy and implementation are inextricably an interwoven process by which policy goals are associated with policy outcomes.

Implementation studies are crucial to understanding the complex policy process. But they had not received much attention in policy analyses until *New Towns in Town* was published by Martha Derthick in 1972 and *Implementation* was published by Jeffrey L. Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky in 1973. According to Pressman and Wildavsky (1984), implementation studies require researchers to understand that

"apparently simple sequences of events depend on complex chains of reciprocal interaction" (p. xxv). Implementation studies have been a growing field ever since.

In China, in the intricate process of implementing the national policy of teacher education reform, higher TEIs have made tremendous efforts to meet the prescribed goals set by the national policy. These efforts include updating institutional visions and goals, developing initiatives for institutional transformations, upgrading educational programs and curricula, and adjusting policies for recruiting prospective students. Furthermore, higher TEIs have adopted major strategies and techniques, such as using official channels and alternative means to inform the public, with the lofty goal, outlined by the national policies, enhancing the implementation of the national reform. The process itself involves a large number of policy implementers and participants, such as the Communist Party of China (CPC) leaders, university presidents, deans, other administrators, faculties and students, policy researchers, and so forth.

This book looks into this rational, dynamic, and complex implementation process of China's policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s. It constructs a multiperspectival approach and employs a case study method to critically investigate and understand how a higher TEI has responded to the national teacher education reform. The study critically problematizes the China policy case, with a particular focus on such core pieces of the implementation jigsaw as policy flow, the dynamism of implementation, sociopolitical and cultural confluence, and institutional barriers in the complex process. The book serves as a pioneering, exploratory and explanatory instrument to examine how China's policy of teacher education reform has been implemented in a higher TEI, as well as who plays what at the micro-institutional level, and to reveal the unique policy implications derived from the Chinese experiences.

Research Questions

This book adopts John Creswell's model by which the entire study is reduced to a single, overarching question and several sub-questions (Creswell, 1998, pp. 99–105). The central concern of the study is:

How have TEIs implemented China's policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s?

This central question is divided into several, topic-oriented sub-questions. Stake (1995) articulates that topic-oriented questions call for needed information in order to describe the case (Stake, 1995, p. 25), i.e., helping direct research attention and guide investigation units. In this book, the following six sub-questions help look for clues and needed information to answer the central question. As listed in the following, they explain specifically what this volume attempts to explore and interpret (Maxwell, 1996, p. 51):

1. What initiatives have been put forward in China's policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s and what is their institutional, sociopolitical, and cultural context?

   (a) What is the institutional and sociopolitical context of China's policy of teacher education reform?
   (b) What are China's national policies of teacher education reform since the 1990s?
   (c) How have the major policy documents identified policy rationales, problems, and goals, and how do they offer guidelines and strategies to achieve the purposed goals?

2. How is the national policy of teacher education reform perceived and interpreted respectively by implementers and participants at the micro-institutional level?

   (a) How are teachers' new identities, as defined by the national policies, generally perceived and interpreted by local implementers and participants?
   (b) How is the policy generally perceived and interpreted by local implementers and participants?

3. How have TEIs reshaped their institutional visions and strategies to respond to the national reform?

   (a) How are the institutional missions reshaped by TEIs to respond to the national reform?
   (b) What are the institutional strategies made by TEIs to respond to the national reform?

4. How have local policy players been involved in the implementation process of the national policy?

   (a) How has the national policy been channeled to local policy players?
   (b) How have local implementers and participants played their corresponding roles in the implementation process?

5. What institutional changes have taken place due to the implementation of the national policy? How are these implementation outcomes evaluated? And what are the major problems and challenges perceived?

   (a) How are the institutional changes perceived by stakeholders?
   (b) How are the outcomes of the implementation evaluated?
   (c) What are the problems and challenges in the implementation process and how are they addressed by TEIs?

6. What are possible implications learned from the Chinese model of policy implementation?

The dynamic implementation process of China's policy of teacher education reform is conceived metaphorically by this study as a complex jigsaw puzzle. Normally, a jigsaw requires hard efforts to interlock and tessellate hundreds of oddly

shaped pieces into a full picture. The central and sub-questions listed above serve as key pieces or clues – visible or invisible – for the successful assembly of the implementation jigsaw of China's policy of teacher education reform.

Significance of the Study

This study has multiple contributions to the field. First, the existing literature on the studies of China's teacher education reform shows that the policy community in China has paid little attention to the implementation process. This is particularly true at the micro-institutional level of teacher education reform. The dearth of implementation studies on related themes poses great challenges for this study, but it also makes this study a pioneering project, which explores alternative perspectives and theoretical groundings, and serves as the first attempt to open the "black box" of the implementation process of teacher education reform in the Chinese context (Palumbo & Calista, 1990, pp. 3–17; Jenkins, 1978, p. 23).

Secondly, Majone and Wildavsky (1979) argued that implementation studies are able to identify constraints "hidden" in the planning stage of policymaking (p. 166) and disputed that implementation only "translates a policy mandate into action" (p. 167). In other words, implementation is "the continuation of politics by other means" (1979, p. 175). From this perspective, an implementation study is able to function as an instrument to identify hidden policy problems neglected by policymakers in the planning stage. As a result, this study serves as a tool to identify possible hidden policy problems which were not initially laid out by Chinese policymakers and provides recommendations for future policy actions.

Thirdly, researchers in the field of implementation have paid some adequate attention to environmental conditions, such as socioeconomic and political factors (e.g., Van Meter & Van Horn 1975), but culture as a key factor has been almost neglected, if not completely missing, from the literature of policy studies. It must be noted that culture, as a "collective programming" mechanism (Hofstede, 2001, p. 9; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010, p. 6) or "socially learned knowledge" and patterned behaviors (Peoples & Bailey, 2015, pp. 21–30), has played a key part in the rationality, dynamism, and complexity of implementation process. Beyond the empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks on which Western policy analysis heavily relies, this study offers an East Asian lens rooted deeply in traditional Chinese culture. China has historically had a so-called hierarchical officialdom, or official-centered bureaucracy, coupled with a culture of authoritarianism and a centralized administrative system over thousands of years. One of the major tasks of this study is to uncover how Chinese culture may have played a determining role in the implementation process of the national policy of teacher education reform.

Last but not least, as Latin American scholarship has contributed dependency theory and Freirean critical theories for educational changes (So, 1990, pp. 91–109; Freire, 1998, 2003), this study constructs and employs the bricolage of the multiperspectival approach and provides an East Asian perspective on policy studies,

seeking policy insights and practices from the margins of the global reality of education and schooling that have been too long dominated by Western mentalities (Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011). As confirmed by Liu (2011), Asian perspectives provide "the possibility of epistemological breakthroughs" that can be translated into concrete practices of social theories (p. 224). The unique findings, critical reflections, and valuable experiences drawn from the China policy case help dismantle the hegemonic dominance of Western scholarship in this area and shed new light on implementation studies, as well as on alternative ways of preparing world-class educators through policy actions for the excellence of teacher education system in a global age.

Key Terms

Implementation is part of public policymaking (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984, pp. 196–218) and is often viewed by policy researchers as an interactive process. For example, Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) define implementation as "a process of interaction between the setting of goals and the actions geared to achieving them" (p. xxiii). Gerston (2004) holds that implementation is a "follow-through" component of the policymaking process and "represents the conscious conversion of policy plans into reality" (p. 94). In this sense, policymaking and implementation are a closely interwoven process by which policy goals are associated with policy outcomes, responding to environmental changes but being confined by contextual factors.

Public policy can be simply defined as "whatever governments choose to do or not to do" (Dye, 2013, p. 3). Generally, the term refers to a "purposive course of action or interaction" (Anderson, 2011, p. 6), which is often advanced or authorized by higher institutional levels of a policy system in pursuit of influencing or not influencing lower levels or units of the system. In this sense, it can be viewed as "the dynamic and value-laden process through which a political system handles a public problem," and it "includes a government's expressed intentions and official enactments, as well as its consistent patterns of activity and inactivity" (Fowler, 2013, p. 5).

Policy analysis is often seen as "an applied social science discipline that employs multiple methods of inquiry, in contexts of argumentation and public debate, to create, critically assess, and communicate policy-relevant knowledge" (Dunn, 1994, pp. xiii–xiv). Generally, policy analysis involves "a rigorous search for the causes and consequences of public policies" (Dye, 2013, p. 9). Simply put, it is the study of who gets what, when, and how (Lasswell, 1950).

Research perspective is a comprehensive, theoretical way of disciplinary inquiry based on one or more epistemological assumptions. For policy analysis, it is normally interchangeable with research framework, which is "a simplified representation" of some aspects of the real world (Dye, 2013, p. 15), guided by certain epistemological paradigm for policy studies. As policy analysis is seriously

complicated by social issues and their contexts, institutionally and societally, a research perspective can be further entangled, diversified and problematized. For example, Lester and Stewart (2000) lay out an array of nine specific research frameworks for policy analyses (pp. 36–42). These research perspectives are sometimes independent, but most of the time they may also overlap with each other.

Case study is widely accepted as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (Yin, 2014, p. 16). Yin categorizes case studies into explanatory, descriptive, and exploratory inquiries (Yin, 2014, pp. 6–9; p. 238). This case study is a combination of the three inquiries, as it aims to understand in great depth what and how a TEI has implemented the national teacher education reform in China since the 1990s, which has never been explored empirically and systematically before.

Teacher education generally denotes two major forms of education, i.e., preservice preparation for those who plan to enter the teaching profession and in-service professional development for those who are already working in the field. In China, preservice teacher education is provided by 2–3-year normal schools, 3–4-year normal universities, or 2–3-year normal colleges. In-service teacher education is provided by 2-year teachers' schools, 2–3-year normal professional colleges, 2–3-year regional or provincial colleges of education, or Internet teachers colleges. Teacher education programs usually include studies for qualification and certification, respectively, at the levels of undergraduate studies and graduate studies.

Normal universities are the most common form of higher TEIs in mainland China, as well as in Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, and some other East Asian societies. In mainland China, all normal universities, including key national and provincial ones, are publicly funded.[1] Because provincial normal universities enroll the largest body of student-teachers nationally, they are the focus of this study.

Yangtze Normal University (*YNU*) is a key provincial normal university selected as the case for this study. It is the largest university in the province of Yangtze for teacher education. For the purposes of protecting the identity of the case and the site, Yangtze is used as a pseudonym for the school and the province throughout the book.

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[1]China has several specialized systems of HEIs, e.g., separately for teacher education, language education, agriculture education, medicine education, ocean education, forests education, geoscience education, and military education, continued from the Soviet model of specialism. TEIs were among those that used to offer free admissions to students. The free admission policy had been implemented by the Chinese government over decades by 1997, because not many students were keen to be admitted to TEIs, unless their tuition was subsidized. After 10 years' fee-charging policy, the Chinese government has restored the original free-lunch policy since 2007 to encourage teacher-students (The State Council, 2007, May 9), as the country needs a stable supply of teachers educated by TEIs for socioeconomic development.

The Structure of the Book

The main body of this volume is structured with ten chapters. Chapter 1 offers an overview of the purpose and significance of the study and its central and topic-oriented sub-questions. It also defines the working terms used throughout the book and its structure.

Chapter 2 begins with a brief introduction to China's sociopolitical and cultural settings, i.e., sociopolitical context and educational legacy. It then outlines the modern history of China's teacher education system by reviewing its four distinct stages of development. Current provisions, latest trends, and recent policy efforts for teacher education are also systematically documented.

Chapter 3 introduces China's policy actions for world-class teachers by first sketching out the policy context for the reform of teacher education, that is, the New Curriculum Reform for Basic Education (NCRBE) and the higher education expansion. Major initiatives of the teacher education reform are described in great details, with their key policy documents, rationales for reform, policy goals and guidelines, as well as tasks and strategies. Finally, studies on the national reform of teacher education are reviewed, concluding of a clear dearth of implementation studies on the national reform and hence the need for this study.

Chapter 4 reviews relevant literature on the new identities of teachers and the worldwide trends in teacher professionalization and teacher education reform in a global age. It gives a comprehensive understanding of how the new identities of teachers and the teaching profession are defined by theorists from various perspectives and provides an institutional background to understand how teacher education reform has been developed in varied settings in similar and dissimilar ways. This chapter also explains why Chinese policymakers have responded to the new teacher identities and to the worldwide call for teacher education reform and how they have attempted to integrate the international experiences into the Chinese context for the quest for world-class teachers.

Chapter 5 explores various theoretical perspectives as the general guidance for policy studies, with both the rational and critical perspectives identified and the multiperspectival approach as the bricolage for this study. It introduces an analytic model as the operational instrument with six variables for data collection, analysis, and the presentation of findings. The chapter elaborates on how the operational analytic model is selected and how it may guide this book to pinpoint the key units of data collection and analysis for the practical operation of the study.

Chapter 6 presents reasons as to why the case study approach was used and how it was employed for the fieldwork. It explains how the single case, i.e., YNU, was selected and accessed and how participants of this study were identified, following the strict requirements of qualitative research. Moreover, it addresses the process of data collection and an approach to analysis that is both valid and ethical. The other half of the chapter sketches YNU's history and institutional development and portrays the organizational settings as well as its College of Educational Sciences (CES). The relationships the university had with the central and local

governments are detailed. The brief introduction of YNU provides a comprehensive understanding of what a typical TEI looks like in the policy context of China.

Chapter 7 examines how China's national teacher education reform was channeled from the macro national level to YNU's micro-institutional level and how the institutional goals were reoriented to meet the mandate of the national teacher education reform. It begins with an introduction to how YNU's administrative system worked and then looks into how it functioned in a top-down, linear policy flow in the implementation process. It further describes how the university employed its official communication system to ensure the success of the policy delivery and how YNU's mission deviated from the purported policy goals of the teacher education reform.

Chapter 8 probes into the dynamic process of implementing the national teacher education reform at YNU. It presents how YNU's various stakeholders have involved themselves and participated in the implementation process in many ways. It also details the implementation strategies and actions that YNU has taken and how these strategies and actions have changed YNU's social status and public image. In addition, it investigates how the implementation outcomes were evaluated officially and individually.

Chapter 9 examines the major sociopolitical and cultural factors that came together to affect YNU's implementation outcomes. The unfavorable institutional barriers in the implementation process include the university leaders' weak awareness of the national reform, the decline of teaching quality, the problems arising from the patterns of hierarchical officialdom, and the economic and political conflicts that emerged at YNU. In addition, the National Evaluation of Baccalaureate Programs Project (NEBPP), the higher education expansion, and the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) are analyzed as institutional confluence that has affected YNU's success and failure in the implementation process. Therefore, these factors explain the inconsistent implementation outcomes of the national reform.

Chapter 10, the final chapter, critically revisits the six research questions and reflects upon the findings of this study based on the multiperspectival approach constructed. When the research questions are reviewed at the beginning of this chapter, the rational and critical perspectives highlight dissimilar interpretations to explain the rationality, dynamism, and complexity of YNU's implementation jigsaw in relation to the national policy of teacher education reform. The contrasting power and limitations of the two frameworks and the operational analytic model are reexamined with the cultural factors. With the reflections on these valuable Chinese experiences, key recommendations and implications are proposed for policy studies. In the final remarks, the chapter constructs the Chinese *Zhong-Yong* Model of policy implementation, which is characterized by moderation, propriety, and decency centered in benevolence and without extremism. There is a rationality, normality, and practicality that is based on these Confucian doctrines. Finally, the book concludes that the Chinese *Zhong-Yong* Model of policy implementation and the implications revealed by this study shed new light on policy studies of teacher education reform

in particular and public policy actions more generally. The Chinese experiences of policy implementation may be transferrable to other sociopolitical contexts seeking to nurture world-class teachers and achieve educational excellence in a global age.

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Chapter 2
The Context of Teacher Education Reform in China: A Comprehensive Review

This chapter introduces the sociopolitical and historical context of China's teacher education system and outlines its rich educational legacy and developmental trajectory in different stages. It also provides an overview of current provisions for teacher education and policy efforts made by the Chinese government in recent decades.

The Sociopolitical Context

The Political Power Structure

China has a tradition of heavily centralized governance for more than 2000 years, and the People's Republic of China, which was founded in 1949 when the CPC took over the political power, has continued this pattern. The CPC has been China's sole political party in power ever since 1949. Under the Constitution amended in 1999, the socialist political system led by the CPC has remained the basic political system of China.

The CPC is a unified political party organized according to its constitution and the principle of democratic centralism. At the top are the Political Bureau and its Standing Committee which are elected by the plenary session of the CPC Central Committee (CPCCC). The Political Bureau and its Standing Committee exercise the power of the CPCCC and lead the National Congress of the CPC. At the local level are CPC branches and subunits all over the country. The CPC has various agencies located throughout the country within central and local governments as well as all governmental institutions and enterprises. Put in other words, all roads in the country lead to the CPC. If someone goes anywhere in China, even far in remote areas – a small village or residential neighborhood – there is a CPC unit,

called *Jiedao Dangzhibu* in towns or *Cun Dangzhibu* in villages. These units report and are responsible directly to their higher CPC units.

The CPC's leadership over the country is mainly political, ideological, and institutional (the CPC, n.d.), as reflected in the following five functions:

1. To organize and exercise leadership over the country's legislative and law enforcement activities
2. To maintain leadership over the armed forces
3. To provide leadership and manage the work of officials
4. To organize and mobilize society
5. To give importance to ideological and political work (Source: http://cpc.people.com.cn)

According to China's Constitution, the National People's Congress (NPC) and its provincial and local congresses form the fundamental governmental system for the exercise of state power in China. They are established mainly by selections at different levels, responsible to and supervised by the people, at least on paper. All the ethnic minorities in China are entitled to appropriate representation. The NPC is legitimately viewed as the highest organ of state power. It should be noted, however, that the NPC is politically controlled and manipulated by the CPC. For a long time, it has been viewed as merely a rubber stamp. But in recent years, its capacity to function has increased, as representatives from all levels have become more vocal and independent in their decision-making. Many representatives not only criticize government policies but cast negative votes as well in some cases.

Local people's congresses are branches of state power. State administrative, judicial, and procuratorial agencies are created by, responsible to, and supervised by the people's congresses. The NPC exercises the following functions and powers:

1. To amend the Constitution and oversee its enforcement
2. To enact and amend basic laws governing criminal offenses, civil affairs, state organs, and other matters
3. To elect and appoint members to central state organs
4. To determine major state issues (Source: http://www.npc.gov.cn)

The administrative system in China is shaped by a series of regulations with regard to the composition, system, power, and activities of the state administrative organizations. The State Council is the highest executive agency of the state administration. Its main responsibilities are to carry out the principles and policies of the CPC as well as the regulations and laws adopted by the NPC, and it deals with such affairs as China's internal politics, diplomacy, national defense, finance, economy, culture, and education. Under the current Constitution, the State Council exercises the power of administrative regulation and leadership, submission of proposals, economic management, diplomatic and domestic administration, and other powers granted by the CPC, the NPC, and their standing committees. The State Council exercises unified leadership over state administrative agencies at various levels throughout the country, and it regulates their specific division of power and function at the central level, provincial level, autonomous regional level, and municipal level.

Fig. 2.1 The simplified political system of China (Adapted from the Central People's Government of China Web Portal: http://www.gov.cn)

The State Council is composed of the premier, vice premiers, ministers in charge of ministries, ministers in charge of commissions, the auditor-general, and the secretary-general. Ministries, commissions, the People's Bank of China, and administrations are departments that make up the State Council. The Ministry of Education (MOE), which had been called the State Commission of Education (SCE) for some years by 1998, is one of the State Council's administrative units responsible for national educational undertakings and language work.[1]

China's consolidated political system is characterized by a one-way, hierarchical flow of power, often in a top-down model. Government policies usually move asymmetrically from the top or upper level to the bottom or lower level and from the national or central level to the regional or local level. The CPCCC, the NPC, and the State Council are the three top, most powerful governmental institutions, as shown in Fig. 2.1. Among them it is the CPCCC that serves as the core in terms of political leadership and policymaking body at the national level, while the State Council is the major administrative actor for the implementation of policies made or approved by the CPCCC. In many cases, the State Council also makes administrative decisions on its own, but anything important must first have the approval from the CPCCC before being carried out.

Integrated within the polity, China's economy had been regulated by a central planning system until the late 1970s. Since 1984, national policy actions have called for the decentralization of economic planning and for increased reliance on the participation of market forces in economic activities. The economy expanded radically during the early 1990s as the government continued to ease its controls. As a corollary, the rapid economic growth was also spurred by the widespread marketization, commercialization, and privatization of education at all levels and by China's becoming a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. Today, China continues to be in the midst of economic transition from a central planning system to a free market system, though "many of the main drivers of the Chinese economy remain in state hands" (Aldonas, 2003, October 1, p. 45). Thanks to such a transition, China has been optimistically estimated as the largest economy in the world since 2014 (Ohlin, 2014, September 28).

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[1]For more information about China's political system, please refer to Yin, Z. Q. (2004) and Dreyer, J. R. (2005).

A Centralized Administrative System for Education

The administration of education in China used to be highly and rigidly centralized during the Mao era (1949–1976), like that in all other public sectors. In the post-Mao era especially since the late 1980s, the decentralization and deregulation of the central government, along with the adoption of an open door policy toward marketization and globalization for economic development, have opened up opportunities for various education reform initiatives. However, the system for education has remained highly centralized despite the fact that local governments and schools are enjoying more freedom from the CPC's central control (Li, 2009a).

Teacher education in China is embedded within this centralized system with no exception. The Department of Teacher Education (DTE), one of MOE's subunits, routinely administers, supervises, and governs teacher education at the national level and monitors the sector at the regional, provincial, and local levels. Many national policies for teacher education are initiated, developed, and implemented by the DTE, but some critical national policies, such as the expansion of TEIs and the restructuring of teacher education systems, are initiated and approved at the ministerial level. Similarly, each province, autonomous region, or municipality directly under the central government has a Bureau of Education, responsible for governing its teacher education.

The Educational Legacy

In addition to the long tradition of central governance in China, the country also has a rich heritage of education and schooling over 2000 years,[2] and one of its most deep-rooted normative values is the belief in education and learning as a major instrument for achieving the highest good for both individuals and society (Hayhoe & Li, 2010).

Education as the Highest Good

The purpose of education and learning was defined as "to let one's inborn virtue shine forth, to renew the people, and to rest in the highest good,"[3] as stated in

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[2]Please see Li, J. (1998). *Jiaoyuxue Zhi* [*A history of Chinese thought on education*]. Shanghai, China: Shanghai People's Press.

[3]The translation of Chinese classics hereafter is mainly mine, adapted from various versions of translation. Here is adapted from the following reference: Chai, C. and Chai, W. (1965, trans. & eds.). *The humanist way in ancient China*: *Essential works of Confucianism*. New York: Bantam Books, Inc.

Daxue (*The Great Learning*, 1.1), showing a harmonious integration between the individual good and the benefit of society (Lee, 2000, pp.10–11). Education and learning were thus the first priority in major political agendas, as made explicit in *Xueji* (*The Theory of Education*), a short essay of *Liji* (*The Book of Rites*) in *Wujing* (*The Five Classics*).[4]

This belief in the importance of education and learning has been deeply imbedded in Chinese culture over the past 2000 years and is still widely embraced by Chinese political leaders, educators, learners, and their parents, in addition to the general public. Education has also been seen as a private good, in the sense that it provided individuals with a competitive advantage in the struggle for desirable social positions. Thus the Imperial Civil Service Examination System (*Keju*) made it possible, in theory at least, for any young man who mastered the Confucian classics to a high enough level to become a scholar-official.

Teachers as Respected Cultural Symbols

Concomitant with the importance given to education in traditional Chinese society, teachers were usually given the most respected sociopolitical status. In fact, they were important cultural symbols in ancient China, while at the same time there were very high expectations of their roles. Xun Zi (313–238 BCE), a Confucian philosopher and reformer in the third century BCE, was the first to theorize the professional role of the teacher in Chinese history. He viewed teachers as on the same level as sovereigns and made the point that teachers must be respected if the nation was to rise (Knoblock, 1994, p. 231). Later in the Tang Dynasty, Han Yu (768–824 CE) depicted the responsibility of the teacher as encompassing the following threefold roles – transmitting moral values and principles (*Chuandao*), delivering knowledge and skills (*Shouye*), and solving the puzzles that arise in learning (*Jiehuo*). Lee (2000) observes that "the Chinese people have since cherished this dictum as the best characterization of a model teacher" (p. 258). The concept of the teacher as knowledge transmitter, role model, and puzzle solver is deeply rooted in Chinese culture.

Probably the most influential role definition of the teacher in ancient China is seen in the picture of Confucius (551–479 BCE) that emerged from his dialogues with his disciples in *Lunyu* (*The Analects*). Here he emphasized both a sound grasp of knowledge and openness to new ideas: "Reviewing the old as a means of realizing the new – such a person can be considered a teacher" (*The Analects*, n.d., 2.11). He also demonstrated that teaching and learning is an interactive process, with teachers

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[4]Please see Gao, S. L. (2005). *Xueji yanjiu* [*A study of Xueji*]. Beijing: People's Education Press; Gao, S. L. (1982). *Xueji pingzhu* [*An annotation of Xueji*]. Beijing: People's Education Press; and Xu, D., & McEwan, H. (2016). *Universal principles for teaching and learning*: *Xue Ji in the 21st century*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

playing key roles as co-learners, cheerleaders, mentors, and role models of integrity: "To quietly persevere in storing up what is learned, to continue studying without respite, to instruct others without growing weary – is not this me?" (*The Analects*, n.d., 7.2)

Later, *Xueji* has a summative explanation of all that is involved in becoming a *good* and *effective* teacher, as explained in the following depiction of "Four Successes" and "Six Failures" in heuristic teaching:

> The ways of higher education are as follows: to suppress what has not yet emerged is called *prevention*; to present what is opportune is called *timeliness*; not to transgress what is proper is called *conformity*; to observe each other and follow what is good is called *imitation*. These four things are accountable for the success of teaching.
>
> On the other hand, to suppress what has broken out will arouse opposition which cannot be overcome; to study what is not opportune calls for bitter efforts which hardly bring about any outcome; to teach what is improper will result in confusion not cultivation; to study alone without co-learners will lead to ignorance; to feast with friends in defiance of teachers and to associate with evil companions is to the detriment of study. These six things are accountable for the failure of teaching.
>
> Having understood the causes of the success of teaching, as well as the causes of its failure, a gentleman is qualified to be a teacher. Therefore the gentleman in his teaching relies on enlightening. He guides but does not drag; he encourages but does not push; he opens the way but does not supersede . . . .
>
> Having understood what is difficult and what is easy in learning, as well as what is the difference of potential and capacities, a gentleman is then able to teach heuristically. When he can teach in this way, he is then qualified to become a master.[5]
>
> *Xueji*, Chapters 11, 12, 13 and 16

The authors of *Xueji* clearly indicated that a scholar who is only able to memorize what he has learned is by no means qualified to be a genuine teacher. A true teacher must be someone knowledgeable who is a gentleperson (or a *good* person) and is dexterous at enlightening students. It is in this cultural sense that teachers have historically become widely respected cultural symbols, whom have been venerated with the highest sociopolitical status, the same as that of a king in ancient China.

The Rich Tradition of Public Higher Education

Similarly, China has a rich historical tradition of higher education, e.g., the Chinese University 1.0 and Chinese University 2.0, which is now evolving into the emerging Chinese University 3.0 (Li, 2016c). Here the main features of the Chinese University 1.0, i.e., the imperial universities, will be introduced in the public sphere, as well as the *Shuyuan* (academies) in the private sphere, in order to reflect on their

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[5]Please refer to Chai, C. and Chai, W. (1965, trans. & eds.). *The humanist way in ancient China: essential works of Confucianism*. New York: Bantam Books, Inc., p. 347. Also refer to: Gao, S. L. (2005). *Xuji yanjiu* [*A study of Xueji*]. Beijing: People's Education Press; and Gao, S. L. (1982). *Xuji pingzhu* [*An Annotation of Xueji*]. Beijing: People's Education Press. The English translations here are adjusted and re-written by me.

implications for China's teacher education. *Taixue*, the first imperial institution of higher learning, was established during the Western Han Dynasty in 124 BCE and continued as an important part of the imperial government through changing dynasties up to the last one, the Qing Dynasty (1644–1912). The purpose was to prepare scholar-officials, and the selection of teachers and students was thus serious, competitive, and rigorous.

At the very beginning, a recommendation system was used, with teachers for the *Taixue*, called *Boshi* (literally "scholars of extensive learning"), initially selected by local officials, then recommended by ministers, and finally approved by the emperor himself. In the Eastern Han Dynasty (25–220 CE), an examination system was initiated and used alongside the recommendation system. This was later developed into the *Keju* system, which was formally established during the Sui Dynasty in 606 CE. Thereafter, these examinations became the only way in which talented people could become teachers in the imperial institutions of higher learning or officials serving in other roles within the government.

The imperial higher learning institutions set up an institutionalized administrative system and regulations for student recruitment, the academic calendar, examinations, and codes of conduct (Sun, 2009, pp. 160–167). There were also firm moral requirements for teachers and students, based on the core Confucian value of benevolence, which Confucius explained could be reached through five essentials: respectfulness, tolerance, trustworthiness, diligence, and generosity (*Analects*, 17.6). These moral values were taken as fundamental requirements in selecting teachers and students.

While the imperial higher learning institutions were a part of China's state system, so had little autonomy, there was considerable intellectual freedom. At least there were lively debates among different schools of Confucianism and the acceptance of diverse approaches to teaching. The ancient text (*Guwen*) and contemporary text (*Jinwen*) schools of Confucianism employed different paradigms, original texts, and research methods. While the contemporary text school was the dominant one, and most teachers had that background, the ancient text school won a seat for teaching in the *Taixue* toward the end of the Western Han Dynasty, after a long struggle. The *Taixue* was thus open to different schools of Confucianism, and both the content and method of teaching varied with different teachers.

The Intellectual Heritage of the Shuyuan

China also had a long history of private higher education (*Sixue*), going back to the sixth century BCE. During the Warring States period (475–221 BCE), *Sixue* was so widespread that many states saw it as a key strategy for attracting talented people for political purposes (Li, 1991a, 1991b). A striking example is the Jixia Academy, established by Duke Huan Tianwu (400–357 BCE) in the State of Qi in the third century BCE. At one time, it had a population of more than 10,000 students and teachers. While it was an imperial higher institution, it was effectively private

and provided space for many different schools to debate with and learn from each other, without any intervention from state. It was self-governed, with teachers and students who adhered respectively to Confucianism, Taoism, the Huanglao School, the Yinyang School, and others. Students and teachers came and went as they pleased, and the teaching was open to all, regardless of their academic background. Regular fora were held where teachers and students of different schools could debate with each other or hold discussions (Hartnett, 2011; Li, 1988).

Shuyuan first appeared in the eighth century CE during the later Tang Dynasty, and they are often seen as inheritors of the spirit of the Jixia Academy. They were set up by scholars to provide a remote learning environment where students could engage in study and contemplation without distraction. They were often in remote mountain areas, and some developed in association with Buddhist temples or monasteries. By the early Song Dynasty, *Shuyuan* had become very popular, as a welcome alternative to the restricted opportunities for higher learning in the formal imperial system (Sun, 2009, pp. 214–219).

Shuyuan had a rich, intellectual legacy of teaching and learning, which was developed from such ancient private institutions as the Jixia Academy and from the influences of Buddhist education. Over its 1200 years of history, the *Shuyuan* accumulated significant experience in the following areas: organizational governance, methods of creating and selecting teaching content and approaches, ways of integrating knowledge and practice, and a unique style of relationship between students and teachers.

While some *Shuyuan* looked to local governments or the central imperial government for support, both financially and politically, many found their own funding through the ownership of land or through donations. This made possible a high degree of independence and a democratic approach to self-governance.

The second important feature of the *Shuyuan* was its autonomy in generating new knowledge and in selecting teaching content and approaches, which reflected its relative freedom in teaching and research. One of the significant roles of the master of a *Shuyuan* was to develop new teaching content which was influential in attracting students and in raising its public image. For example, the White Deer Grotto Academy (*Bailudong Shuyuan*) was revived when Zhu Xi (1130–1200) became its master in 1179 CE. He reexamined *The Five Classics* of Confucianism and annotated and put together *The Four Books*. His *Selected Commentaries on the Four Books* became the major teaching content of the White Deer Academy. Later it was selected as the basic teaching content for the imperial universities and for preparation for the *Keju* over many centuries.

In order to create a free academic environment, the *Shuyuan* used the approach of organizing fora, called *Jianghui*, where one or several keynote speakers were invited from other *Shuyuans*, to introduce new ideas. In many cases, this was a monthly event, and it encouraged lively debates among scholars adhering to different schools of knowledge. It was an event open to everyone in the community and not limited to the students and teachers associated with the *Shuyuan* itself. While women studied mainly within the family and were not allowed to become formal students of the *Shuyuans*, these were occasions which they also could attend.

A third feature of the *Shuyuan* was its emphasis on the integration of knowledge and practice (Li, 2016c). In the guidelines for the White Deer Grotto Academy, Zhu Xi reiterated the point that the purpose of learning is for practice, not a matter of knowledge for its own sake. In this he reflected the famous opening lines of Confucius in *The Analects*, "Isn't it a pleasure to practice what you have learned after due intervals?" (1:1). Learning and practice are seen as one integrated process, and Zhu Xi urged both teachers and students of the academy to integrate Confucian human relationships into daily life in the neighborhood, the local community, and the wider society. Perhaps the most famous example of knowledge and action is the Donglin Shuyuan under its master, Gu Xiancheng (1550–1612). Gu's research and teaching focused intensely on contemporary political issues and social development, and he attracted students from all over the country, who wished to emulate his approach to putting knowledge into immediate political action (Dardess, 2002; Mote, 1999, pp. 736–737; Sun, 2009, pp. 251–253).

Finally, the relationship between students and teachers was one of close connection and deep mutual commitment in the community of a *Shuyuan*. Traditionally, the master-disciple relationships in China resembled that of parents and children in families, based on the Confucian rituals. To commit oneself to students is an essential requirement of every teacher. On the other hand, to be respectful to one's teacher is a first step in learning and moral discipline.

In the *Shuyuan*, teachers and students usually met for purely academic or occupational interests, rather than practical purposes related to career advancement. In addition, teacher-student relationships tended to be relatively more equal, compared with the situation in imperial institutions. More importantly, teaching and learning was usually one lifelong process, which involved close communications on a regular basis. The teacher-student relationship became one of tangible caring, sharing, and responsibility to each other. This was particularly true in history when difficult times came.

Historical Influence on Teacher Education

The legacy of educational tradition has shaped and reshaped China's teacher education reform in fundamental ways (Li, 2016a). Suffice it to say that China has a remarkable tradition of education as the core integrative field of higher learning, with an open tradition in which Confucianism was enriched and transformed over time (Li, 2009b; Li & Hayhoe, 2012). It has been a tradition that emphasizes the practical application of knowledge and sees responsible action for the social good as the main test of valid knowledge, rather than logic and theoretical proof, as in the Western tradition. It has also been a reflective tradition that continuously speculated on the successes and failures of learning, teaching, and schooling and distilled these valuable experiences into various educational theories which still provide powerful normative frameworks for the practices of modern schooling and teacher education.

Most importantly, the Chinese heritage of education over thousands of years makes it clear that the role of the teacher combines that of knowledgeable scholar, artistic and caring professional, and responsible public intellectual and that education is always a priority, both for individual cultivation and for national strengthening and societal development.

To ensure this priority, the teaching profession has been always seen as the cornerstone to providing educational service for both the public and the private good. The education and development of teaching professionals is commonly recognized as the key to the success of basic education and student learning. Thus it is not surprising that the concept of a "university of education" first emerged in Confucian heritage societies, such as Hong Kong, Japan, and Korea, and that the idea of the normal university, first developed in France after the French Revolution, has taken deep root in Chinese soil. While the university of education is somewhat limited by its historical roots in the normal college, the idea of the normal university embraces all the strengths of the basic disciplines in the sciences and humanities found in the comprehensive university, while giving education a core responsibility for integrating each field of specialist knowledge into the broader field of education, with its moral, intellectual, aesthetic, and emotional dimensions (Hayhoe, 2015; Hayhoe & Li, 2010).

A Brief History of China's Modern Teacher Education

The term teacher education is traditionally *Shifan Jiaoyu* in Chinese language. Literally, *Shifan* means the teacher as a role model and is often used as the Chinese translation for the English word "normal," which is originally from the French "normale"; *Jiaoyu* carries the meaning of educating and nurturing. Both *Shifan* and *Jiaoyu* are neologisms of the 1890s, borrowed from Japanese. Since the late 1990s, the traditional term *Shifan Jiaoyu* has been gradually replaced by *Jiaoshi Jiaoyu*, literally "teacher education." Although China has a long tradition of respecting teachers and attaching importance to education, there was no professional training system for teachers until the late 1890s.

Establishment (1897–1911)

Unlike the Western tradition, where teacher education schools were initially set up for religious purposes, the Chinese system was established for political purposes, based on the Confucian tradition that teachers are always the foundation of education for individual and societal development. The prosperity of the Qing Empire had waned steadily during the early nineteenth century and continued to decline subsequently due to serious internal problems, such as bad harvests, natural disasters, overpopulation, government corruption, social unrest, and the

increasing inroads of foreign imperialism. It was weakened by the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864), the Boxer Uprising (1900), as well as military defeats in the wars with Britain (1842 and 1864), with France (1884–1885), and with Japan (1895). The Qing Empire tried to revive its regime with various reforms, such as the Self-Strengthening Movement (1861–1895), the Hundred Days' Reform (1898), and the New Reform (1901–1911).

These political reforms initiated radical programs of institutional change and economic modernization. They consistently sought to develop new, practical talent as opposed to revitalizing the traditional Confucian intelligentsia. Subsequently, it became widely accepted that renovating the old education system and establishing modern schools were vital and urgent tasks. With a strong catch-up mentality, a number of politicians and educators agreed that teacher education was crucial for meeting the political goals of national survival and self-strengthening. Thanks to these political reforms, modern teacher education came into being and was institutionalized in the late 1890s.

The first school for training teachers in China, the Normal School of the Nanyang Gongxue (Nanyang College), was founded in 1897, which was about 200 years after the first Western normal school, the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools that was set up in the early 1680s by Jean Baptiste de La Salle in Reims, France. A forerunner of Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Nanyang Gongxue was founded in Shanghai by Sheng Xuanhuai (1844–1916), as an institute purposively for teacher education, and became the first TEI in modern China (Chen, 1936, pp. 478–479; The Editorial Board of Educational Almanac, 1948, p. 909). On May 21, 1902, the first independent normal school, Hubei Normal School, was founded by Zhang Zhidong (Chen, 1981, p. 117). Later in the same year, the first private normal school, Tongzhou Private Normal School, was founded by Zhang Jian in Nantong, Jiangsu Province near Shanghai (Liu, 1984, pp. 7–8). In addition, Jingshi Daxuetang, the first modern national university founded by the late Qing government in 1898, opened an institute for teacher education in 1902.

In 1902, an independent teacher education subsystem was included in the first national educational legislation *Renyin Xuezhi*, which aimed to create a modern national school system based on the model borrowed from Japan. The 1903 legislation, *Guimao Xuezhi*, revamped *Renyin Xuezhi* and was enacted in 1904. In *Guimao Xuezhi*, teacher education was of three types: lower, higher, and industrial normal schools (Kuo, 1915, pp. 82–84). The system was consistently envisioned as an independent school system for the first time in China's history (Chen, 1979, p. 183; Gu, 1981, p. 243; Sun, 1971, p. 514). For example, *Guimao Xuezhi* stipulated that every county or prefecture should open a junior normal school and every province should open a senior normal school, in order to train teachers for local elementary and middle schools, respectively.

During this period, China's first national licensing system for elementary schoolteachers was established by the MOE in 1909, and in the following year, a similar licensing system was further adopted for teachers of lower and normal and

middle schools (Kuo, 1915, p. 158).[6] Moreover, girls' normal schools were formally opened in 1907, and there were a total of 15 girls' normal schools around that time (Chen, 1936, pp. 73–74). By 1907, there were 271 normal schools and 282 teachers' training institutes with a total number of 36,608 students and 36,974 certified teachers (The MOE Bureau of General Affairs, 1907, pp. 13, 23–24, 50–51). Three years later in 1910, the school numbers were decreased to 233 normal schools and 182 teachers' training schools, enrolling 20,902 and 7670 students, respectively, due to the possible reason that earlier preparation for teachers had met the demand (Kuo, 1915, pp. 156–157).

Since the legislation of 1902 and 1903 was virtually copied from the Japanese school system, the teacher education system was also borrowed from Japan (Chen, 1979, pp. 167–202; Hayhoe, 1984, pp. 35–37; Qian & Jin, 1996, pp. 50–214; Sun, 2009, pp. 346–350). In fact, the term *Shifan jiaoyu* was taken verbatim in Japanese characters from *Shihan Kyouiku*, the Japanese terminology for teacher education. China's emulation of Japan was explained by acknowledging that the two neighbors shared geographical vicinity, cultural similarity, and an identical need for national self-strengthening (Shen, 1994, p. 60). Moreover, the increasingly shaky Qing Empire viewed Japan as a successful model of modernization in the way it competed with Western powers through self-strengthening reforms initiated in the Meiji Restoration.

Institutionalization (1912–1949)

The Qing government attempted to revitalize itself but was unsuccessful, and the Empire finally collapsed in 1911 as a result of the Republican Revolution led by Sun Yat-Sen. This was a critical turning point in China's history since the revolution overthrew the imperial system that had existed for more than 2000 years. In his inaugural address on January 1, 1912, Provisional President Sun announced that the task for his government was to "sweep out the baneful influence of autocracy and build the Republic to meet the goals of the revolution and the will of all citizens" (Sun, as cited in Chen, 1981, p. 218). Sun Yat-Sen's Three Principles of the People[7] paved a solid foundation for the goals and visions of new educational establishments, which were imperative for the transition from the feudal system to the new democratic Republic.

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[6]This disproves the widely accepted claim that China's teacher certification system was first established in 1996, i.e., The MOE Department of Teacher Education (2001). *Jiaoshi zhuanyehua de lilun yu shijian* [*Theories and practices of teacher professionalization*]. Beijing: People's Education Press, p. 225.

[7]The Principle of *Minzu* (civic nationalism, i.e., government of the people), the Principle of *Minquan* (power of the people, i.e., government by the people), and the Principle of *Minsheng* (welfare or livelihood of the people, i.e., government for the people).

Shortly after the Republic was established, the new administration passed several pieces of legislation regarding the school system in the early 1910s. Two of these, issued in 1912, *The Teacher Education Act* and *The Normal School Regulations Act*, guided the objectives, programs, and curricula for teacher education. Through such new regulations, teacher education was instituted at two levels: normal schools for elementary schoolteachers and normal colleges and universities for secondary schoolteachers. Normal schools were provincial, while normal colleges and universities were either provincial or national. A district system for normal schools was set up in 1912 for the first time in Chinese history, in order to respond to various local circumstances, followed by a licensing system for elementary schoolteachers on April 28, 1916 (Sun, 1971, pp. 530–533). In addition, women were included in formal programs of the teacher education system. For example, Peking Women's Higher Normal College was upgraded in April 1919 from Peking Women's Normal School, becoming the first independent higher TEI for women in China (Liu, 1984, p. 41).

These initiatives for teacher education were revolutionary and effective in terms of providing new visions of teacher education programs and institutions. In 1911, there were a total of 253 normal schools with 2894 teachers, enrolling a total of 28,605 students. Ten years later by 1922, the numbers jumped to 385, 5013 and 43,846, respectively (The MOE, 1934, p. 311). However, because the 1912 and 1913 Acts emulated a Japanese type of school system, which was not well adapted to Chinese settings, the two bills drew much criticism for being rigid and incapable of accommodating the differing socioeconomic and educational needs in different regions of China's huge land.

The changing political circumstances greatly challenged the Republic's education reforms, which were soon impeded by the restoration of the imperial system under Yuan Shikai (1859–1916), a powerful politician and notorious warlord of the late Qing period. Then two important movements, the New Cultural Movement in 1917 and the May Fourth Movement in 1919, initiated a revolution in cultural terms against the Confucian tradition by advocating Western values of democracy and science and criticizing traditional Confucianism. The two nationwide movements fundamentally changed traditional politics, culture, values, and education in China. During this time, overseas returnees such as Cai Yuanpei (1868–1940), Chen Duxiu (1879–1942), Lu Xun (1881–1936), Hu Shi (1891–1962), and Tao Xingzhi (1891–1946) introduced to China various Western ideas and values of modern education. Among them, Deweyan pragmatism and Western scientism were the two most influential theories that brought new incentives for education reform in China. John and Alice Dewey made a 2-year visit to China from May 1919 to 1921, which stimulated many educational initiatives for social change in China (Keenan, 1977).

Renxu Xuezhi, the new legislation which was passed on November 1, 1922, radically shifted from the Japanese model of the school system to an American one. This model was characterized by flexibility and adaptability to various local conditions, a 6-3-3 system with education levels tailored for different stages of students' development, and distinctive secondary schools (Qian & Jin, 1996, pp. 284–300). Under the new legislation, teacher education was planned at two levels: normal schools and

normal colleges and universities. For elementary schoolteachers, normal schools were generally merged into comprehensive secondary schools. Some provinces began to stop providing subsidies for students enrolled in normal schools, resulting in a decline in enrollment in teacher education. Normal colleges and universities were still positioned as independent institutions on paper. In practice there was only one TEI, the Peking Higher Normal School; other higher TEIs were merged into comprehensive universities (Hayhoe & Li, 2010, pp. 89–90). Although the 1922 legislation was praised as a milestone in modern history of education in China for its flexible school years, operational adaptability, and profound influence, teacher education was actually undermined (Sun, 1971, p. 539). Liu (1984) documented the fact that from 1922 to 1928, the number of "normal schools was reduced by 63 %, student numbers declined by 49 %, and budgets were cut by 34 %" (p. 54).

The decline in teacher education began to turn around in the early 1930s. From 1932 to 1935, the Nationalist Government made great efforts to restore the pre-1922 system of teacher education. Normal schools were removed from comprehensive secondary schools, and some higher education institutions (HEIs) became independent normal colleges and universities for training teachers again. But the sociopolitical context changed dramatically from 1921 to 1949, with a succession of wars breaking out in China: the First Civil War between the nationalists and the warlords, with the communists joining the warlords later (1921–1927); the Second Civil War between the nationalists and the communists again (1927–1937); the Anti-Japanese War (1937–1945); and the Third Civil War, in which the communists defeated the nationalists. While the country underwent these bitter hardships, it is remarkable that the modern teacher education system thrived. There were 364 normal schools with 48,793 students in 1937. By 1946 the number of normal schools had almost tripled to 902, and the number of students increased fivefold to 245,609 (The Editorial Board of Educational Almanac, 1948, pp. 929–930).

Reinstitutionalization (1949–1993)

Soon after the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the Western powers turned their backs on the newly born socialist regime, while the Soviet Union supported it. Before they broke their ties a decade later, China and the Soviet Union built a strong partnership which allowed China to obtain considerable aid and ideological support. As a result of this new political alliance, China's education system began to emulate the Soviet model, which featured independent specialized HEIs.

The new government, with dreams of eliminating illiteracy and providing universal education for all school-aged children in the shortest time possible, immediately reestablished teacher education and made it one of the nation's priorities, in order to catch up with such Western powers as the USA, the UK, France, Germany, and Japan. In August 1951, the First National Meeting on Teacher Education called for

reestablishing the district system for normal schools. Two months later, the State Council published the *Decision on School System Reform* which clearly urged that a teacher education system be set up independently within the national education system. Based on this decision, the MOE promulgated the *Regulations on Higher Normal Institutions* (*Draft*) in 1952.

Given the sociopolitical circumstances, the Soviet model of teacher education was adopted and remained in place for more than two decades thereafter (Chen, Zhu, Hu, Guo, & Sun, 2003, p. 7; Pepper, 1996, p. 149). With this model, China relied solely on an independent teacher training system, and teachers were exclusively prepared by normal schools, normal colleges, and normal universities, with provincial or regional colleges of education providing in-service education for teachers. By 1953, there were a total of 31 independent normal colleges and universities nationwide (China National Institute for Educational Research, 1984, pp. 90–91).

The national policy on "the Reorganization of Departments and Colleges" brought tremendous changes to the teacher education system in the mid-1950s. For example, East China Normal University (ECNU) was founded in Shanghai in 1951 on the basis of several private universities, by merging the departments of education from Fudan University, Aurora University, Datong University, St. John's University, and Shanghai University. Although departments of education had been integrated within comprehensive universities during the Nationalist period before 1949, they were now affiliated solely with the newly established or combined normal colleges and universities.

For political reasons, education was deeply interwoven with politics during this time. Since the late 1950s, the Communist government repeatedly claimed that education must serve proletarian politics. Teacher education, like all other fields, was also deeply involved in politics while its other functions were largely neglected. Due to this political situation, teacher education was fundamentally weakened and even destroyed in many places during the 10-year Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). Political-ideological movements and struggles hampered the entire system, and student recruitment and enrollment ceased for several years.

Additionally, the profession of teaching suffered tremendous criticism, and teachers' sociopolitical status declined significantly. Teachers were despised as "little bourgeois" and were "under great strain with many of them suffering considerable mental and, often, physical abuse" (Guo, 1999, April, p. 3). During this period of dramatic uncertainty, some teachers were persecuted and even executed, as documented below:

> On the athletic field and farther inside, before a new four-story classroom building, I saw rows of teachers, about forty or fifty in all, with black ink poured over their heads and faces so that they were now in reality a "black gang." Hanging on their necks were placards with such words as "reactionary academic authority So-and-So," "class enemy So-and-So," "capitalist roader So-and-So," "corrupt ringleader So-and-So," all epithets taken from the newspapers. On each placard was a red cross, making the teachers look like condemned prisoners awaiting execution. They all wore dunce caps painted with similar epithets and carried dirty brooms, shoes and dusters on their backs. Hanging from their necks were pails filled with rocks. I saw the principal; the pail around his neck was so heavy that the wire

had cut deep into his neck and he was staggering. All were barefoot, hitting broken gongs or pots as they walked around the field, crying out, "I am black gangster So-and So." Finally they all knelt down, burned incense and begged Mao Tse-tung (Mao Zedong) to "pardon their crimes." (Ling, 1972, p. 19, as cited in Lin, 1991, pp. 22–23)

Mao Zedong's death in 1976 did not immediately end the nightmare. After fiercely fighting against the Left extremists, progressive leaders such as Deng Xiaoping took over the political power of China. In 1978, with the government's adoption of the national policy of Reform and Opening-up in order to modernize the country and catch up with Western superpowers, China's teacher education began to recover, entering a period of radical restoration and reform.

In June 1980, the Fourth National Meeting on Teacher Education was held to reflect upon the previous 30 years' experience of teacher education. The meeting agreed that teacher education was the foundation for national educational development and set it as a national policy priority, including both preservice and in-service levels. For example, in 1983, elementary and secondary schoolteachers were required to complete a secondary teacher education program, a 2- to 3-year postsecondary teacher education program, and a 4-year college-level teacher education program, respectively.

In addition, all national policy actions, such as the *Opinion on Strengthening and Promoting Teacher Education* in 1978, the *CPCCC's Decision on Reform of the Educational System* in 1985, the *Opinion on the Plan for Basic Education Teachers and Teacher Education*, and the *Opinion on Strengthening and Promoting Teacher Education* in 1986, asserted that teacher education must be the first priority of educational development. Furthermore, in order to create favorable circumstances for teachers and teacher education, the first National Teachers' Day since 1949 was instituted on September 10, 1985, as a symbol of respect for the profession. Since then, National Teachers' Day has been celebrated every year. These policies and strategies helped restore the regular functions of the teacher education system and provided possibilities for future policy actions.

Professionalization (1993–Present)

In the post-Mao era, and particularly since the early 1990s, Chinese leaders have embraced a sweeping wave of reforms, including marketization, privatization, and decentralization, with various promises about socioeconomic development and global status assumed by human capital and modernization theories. Although the socialist regime remains highly centralized, the economic, education, and cultural sectors enjoy certain freedoms that used to be restricted by the central government. For example, the CPC has called for the decentralization of economic planning and for increased reliance on market forces to determine the prices of consumer goods.

In pursuit of modernization and to catch up with developed countries, the new round of education reform has aimed to expand education at all levels while maintaining or improving quality. The rapid expansion of compulsory education

and postsecondary education has also generated an urgent demand for highly qualified teachers. The Soviet model of an independent teacher education system was no longer able to cope up with the demand for a stronger and larger teacher workforce. For example, the old model of an independent teacher education system failed to meet the rapidly changing demands of preparing and developing a teacher workforce.

There was even some doubt about whether TEIs were competent in comparison with what comprehensive universities were capable of offering. Furthermore, the Soviet model had separated preservice and in-service teacher education into two exclusive subsystems, in effect dissipating resources for teacher education. The national campaign for quality education demanded a process of professionalization of teachers. This was very challenging, and problematic, for there were a large number of incompetent teachers who had received limited teacher education or qualifications. In rural schools, there were many teachers who had never had any form of teacher education.

To respond to these challenges, Chinese policymakers initiated a retooling of the teacher education system, seeking overall structural adjustment and improvement, as part of restructuring the higher education system based on the reform strategies for decentralization of the economy and governance. The objectives were to give teacher education a new status and bring about the improvement of educational qualifications for new teachers, the establishment of continuing education for teachers, and remarkable improvement in the overall quality of the teacher workforce (The MOE, 2002).

The goals of the policy action were to produce enough qualified teachers and to professionalize the teaching workforce, to reform and diversify the teacher education system, and to continuously improve teachers' economic and social status. In addition, China viewed the USA as an ideal model to emulate in trying to catch up in economic development and modernization and tried to pilot the American model of teacher education being provided by comprehensive universities on Chinese soil again, but the challenges had to be dealt with in a new era of intensified globalization, individualization, digitalization, decentralization, and marketization.

There have been two stages in the retooling of the teacher education system since 1993. During the first stage (1993–1996), the *Guidelines for China's Education Reform and Development* were put into policy action in 1993 (The CPCCC & The State Council, 1993, February 13). Eight months later, the *Law of Teachers of the People's Republic of China* was enacted on October 31, 1993, signaling a new era of teacher education reform. This is the first law in China since 1949 for the teaching profession. The law regulates the legal rights and responsibilities of teachers as professionals and mandates a national teacher certification system. The *Ordinance of Teacher Qualification* implemented in 1995 requires candidate teachers to obtain at least one of seven licenses to teach (The State Council, 1995, December 12).

Despite great expectations, the enforcement of these laws and regulations was limited in the early 1990s, and teacher professionalism remained at a low level. At

this stage, the Chinese government made great efforts in other ways, such as raising teachers' salaries and improving their overall working conditions.

The second stage (1996–present) of the retooling of the teacher education system started with the Fifth National Meeting on Teacher Education held in 1996. The *Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education* reenvisions a teacher education system that is chiefly reliant on independent normal colleges and universities, with some participation from comprehensive universities (The SCE, 1996, December 5). This renewed vision has charted a confirmed direction for the restructuring of the teacher education system that includes players such as comprehensive HEIs. Influenced by an ideology of reform that has embraced privatization and market forces, the Chinese government has taken substantial actions to reorganize the teacher education system and to address the teaching profession through some key strategies (The MOE, 1998, December 24; 2000, September 23; 2002, February 6; The CPCCC & The State Council, 1999, June 13; The State Council, 2001, May 29).

A new vision and key initiatives have been highlighted for teacher education development by four important policy documents, i.e., the CPCCC and the State Council's *Decision on Deepening Educational Reform and Bringing Forth Quality Education in an All-Round Way* in 1999, the *Tenth Five-Year Plan for Education* in 2001, the State Council (2010)'s *Guidelines for Mid- and Long-Term Educational Reform and Development 2010–2020*, and The MOE (2011)'s *Curricular Standards for Teacher Education*. Specifically, the 2010–2020 Guidelines have reaffirmed the importance of high moral and academic standards in teacher professionalism and its enhancement through continuously raising the social status of the profession. They can be seen as rooted in a Confucian epistemology that synergizes professional knowledge and ethical principles of teaching, which was inherited at the time when the modern system of teacher education was first established by the late Qing Empire a century ago.

Current Provisions for Teacher Education

Today China has the largest system of basic education and the largest teaching force in the world. As of 2014, 10.8 million teachers were instructing 162.4 million students who were enrolled in 279,700 schools in China (The MOE, 2015). Obviously, China's teacher education system has played a critical role in preparing an enormous army of qualified teachers for its basic education system, which is given the task of improving the quality of life for all its citizens.

TEIs are one of China's several specialized systems of higher education, which include those for teachers, languages, agriculture, medicine, oceans, forests, geosciences, or military, under the administration of respective ministries. Represented mainly by normal universities, TEIs are the largest system among them, and almost

each of China's 34 provinces, autonomous or directly governed regions, has at least one of these TEIs.

There are a variety of schools, colleges, and universities preparing teachers at different levels in China. Teacher education often denotes two major forms of education for teaching at three professional levels. The first is the preservice teacher education at the levels of normal schools, normal colleges, and normal universities. Meanwhile, there is the in-service teacher education at county level teachers' schools, prefectural level colleges of education, and provincial level colleges of education. Among these regular TEIs are six major types: normal universities, normal colleges, normal schools, provincial and prefectural colleges of education, and local teachers' schools, in addition to comprehensive universities and online colleges that are nontraditional TEIs but actively participate in the provision of teacher education programs. By 2014 there are a total of 218 higher TEIs in China, including 151 regular TEIs with Bachelor's programs (The National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2015).

Normal Universities

Normal universities are comprehensive institutions with a particular focus on teacher education, and they are the predominant form of teacher preparation in China for secondary schoolteachers, covering programs for both preservice and in-service schoolteachers. Normal universities generally provide 4-year bachelor's programs and 3-year master's programs, and many also provide 3-year Ph.D. programs. Undergraduate students of these institutions are recruited from senior secondary school graduates through the competitive NCEE. Undergraduate programs usually include general courses (political theory, foreign languages, educational studies, psychological studies, and physical education), specialized core courses (varied according to majors), and fieldwork or internships in specialized areas generally over a total of 16 weeks. A dissertation is required for a bachelor's degree. Graduates from normal universities will be granted corresponding degrees after successfully finishing their programs of studies. Normal universities usually have a larger student body, more teaching programs, a stronger faculty, and more financial resources than normal colleges do. It is common for each province to have at least one normal university. In addition, there have been six key national normal universities, i.e., Beijing Normal, East China Normal, Northeast Normal, Huazhong Normal, and Shaanxi Normal,[8] if we include Southwest University in Chongqing, a

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[8]Since the 1950s, China has adopted a key school system to give priorities to just a few universities and schools, usually located in the urban centers of big cities or provincial capitals. This system guarantees more financial resources as well as better staffing and facilities to so-called key schools or key universities such as key national universities and schools, key provincial universities and schools, and key city or county schools. Under this system, all other universities or schools are called "ordinary." The initial purpose of this system is to provide prioritized resources to

recently merged comprehensive university that has retained a main focus on teacher education. Their students are recruited throughout the whole country. By 2013, there were a total of 113 normal universities, enrolling 1.44 million students (The Editorial Board of the People's Republic of China Yearbook, 2014, p. 603).

Normal Colleges

Normal colleges generally provide 3-year sub-degree programs for preservice teachers for junior high schools. The curricula are almost identical to those of normal universities, but the study workload is less in terms of the school year. Graduates from normal colleges are not granted a degree, but instead receive graduation certificates or qualifications for teaching after successfully completing their program. Students are recruited from senior secondary school graduates with lower scores through the NCEE. Normal colleges have been upgraded into normal universities or consolidated with provincial or regional colleges of education. For example, the Shanghai Preschool Normal College was merged into ECNU and became its College of Preschool and Special Education in December 1997. In 2013 there are a total of 55 normal colleges, enrolling 0.52 million students (The Editorial Board of the People's Republic of China Yearbook, 2014, p. 603).

Normal Schools

Normal schools generally provide 2- to 3-year programs for preservice teachers for elementary, kindergarten, or nursery schoolteachers. The courses include political theories, language studies (Chinese and foreign languages), history, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, hygiene, geography, psychology, educational studies, teaching methodology, music, arts, and so on. An in-class internship is required. Normal school graduates are granted graduation certificates or qualifications for teaching after successfully finishing the program. Students are recruited from junior secondary school graduates. Normal schools used to offer the major path for elementary school, kindergarten, or nursery schoolteachers. In recent decades, these schools are being upgraded into normal colleges or being shut down, as elementary schoolteachers are now required to have a college qualification. Furthermore, some

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a limited number of institutions so that they can achieve and maintain higher quality, since government budget is very limited, especially in China's earlier stage of development. As a result, the development opportunities of schools across the country have been significantly stratified over decades. Some universities or schools are severely disadvantaged by limited resources allocated to them, resulting in remarkably lower quality and institutional status. Recently and alongside more resources available, the Chinese government has taken substantial actions to soften the system, but the actual outcome still remains unclear.

elementary schools are being closed due to the decline in school-aged student population. In 1990, there were 1026 normal schools enrolling a body of 0.68 million students (The National Bureau of Statistics of China, 1991, pp. 683, 696). By 2013, the number of normal schools had sharply declined to 110 with 0.23 million students (The Editorial Board of the People's Republic of China Yearbook, 2014, p. 603).

Provincial and Regional Colleges of Education for In-Service Teachers

Provincial and prefectural colleges of education are traditionally in-service TEIs that provide 2- to 3-year continuing educational programs for in-service teachers. Similar to normal colleges, the curricula include general courses (political theory, foreign languages, educational studies, psychological studies, and physical education) and specialized core courses according to various majors. Neither an internship nor a dissertation is required for graduation. Graduates are granted certificates or qualifications after successfully finishing the program. Students are recruited from in-service teachers who work in elementary or secondary schools. Each province in China has at least one college of education, usually located in its capital.

These regional or local colleges of education are now being consolidated with normal colleges or being upgraded. To give an example, the Shanghai College of Education and the Shanghai 2nd College of Education were both merged into ECNU in September 1998. The Anhui College of Education, a college of education since 1955, has been upgraded into the Hefei Normal University since 2007, which offers bachelor's and master's degree programs. From 1999 throughout 2005, colleges of education were downsized to 64 from 166, with 55 of them merged into normal colleges, universities, or other HEIs (The Editorial Board of the People's Republic of China Yearbook, 2007, p. 830). Consequently, the enrollment and number of both provincial and prefectural colleges of education had plummeted from 0.30 million and 122 in 2001 to 0.19 million and 80 in 2005, respectively (The Editorial Board of the People's Republic of China Yearbook, 2002, p. 884; 2006, p. 799).

County and Local Teachers' Schools for In-Service Teachers

County and local teachers' schools are adult TEIs that used to be continuing education institutions in local counties for in-service elementary schoolteachers. Now they are being shut down or consolidated into the National Online Networks for Teacher Education,[9] as elementary schoolteachers are now required to have a

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[9]This is a new initiative of Internet-based national network for teacher education since 2003, which will be detailed later in the last section of this chapter, i.e., Recent Trends of Teacher Education Reform (pp. 37–40).

college degree, and some elementary schools are being closed due to the decline in school-aged student population in some local areas.[10] By 2002, a total of 0.18 million students were enrolled in 1703 county or local teachers' schools in China (The Editorial Board of the People's Republic of China Yearbook, 2003, p. 807). There are no national statistics for teachers' schools after 2003, implying that most of them have since been closed or consolidated.

Non-teacher Education Institutions

In addition to the above six forms of teacher education, more and more non-TEIs, usually comprehensive universities, have been actively participating in teacher education programs. For example, by 2013, 337 comprehensive universities had set up teacher education programs, producing 49.2 % of teacher graduates (The Editorial Board of the People's Republic of China Yearbook, 2014, p. 606). Meanwhile, the National Online Network for Teacher Education and Internet-based programs have played an important role in preparing teachers since their advent in 2003, which will be detailed later in the last section of this chapter, i.e., Recent Trends of Teacher Education Reform.

Statistical Trends of Teachers, Students, and Schools

With a diverse array of TEIs, there were over two million students studying in regular teacher education programs in 2014 (see Table 2.1). Teacher numbers increased from 8.61 million in 1990 to 10.8 million in 2014 (see Fig. 2.2), and the quality of the teaching profession reached a new level. For instance, the educational qualification rates of elementary, junior, and senior secondary schoolteachers jumped up to 99.9 %, 99.5 %, and 97.3 % in 2014 from 73.9 %, 46.5 %, and 45.5 % in 1990, respectively (The MOE, 2015; The SCE, 1991). Moreover, teacher-student ratios in the last decade have been constantly decreasing for better quality education of elementary and secondary schools (see Fig. 2.3). As Guan (2003) observed in the earlier stage of the reform, the restructuring of the teacher education system has been effective in a number of ways: a significantly raised teacher professional profile, continuous expansion of teacher education, and steady improvement in teacher education quality. Teacher education is on its way to higher standards, while its status is being gradually elevated.

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[10]China has adopted a strict national policy of birth control since the late 1970s. Based on this policy, one family is generally allowed only one child. In some rural areas, a family is allowed to have two children if the first is a girl. The penalty could be very serious with extremely rigid enforcement if it is violated. The school-aged population has been declining since the late 1990s largely due to this policy. This national policy has been eased since 2016.

Table 2.1 Statistics of teacher education provisions in China 2014 (Unit: thousand)

| Programs	Entrants	Enrollments	Graduates
Degree programs (regular institutions)	350.1	1491.1	364.2
Degree programs (continuing institutions)	106.2	255.0	98.2
Degree programs (Internet-based institutions)	14.4	32.6	14.5
Sub-degree programs (regular institutions)	147.3	525.7	171.3
Sub-degree programs (continuing institutions)	138.0	302.9	104.3
Sub-degree programs (Internet-based institutions)	12.5	26.6	11.5
Total	768.5	2633.9	764.0

Source: *Zhongguo Tongji Nianjian 2015* [China Statistical Yearbook 2015] by The National Bureau of Statistics of China (2015)
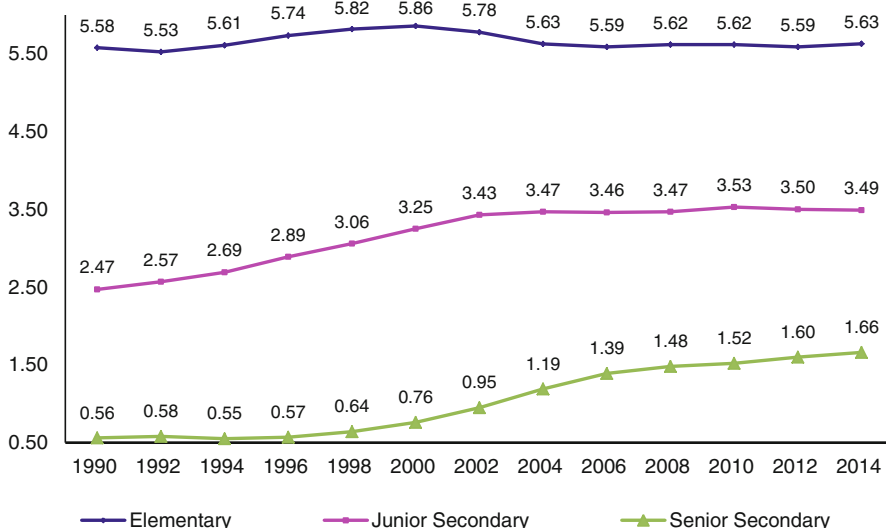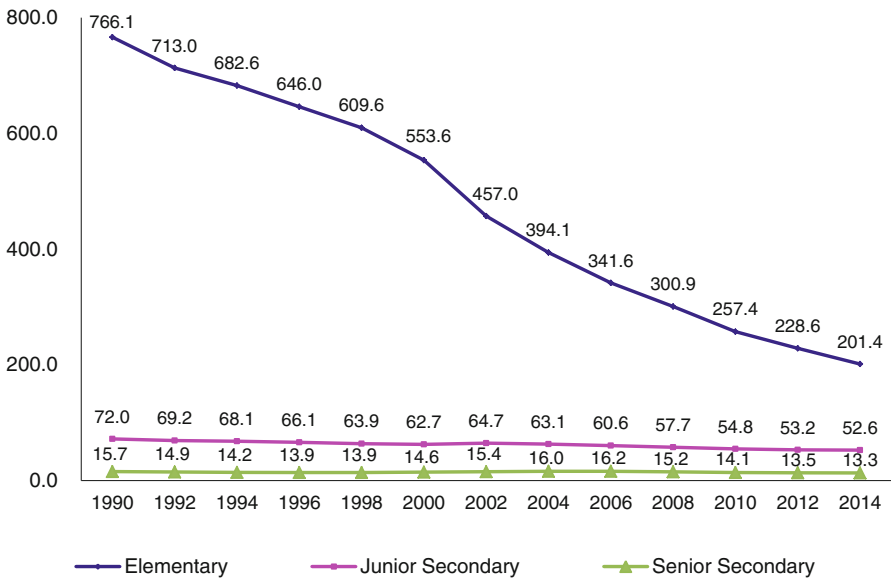

Fig. 2.2 Statistical trends of schoolteachers in China 1990–2014 (unit: million) (Source: *China Statistical Yearbook 2012* by The National Bureau of Statistics of China (2012), p. 751; and *China Statistical Yearbook 2015* by The National Bureau of Statistics of China (2015))

But there are challenges down the road since the early 1990s. As shown from Figs. 2.4 and 2.5, one of the challenges for teacher education reform is the dramatic demographic change in China. Due to the success of the government's policy to limit every family to one child, strictly enforced since the late 1970s, the number of newborn generations has steadily declined following a population peak in the late 1990s and earlier 2000s, respectively, for elementary and secondary schoolteachers. In particularly, the rapidly declining number of school-aged students in elementary schools has shifted the focus of basic education system from increasing the number of qualified schools and teachers to improving the quality of the teaching profession.
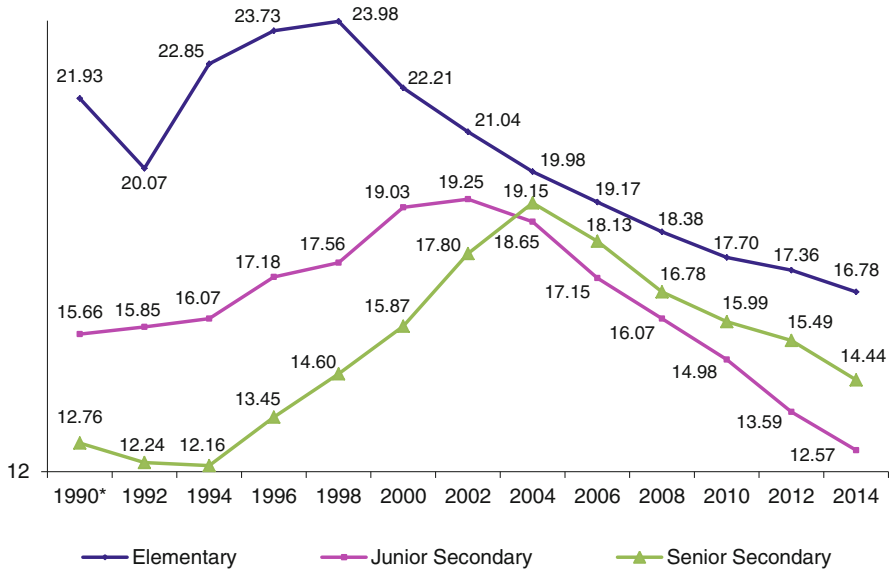
Fig. 2.3 Teacher-student ratios in China 1990–2014 (Source: Data from *The National Statistical Communiqué of Educational Development* (The MOE, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015; The SCE, 1993, 1995, 1997). * Estimated data in 1990 from *Educational Statistics Yearbook of China 1990* (The SCE, 1991))

Fig. 2.4 Statistical trends of regular schools in China 1990–2014 (unit: thousand) (Source: *China Statistical Yearbook 2012* by The National Bureau of Statistics of China (2012), p. 751; and *China Statistical Yearbook 2015* by The National Bureau of Statistics of China (2015))
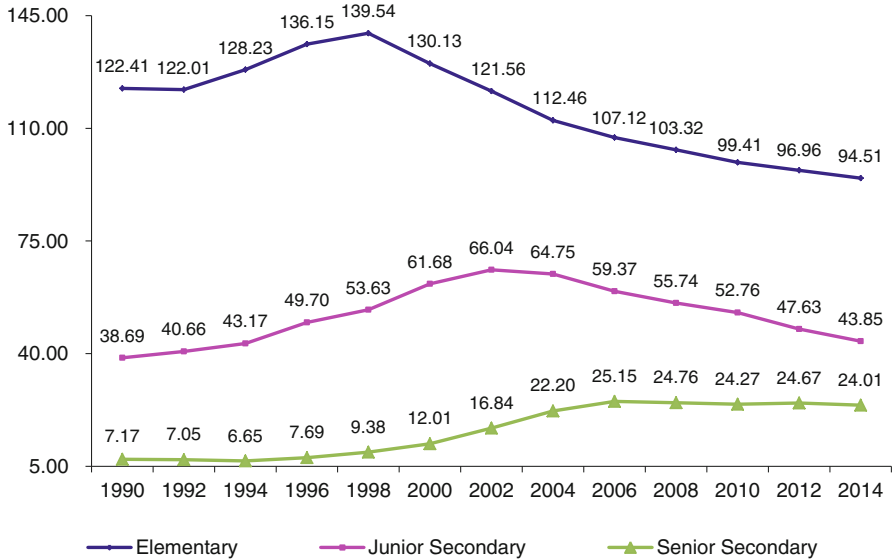
Fig. 2.5 Enrollment trends of school students in China 1990–2014 (unit: million) (Source: *China Statistical Yearbook 2012* by The National Bureau of Statistics of China (2012), p. 752; and *China Statistical Yearbook 2015* by The National Bureau of Statistics of China (2015))

On the other hand, for secondary schoolteachers, while quality is a more serious issue, there is also a huge demand for teachers, posing dual challenges of quality and quantity for teacher education reform in the 2010s.

Recent Trends of Teacher Education Reform

Since the Chinese government launched a new round of teacher education reform in the 1990s, several key trends can be observed as below.

Firstly, the original specialized, independent teacher education system in China has been transformed into an open, hybrid model, which I term it the Chinese model of teacher education (Li, 2016b). The newly emerging system is quite distinct from those in the UK or in the USA, in that it accommodates various forms of teacher education provided by professional and comprehensive institutions, while the British or American systems rely mainly on teacher education programs provided by comprehensive universities.

The change has a dual meaning for the development of teacher education in China. On the one hand, normal colleges and universities, along with the active participation of comprehensive universities, have become the main platforms for teacher preparation and development (The State Council, 2001, May 29). Graduate

schools and faculties of education in comprehensive universities such as Peking, Tsinghua, Wuhan, Nanjing, and Zhejiang Universities have all established programs of educational studies to compete in the market. And more and more comprehensive universities are providing programs for teachers.

On the other hand, the two once exclusive subsystems of teacher education, preservice and in-service teacher education, are now being integrated with each other. Provincial and prefectural colleges of education, formerly responsible for in-service training and adult learning, have been largely integrated into normal colleges or universities which also offer programs for in-service teacher education. Alongside these institutional changes since the late 1990s, *Jiaoshi Jiaoyu* (teacher education) has replaced the old discourse of *Shifan Jiaoyu*, literally "teachers" and "role models," which used to refer to preservice teacher education only, exclusive of in-service teacher education (Zhu, 2001). On July 28, 2012, the original MOE's Department of Normal Education was officially replaced by the new Department of Teacher Education (DTE).

Secondly, the traditional three levels of teacher education are being upgraded to a new three-level system. Elementary, junior, and senior secondary schoolteachers used to be educated in normal schools, 2- to 3-year normal colleges, and 4-year normal universities, respectively. A new model is needed in order to meet the demands of a teacher workforce with increasing professionalism. For example, elementary schoolteachers have been required to receive higher qualifications from 2- to 3-year normal colleges; all teachers in secondary schools have been required to hold bachelor's degrees. Under the new requirements, normal schools for elementary schoolteachers have generally been shut down or merged into other types of schools nationwide. For some secondary schoolteachers, graduate studies in teacher education programs provided by normal universities are usually mandatory (The MOE, 2002).

Thirdly, new programs and degrees for teachers have been established with the freshly installed national *Curricular Standards for Teacher Education* to achieve excellence of teacher supply. Master of Education or Master of Arts in Subject Teaching (M.Ed.), different from academically oriented Master of Arts programs, has been established since 1996 for elementary and secondary schoolteachers. The new master's degree is an occupational or professional degree, like the MBA or MPA, for those who have been working in the teaching profession. At this stage, there are more than 41 normal or comprehensive universities offering M.Ed. programs for in-service teachers. Students registered in M.Ed. programs jumped from 1490 in 1998 to 6970 in 2003; and more than 20,000 M.Ed. students were enrolled in normal or comprehensive universities in 2003 (Feng, 2003, September 24).

Fourthly, a new licensing system and professional standards for the teaching profession, and the national curricular standards of teacher education, have all been fully and consistently operated with standardized procedures, legislative requirements and measurements, and wide participation. Further policy actions have focused on the implementation of an accreditation system for TEIs and an evaluation system for supervising their quality (The MOE, 2002). In addition,

the new national curricular standards of teacher education and new professional standards of schoolteachers at kindergarten, elementary, and secondary levels, which were enacted in 2011 and 2012, respectively, have placed high pressures on the further reform of teacher education in the forthcoming decades.

Fifthly, TEIs have adopted new forms to provide teacher education programs, such as the readoption of free bachelor's programs offered to teacher students admitted in key national TEIs, which initiative has been implemented since 2007 (The State Council, 2007, May 9). TEIs used to be a free, nationwide public system in China after 1949,[11] like all other HEIs, with all teacher students fully subsidized by governmental funding as long as they were able to be admitted into TEIs through the extremely competitive NCEE. But market forces were introduced into the public system in the mid-1990s, when the Chinese government had suffered severe shortages of public funding for higher education. In 2013, there were around 8549 new students enrolled in the fee-free programs and 12,013 graduated and worked in rural schools (The Editorial Board of the People's Republic of China Yearbook, 2014, p. 605). Since 2013, the readoption of free bachelor's programs has been extended to provincial TEIs. Most recently, the central government has set up a special 5-year supporting plan to further enhance the free teacher education program (The State Council, 2015, June 1).

On the other hand, TEIs have also started to provide other new forms of teacher education services for teachers and schools in rural areas, thanks to the development of information technologies. For example, an alternative, nontraditional form of teacher education was set up, i.e., the National Network for Teacher education, which is an Internet-based, nationwide lifelong education project supported by TEIs for training both preservice and in-service teachers especially in rural areas.[12]

Finally, fundamental to the above trends is the unchanged focus on the deep integration and synergy of professional knowledge and ethical cultivation of teachers in the provision of teacher education programs, as highlighted repeatedly in many policy documents, such as the CPCCC and the State Council of the People's Republic of China *Decision on Deepening Educational Reform and Bringing forth Quality Education in an All-round Way* in 1999, the *Tenth Five-Year Plan for Education* in 2001, and the State Council's *Guidelines for Mid- and Long-Term Educational Reform and Development 2010–2020*. The focus is inherited from a Confucian epistemology that emphasizes knowledge for the human good and its applications to the social life world (Hayhoe, 2015; Hayhoe & Li, 2010; Li, 2012).

But not all researchers are optimistic about the outcomes of China's reform of teacher education in recent decades. For example, Zhou (2014) argues, from the historical perspective, that although TEIs have experienced tremendous changes

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[11]The remittal tradition dates back to the first establishment of the modern teacher education system in China in the beginning of the twentieth century. Please refer to Kuo (1915), pp. 82, 133.

[12]Please see Shi, X. L. (2003, September 9). Quanguo jiaoshi jiaoyu wangluo lianmeng qidong, daguimo kaizhan gaoshuiping jiaoshi peixun [The National Networked Consortium for Teacher Education opened for largely expanding high quality teacher training]. *China's Education Daily*, 1.

at the macro level, there are still many problems in the micro process of teacher education that determines the quality of teacher preparation over the past several decades (p. 516).

When looking back at the history of modern teacher education in China, it is obvious that it has gone through a bumpy and sometimes awkward trajectory over a century. In recent decades, it has moved from being exclusively provided by normal schools, colleges, and universities to the full participation also by non-TEIs. These transforms are results of the implementation of the national policy. The next chapter will introduce major initiatives of teacher education reform in China, by reviewing key policy documents and the rationales behind them and linking the reform of teacher education with the convergence of two other key national reforms, almost simultaneously taking place, i.e., the New Curricular Reform for Basic Education and higher education expansion. In addition, the existent literature on the implementation process will be comprehensively surveyed and critically evaluated.

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Chapter 3
Policy Actions for World-Class Teachers

If Shanghai students are top students in the world, in terms of their international standing of academic achievements, Shanghai teachers are without doubt world-class too. Over past decades, Chinese government has taken many policy actions to pursue a world-class teaching force by reforming teacher education, and TEIs have often been targeted for reform. This chapter will introduce and review these major policy documents and rationales behind them, and place these national initiatives in the bigger picture of its convergence with two other key national reforms, both taking place simultaneously, i.e., the New Curriculum Reform for Basic Education (NCRBE) and the higher education expansion. It will also provide a comprehensive, critical review on the existing literature with regard to the implementation of these national policy actions.

The Policy Context

The 1990s was a rare period in which Chinese policymakers made many key national policies for education reform simultaneously. Apart from the national reform of teacher education, the Chinese government also launched the NCRBE and the higher education expansion, both in 1999.

The New Curriculum Reform for Basic Education

On June 13, 1999, the CPCCC and the State Council jointly promulgated *The Decision on the Deepening of Educational Reform and the Full Promotion of Quality Education*. In this policy initiative, the NCRBE was introduced nationwide to completely replace the old curriculum system. The old school system had long

been criticized for having "overemphasized on subject system, disconnected with real needs of the times, social development and students" (The CPCCC & the State Council, 1999, June 13). Since then, the overall structure and system of curricula have fundamentally changed in all schools in China.

The new curriculum system is consisted of three components: national curricula, local curricula, and school curricula. It focuses on new learning contents, teaching methods, and technologies and aims to optimize curricular structures. Comprehensive contents are enhanced for elementary school students. Junior high schools combine subject-learning and comprehensive knowledge lessons, and senior high schools strengthen subject-learning lessons accordingly. In addition, students are exposed more to learning experiences of individual creativity and team work and have more opportunities to get involved in IT applications, foreign language studies, social activities, and voluntary public services (The State Council, 2001, May 29; The MOE, 2001, June 7).

The NCRBE is viewed by Chinese policymakers as the core of current education reform and a key to promoting excellence in student learning. As a result, it creates high pressure to the reform of teacher education in China, for it requires teachers, including prospective teachers and in-service teachers, to broadly upgrade their professional skills, subject, and pedagogical knowledge. It has also challenged the national policy of teacher education in terms of setting higher standards and requirements for teachers newly graduated from TEIs.

The Higher Education Expansion

In the early 1990s, China began the radical expansion process of its higher education system, and in 2003 has become "the largest national higher education system in the world" (The UNESCO, 2003, June 23–25, p. 8). As shown in Table 3.1 and Fig. 3.1, the gross enrollment of students in HEIs jumped from 3.6 million in 1990 to 35.6 million in 2014, and the gross enrollment rate increased from 3.4 % in 1990 to 37.5 % in 2014 (The MOE, 2015; Xie, 2014, p. 15). The revolutionary expansion of higher education in China, spurred in 1999, was brought about by the national initiative of higher education expansion (Hayhoe, Li, Lin, & Zha, 2011; Li, 2016c; Li & Lin, 2008).

The higher education expansion has brought fundamental transformations of HEIs, also many challenges to TEIs. For example, it pushed normal universities as HEIs to focus on the unprecedented expansion in student enrollments within just a few years, which placed high pressure on faculties and campus facilities. In the expansion process, new programs and departments were set up while TEIs were undergoing systematic restructuring; thus, the higher education expansion has had remarkable impact on the system of teacher education.

Table 3.1 Statistics of tertiary education in China 1990–2014

Year	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
GER	3.4	3.9	6.0	8.3	9.8	12.5	15	19.0	22.0	23.3	26.5	30.0	37.5
TSR	5.2	6.8	9.3	10.4	11.6	16.3	19.0	16.2	17.9	17.2	17.3	17.5	17.7
EPI	1.9	2.1	2.6	2.9	3.3	5.3	6.5	7.7	8.1	8.7	9.3	9.7	10
EP1	326	313	433	470	519	723	1,146	1,420	1,816	2,042	2,189	2,335	2,603
NRH	1,075	1,053	1,080	1,032	1,022	1,041	1,396	1,731	1,867	2,263	2,358	2,442	2,529

Data mainly from *Educational Statistics Yearbook of China 2006* (Han, 2007), pp. 5, 15–17; *Educational Statistics Yearbook of China 2013* (Xie, 2014), pp. 15–17; and *The National Statistical Communiqué of Educational Development* (The SCE, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997; The MOE, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015)
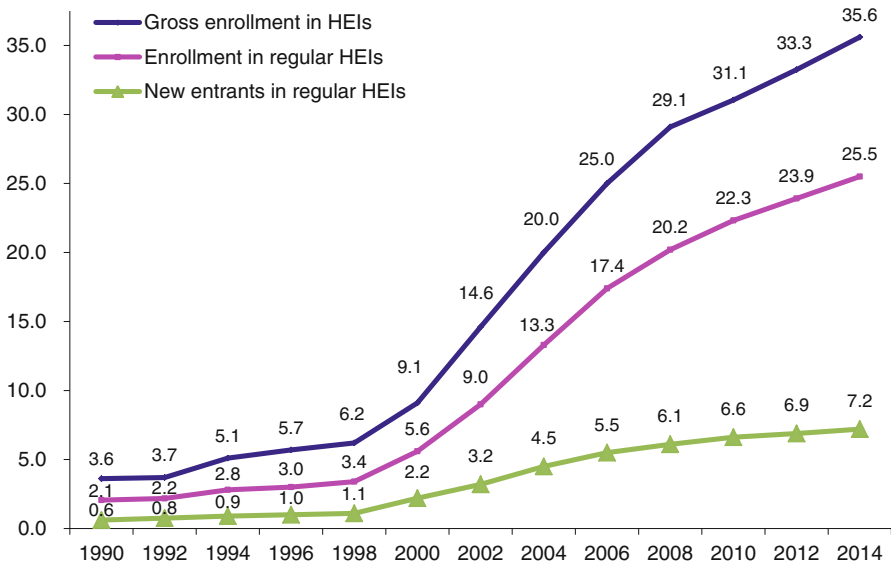*GER* gross enrollment rate (unit: %)
TSR teacher-student ratio
EPI enrollment per institution (unit: thousand)
EP1 enrollment per 1,000,000 inhabitants
NRH number of regular HEIs

Fig. 3.1 Enrollment trends of tertiary education in China 1990–2014 (unit: million) (Data from *The National Statistical Communiqué of Educational Development* (The SCE, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997; The MOE, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015)

These national policies of educational reform have seemed to be consistent with each other, but in reality they have worked against each other. In the latter case, the radical higher education expansion has had profound impact on the national reform of teacher education which will be illustrated in later chapters with empirical evidence.

Major Initiatives

Key Policy Documents

Since the early 1990s, China's teacher education has been undergoing a radical transformation, resulted from a series of policy initiatives for world-class teachers. Table 3.2 is a chronicled list of key policy documents enacted since then.

Central to these policy mandates is the improvement and enhancement of the overall quality of the teaching profession through a variety of policy actions. These included an incremental approach to improving the professionalism of the teaching workforce and the reform of TEIs. For example, the *Ordinance of Teacher Qualification* enacted in 1995, for the first time after 1949, began to ensure the quality of the teaching workforce with a nationwide licensing system. The licensing system requires that teachers in schools at all levels must obtain required teaching license correspondingly (The State Council, 1995, December 12). Based on this national regulation, seven types of license have been established for certifying teachers respectively in kindergartens, elementary schools, junior and senior high schools, special schools and technology schools, and HEIs.

Together with the new requirements and standards for the teaching profession, the reform of TEIs has been viewed by Chinese policymakers as key to achieving world-class quality for basic education, a new stage of development that can be termed Chinese Education 3.0 (Li, 2016d), in violent contrast with teacher education dominated by colleges and universities being disinvested in the USA (Zeichner, 2013). The 22 policy documents listed here have articulated the general rationales, policy problems, major policy goals, and guidelines for China's national policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s.

Rationales Behind the Reform

China has a heavy tradition that education and teachers are highly valued as key instruments for individual and national development (Hayhoe & Li, 2010). Such values become more explicit in China's rationales about education and development in the new context of combined forces of globalization, individualization, digitalization, decentralization, and marketization. Meanwhile, Chinese people had been always proud of their long civilization and national achievement, but in the nineteenth to twentieth centuries, China has lagged behind emerging superpowers, such France, Germany, Japan, the UK, and the USA, with some of its territories in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Shandon partly or fully colonized by them. To fight for its revitalization, especially against the invasion of the Japanese in the 1930s–1940s, China has developed a strong catch-up mentality, which has served as a collectively recognized state ideology for national development over a century. As speculated by Guo (2015), China's teacher education reform has been

Table 3.2 Policy initiatives for teacher education reform 1993–2015

Policy documents	Dates
1. The guidelines for the reform and development of education in China by the CPCCC and the State Council	Feb. 13, 1993
2. The law of teachers of the People's Republic of China by the NPC Standing Committee	Oct. 31, 1993
3. The ordinance of teacher qualification by the State Council	Dec. 12, 1995
4. The Ninth Five-Year National Plan (1995–2000)[a] for educational development and the development outline by 2010 by the SCE	Apr. 10, 1996
5. The opinion on the reform and development of teacher education by the SCE	Dec. 5, 1996
6. The action plan for educational revitalization facing the twenty-first century by the MOE	Dec. 24, 1998
7. The opinion on adjusting the structure of TEIs by the MOE	Mar. 16, 1999
8. The CPCCC and the State Council's decision on the deepening of educational reform and the full promotion of quality education by the CPCCC and the State Council	Jun. 13, 1999
9. The decision on the reform and development of basic education by the State Council	May 29, 2001
10. The guidelines for basic education curriculum reform by the MOE	Jun. 7, 2001
11. The Tenth Five-Year National Plan (2001–2005) for education by the MOE	Jul. 26, 2001
12. The opinion on the reform and development of teacher education during the Tenth Five-Year National Plan by the MOE	Feb. 6, 2002
13. The rejuvenation action plan for education 2003–2007 by the MOE	Feb. 10, 2004
14. The implementation approaches of free teacher education programs in key National Normal Universities by the State Council	May 9, 2007
15. Guidelines for mid- and long-term educational reform and development 2010–2020 by the State Council	May 5, 2010
16. The national training project for elementary and secondary schoolteachers (Guopei Jihua) by the MOE	Jun. 11, 2010
17. The curricular standards for teacher education (provisional) by the MOE	Oct. 8, 2011
18. The professional standards for kindergarten, elementary, and secondary schoolteachers (provisional) by the MOE	Feb. 10, 2012
19. The opinion on the enhancement of the teaching workforce by the State Council	Aug. 20, 2012
20. The guidelines of deepening the reform of the training models of elementary and secondary schoolteachers for the all-round improvement of training quality by the MOE	May 6, 2013
21. The approaches of qualification examination of elementary and secondary schoolteachers (provisional) by the MOE	Aug. 15, 2013
22. The supporting plan for rural teachers 2015–2020 by the State Council	Jun. 1, 2015

Source: Adapted from "*Analysis of the Implementation of Teacher Education Policy in China since the 1990s: A Case Study,*" by J. Li, 2006, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, the University of Maryland at College Park, pp. 44–45; and "China's Quest for World-class Teachers: A Rational Model of National Initiatives and Institutional Transformations," by J. Li, 2013a, *Asia Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, *41* (3), p. 318 © Australian Teacher Education Association reprinted by permission of Taylor & Francis Ltd, http://www.tandfonline.com, on behalf of Australian Teacher Education Association
[a]Although China has adopted a market socialist system since the 1980s, central planning has been still a regular national practice, which takes place every 5 years

fundamentally and historically legitimized by a hybridity of ideological, social, and cultural forces, such as Confucian tradition, Maoism, and Deweyan progressivism.

In addition to these tradition and mentality, China's quest for world-class teachers and the formation of the above policy documents since the 1990s are also supported by a number of modern theories. Among them, the modernization theory and the human capital theory are the two most popular in China.

The modernization theory primarily originates from the evolutionary theory and functionalist theory (So, 1990, pp. 19–23) and is an interdisciplinary interpretation of social development. Alex Inkeles and his followers argued that "to modernize is to develop, and that a society cannot hope to develop until the majority of its population holds modern values" (as cited in Fagerlind & Saha, 1989, p. 16). As a psychologist attempting to explain economic growth, David McClelland (1961) argued that the "need for achievement" or "achievement motivation" is behind the drive for economic growth at national and personal levels.

Chinese leaders have kept pursuing modernization as a national goal for decades. Initially suggested by Chairman Mao Zedong, the four modernizations, i.e., modernization of agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology, were first officially introduced by Premier Zhou Enlai in *The Government Work Report* at the Third National People's Congress in 1964. It was not until during the late 1970s that this theory was fully embraced by Chinese government, led by Deng Xiaoping, toward accelerating China's modernization process.[1]

Deng Xiaoping (1992) believed that "development is the hard truth" (p. 377) and that education has a strategic role for building China's national strength. Since the late 1970s, neoliberal Chinese leaders such as Deng Xiaoping have tried hard to pursue a path of modernization at all levels and all aspects of the country and have shown a strong national achievement motivation to catch up with countries such as Canada, France, Germany, Japan, the UK, and the USA. Their efforts have resulted in radical socioeconomic and educational development, including more coverage of compulsory education nationwide, higher education expansion, reorganizing school system and structure, improving the overall quality of education, and reforming teacher education systems.

Chinese leaders also have strong beliefs in the human capital theory. The human capital theorists look at education and training as capital investment instead of expenditure, in the sense of raising earnings and productivity, and assume that "education and training are the most important investments in human capital" (Becker, 1993, p. 17). Based on these assumptions, human capital theorists advocate that education is powerful and instrumental for individuals' economic returns (Mincer, 1958) and plays a pivotal role in the socioeconomic development especially for poor and developing countries. Since 1980 when Theodore W. Schultz first visited China, human capital theory has been popularly accepted by key policymakers and

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[1]See Hsu (2000), pp. 803–816.

influential scholars in China. In its 714 pages, *A Theme Report of China's Education and Human Capital Resource Development: Stride from a Country of Tremendous Population to a Country of Profound Human Resources* lays out rich data to argue that "human capital promotes economic growth and societal development through multiple ways" and that "after education is developed, human capital is then developed, so is economy, and eventually national power" (The Project Team, 2003, p. 13; p. 31). Since education contributes to a nation's economic productivity and growth, and teachers are responsible for transforming general laborers into specialists and skilled workers (Zhang, 1995, p. 149), the human capital theory becomes one of the major theories on which teacher education policy is based.

Chinese policymakers have had firm belief in the modernization theory and the human capital theory and practically applied them as the rationales for teacher education reform. As unveiled by Ashmore and Cao (1997), Chinese policymakers have prescribed "that education is the best hope for revitalizing the Chinese nation and that the hope for revitalizing education abides in the teachers" (p. 70). For example, the CPCCC and the State Council clearly stated that "education is the foundation of socialist construction of modernization . . . . education is the hope for rejuvenating our nation, and the hope for rejuvenating education relies on teachers" (1993, February 13). In 1996, the SCE elaborated the rationale for teacher education reform as the following:

> Making teacher education a success and training a highly qualified teaching profession shall have profound impact on the development of schooling, the quality improvement of the whole Chinese people as a nation, the implementation of the strategy of national rejuvenation through science and education and that of sustainable development, and propelling economic development and promoting all-round social progress. (The SCE, 1996, December 5)

In subsequent years, the Chinese government repeatedly urged that high-quality education is the foundation of socialist construction of modernization and a highly qualified teacher workforce is the key to promoting quality education (The CPCCC & the State Council, 1999, June 13; The State Council, 2001, May 29; The State Council, 2010, May 5). The rationales for teacher education reform have been theorized by Chinese policymakers as the following equation:

$$TE \rightarrow CT \rightarrow QE/SA \rightarrow QLF \rightarrow MD/EG \rightarrow NAC$$

By this simplified equation, Chinese leaders formulate that a better system for teacher education (TE) prepares more competent teachers (CT), better prepared teachers improve the quality of education and student achievement (QE/SA), higher educational quality and student achievement brings about higher quality of labor force (QLF), and higher quality of the labor force tremendously benefits the country's modernization, development, and economic growth (MD/EG) and eventually leads to China's national achievement and competitiveness (NAC). Based on these assumptions, teacher education becomes the first and foremost domain of the reform for excellence. This instrumentalist view of rationales for the national

reform of teacher education is deeply rooted in a Confucian tradition of the practicality of *Zhong-Yong*[2] (Li, 2016b). Such a pragmatism can be widely observed in almost all national reforms vibrantly ongoing in China in recent decades.

Policy Problems

The diagnosis of substantial problems is often the first step for policy action, and problem identification is "crucial in setting agenda" (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 280). Over the past decades, teachers have been often blamed by political leaders for lack of expected performance, and teacher educators have been targeted as being one of the problems associated with low student achievements and socioeconomic development in a global context, as witnessed by Townsend and Bates (2007). Darling-Hammond and Lieberman (2012) have observed that in Australia, the UK, and the USA, teacher education has been first positioned as a "training problem," then as a "learning problem," and more recently as a "policy problem" (p. 168).

These policy problems are not uncommon in China. In each policy document listed earlier, similar policy problems are usually identified first before any policy actions are introduced. In 1999, the *Opinion on Adjusting the Structure of Teacher Education Institutions* concluded that the development of the country's teacher education could not cope with the sociopolitical demand of "The Three Orientations of Education"[3] and that the reform and development of teacher education were unable to provide quality education for socioeconomic development (The MOE, 1999, March 16). For example, teacher supply by TEIs was insufficient, their structure and allocation were inefficient, their quality was unacceptable, and their pedagogies, programs, and teaching methods failed to meet the needs of quality education. Meanwhile, normal schools were over expanded, and teacher candidates were in short supply (The MOE, 1999, March 16). The document concluded that the quality and efficiency of teacher education programs must be addressed by reform.

In 2002, The MOE continuously identified the problems of teacher education as the following:

1. The policy of "giving priority to teacher education development" has not been fully carried out, funding support and investment are still insufficient, and the comparatively unsatisfactory condition of normal colleges and universities hampers the development of teacher education.

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[2]Please also refer to "Final Remarks: A Chinese Zhong-Yong Model of Policy Implementation" in the last chapter (pp. 203–205).

[3]That *education should be geared toward modernization, toward the world and toward the future* was originally proposed by Deng Xiaoping when he visited Beijing Jingshan School (Deng, 1983, October 1). The message was later abbreviated as *The Three Orientations of Education*, which has served as the most important policy guideline for China's education reform ever since.

2. The distribution, structure, mechanism, and openness of teacher education are not acceptable; reinforcement of the institutional construction of teacher education is imperative.
3. The concepts, curricula and contents, and teaching methods of teacher education do not meet the demand of educational modernization and quality education.
4. The qualification and professionalism of the teaching workforce are generally not up to standards (The MOE, 2002, February 6).

In 2012, The State Council issued *The Opinion on the Enhancement of the Teaching Workforce*, a more recent national policy document. It reiterates that "the overall quality of our teaching force has to be further improved, its structure and management are not optimized yet, and the attractiveness of teaching job as a profession needs to be urgently upraised in rural areas" (The State Council, 2012, August 20).

These stated problems in teacher education have been highlighted by Chinese leaders and policymakers, who based their understanding on data analysis and demographic trend. For example, they forecasted that just in the senior high school level, there would have a shortage of 1.2 million teachers in the early 2000s (The Project Team, 2003, p. 318). From these policy documents, major problems in teacher education are associated with TEIs. In other words, the status quo of TEIs has to be reformed and changed.

Policy Goals and Guidelines

Based on the rationales for teacher education reform, Chinese policymakers lay out the major policy goal for teacher education reform as "building up a highly qualified teacher workforce" (The MOE, 2002, February 6). Article Three of *The Teachers' Law* (1993) defines that "teachers are specialized personnel who fulfill the function of education and teaching" (The NPC Standing Committee, 1993, October 31). Article Four further mandates the fundamental responsibilities of government for the promotion of the teaching profession and teacher education as the following:

> The governments at all levels should adopt measures to strengthen the ideological-political education and professional training of teachers, to improve the working and living conditions of teachers, to ensure the legitimate rights and interests of teachers, and to raise the social status of teachers. Everyone in our society should respect teachers. (The NPC Standing Committee, 1993, October 31)

At the same time, The CPCCC and the State Council (1993) articulated the following guiding principles for teacher education reform:

> Education is the hope for rejuvenating our nation, and the hope for rejuvenating education relies on teachers. The core approach for educational reform and development is to build up a relatively stable teacher workforce with an optimized structure and an excellent political and professional quality. [We] must be firmly committed to adopting key policies and

strategies to promote teachers' social status, to significantly improve their working, learning and living conditions, and to make them the most respectable profession (The CPCCC & the State Council, 1993, February 13).

The goals and guidelines for world-class teacher education stated in the CPCCC and the State Council's jointly issued document have been reiterated over and over in the ensuing years by various local governments at all levels (The CPCCC & the State Council, 1999, June 13; the MOE, 1999, March 16; 2001, July 26; 2002, February 6; 2004, February 10; the SCE, 1996, April 10; 1996, December 5; The State Council, 2001, May 29). In February 2002, the MOE specified a series of guidelines for teacher education reform and development during the period of the Tenth Five-Year National Plan (2001–2005). Particularly, the guidelines called for ongoing, structural adjustment for TEIs and urged actions to be taken to strengthen normal colleges and universities for teacher education. It also required TEIs to actively speed up the applications of information technology for teacher education reform (The MOE, 2002, February 6).

The core of the goals and guidelines for teacher education reform is the promotion of teacher quality to meet the demand of world-class education under radical social changes. These policy goals and guidelines set steadfast directions for the reform of TEIs.

Tasks and Strategies

For fulfilling the above policy goals and guidelines, a number of tasks and their corresponding strategies have been pinpointed, updated, and adjusted from time to time. In 1993, the CPCCC and the State Council's *Guidelines for China's Education Reform and Development* addressed the promotion of the social status of the teaching profession as a major task to enhance teacher education (The CPCCC & the State Council, 1993, February 13). This call was made against the context that the radical transition from a centrally planned economy to a market-oriented economy had made the teaching profession "proletarianized" since the late 1980s, alongside the booming of vibrant private business.

In the mid-1990s when overall enrollments in elementary, junior, and senior high schools soared sharply, TEIs were under high pressure due to a large demand of teachers. The then State Commission of Education (1996, December 5) stipulated the following major task for teacher education reform to increase the output of teachers:

> [We must] overall carry out [socialist] educational guidelines, adhere to the direction of socialist schooling, focus on teaching reform, thoroughly speed up every reform of teacher education . . . to *satisfy the demand of teachers with sufficient quantity and reasonable quality,*[4] build a socialist, lifelong learning teacher education system featured with Chinese characteristics, and gradually accomplish the modernization of teacher education. (The SCE, 1996, December 5)

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[4]Italics added by the author.

In 1996, the SCE's *Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education* set one of its tasks explicitly as improving teacher quality through reforming TEIs for the first time: "Teacher education institutions at all levels are required to plan for the construction of their teaching contingents, to gradually set up regular system for teachers' further education, to well-echelon teacher teams, and to improve their competence of teaching and research" (The SCE, 1996, December 5). In 1999, the MOE realized that the average size of normal colleges and universities was too small whereas that of normal schools was too large for two reasons: (1) the peak wave of student population in elementary schools was over by the late 1990s, and (2) all entrants in the teaching profession would be required by 2010 to graduate at least from a normal professional college. Chinese policymakers therefore decided the major task for teacher education reform was to adjust the system structure for TEIs, targeted at largely increasing the size of normal colleges and universities but significantly reducing that of normal schools by the early 2000s (The MOE, 1999, March 16).

In 2002, the MOE released the *Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education during the Tenth Five-year National Plan* (The MOE, 2002, February 6). This guiding document concluded that during the period of the Tenth Five-Year National Plan (2001–2005), new challenges for teacher education were quality assurance, system reconstruction, and setting policy priorities for teacher education reform. The three major tasks were stated by the document as the following:

1. Generally complete the structure adjustment for teacher education and further improve the teacher education system. Set up an appropriate size and structure for TEIs, build an open teacher education system counted primarily on TEIs, participated by other HEIs, integrate preservice and in-service training, and promote lifelong learning.
2. Create a new situation in training teachers and improve educational qualifications for new teachers. Gradually transform into a teacher education system with three levels: sub-degree, undergraduate, and graduate programs.
3. Deepen teaching reform and improve teaching quality. TEIs must update their educational pedagogies, redouble their efforts toward structure adjustment of programs, continuously enforce the reform on training models and curricular systems, and improve training quality.

To ensure these tasks would be accomplished, MOE (2002, February 6) sketched out several strategies such as adjusting the structure of teacher education and efficiently reorganizing its resources, setting up new standards and requirements for teacher education, updating teaching contents and methods, enlarging student enrolment in the M.Ed. programs, working on teacher training for the NCRBE, as mentioned earlier, reinforcing efforts on the applications of information technologies for teacher education, constructing a highly qualified teacher corps for world-class teacher education, and enhancing the licensing system for teacher qualification.

Based on these tasks and strategies, TEIs were urged to enhance the teaching quality of teacher education courses, to set up the new M.Ed. programs for in-service teachers and principals, to update contents and methods of teacher education courses, to strengthen special characteristics of teacher education, and to optimize resources available for teacher education.

In sum, the multiple tasks and strategies outlined by Chinese policymakers at different periods have greatly shaped the reform of teacher education. The ultimate goals and tasks were obvious: to reconstruct and optimize the teacher education system to allow for diversity, to produce a world-class teaching workforce, and to transform TEIs for a more professional teacher workforce by setting higher standards.

Although Lin and Xun (2001) concluded that "the recent 20 years are the best time for China's teacher education, during which a rapid development with fruitful outcomes has been enhanced" (p. 5), great challenges remain for the long-standing reform. For example, the policy of "giving priority to teacher education development" has not been fully implemented, there is still a severe shortage of financial support and investment, and TEIs' facilities are inadequate as compared to other types of HEIs. In particular, teacher shortages in certain areas continued to exert serious pressure on teacher education programs (Chang & Paine, 1992, pp. 84–88; Paine, 1992, pp. 184–187). In addition, the pedagogies, curricula, and teaching strategies of teacher education do not meet well the needs of promoting a world-class education, and teachers' educational qualifications and their professionalism are still unsatisfactory (The MOE, 2002, February 6).

Studies on China's Teacher Education Reform

As a global issue, teacher education reform has been widely concerned (Shimahara, 1995). A vast number of studies have emerged on China's policy case since the mid-1990s (e.g., Chen, Zhu, Hu, Guo, & Sun, 2003; Cheng, Chow, & Tsui, 2001; Cooke, 2000; Deng, 2002; The MOE Department of Teacher Education, 2001; Dooley, 2001; Finkelstein & Efthimiou, 2000; Gideonse, 1992; Gu, 2003; Gu & Shan, 2004; Guan, 2001, 2003; Guo, 1999, April 14–19, 2005, 2008, 2015; Hagin, 2012; Han, 2012; Hawkins, 1992; Hayhoe, 1998, 2001, 2002; Kaplan & Edelfelt, 1996; Leung & Xu, 2000; Li, 1999; Lin & Xun, 2001; Liu & Xie, 2002; Long & Riegle, 2002; McBride, 1996; Paine, 1992, 1995; Paine & Fang, 2006; Pepper, 1996; Sato & Asanuma, 2000; Shen, 1994; Wang, 1997; Zeichner, Melnick, & Gomez, 1996; Zhang & Li, 2008; Zhou, 2014). Of the various studies on China's teacher education reform, four research themes have emerged: historical reviews, policy analyses, practical deliberations, and international and comparative studies.

Historical Reviews

The publication of *A Brief History of China's Teacher Education* (*Zhongguo Shifan Jiaoyu Jianshi*), published in 1984 by Liu Wenxiu, ended the neglect of research on the history of teacher education in China. This pioneering book divided the establishment and development of Chinese teacher education into five historical stages and concluded that teacher education is the key to the development of China's national education system (Liu, 1984, p. 175). Liu's influential narrations of the history carved out the way for the research area, though his research scope was limited to the period before 1949.

At the centennial commemoration of the establishment of China's modern teacher education system, Wang Bingzhao (1997), an influential figure in the field of Chinese history of education, briefly reviewed the historical development of modern teacher education in China up to 1997. Wang (1997) concluded that the two contradictory traditions of Chinese culture, i.e., respect of teachers, rooting in Confucianism, and the nonprofessional status of teachers, have an offsetting impact on teachers' societal position.

After uncovering the two development stages of the modern teacher education system, Wang (1997) argued that the reform of teacher education must address the following four issues: (1) the varied demand of raising teachers' educational qualification in dissimilar areas, (2) the narrowed system of teacher education designed exclusively for regular elementary and secondary schools, (3) the balance of profession orientation and academic orientation in teacher education, and (4) the combination of preservice and in-service education for teachers (p. 9). His conclusion is continuously supported by Guo (2015), who further argues that the reform of teacher education in recent decades is fundamentally and historically shaped by a hybridity of ideological, social, and cultural forces in China, such as Confucian tradition, Maoism, and Deweyan progressivism.

In addition to the historical reviews presented by Liu (1984) and Wang (1997), recent scholarship has reflected on the practices of teacher education in China. Liu and Xie (2002) highlight the long-standing debate on the relationship between the profession-oriented model and the academic-oriented model in teacher education. The "profession-oriented" model means that normal colleges and universities set a high priority on pedagogical learning (professional development) for teacher-students but tends to give less emphasis to cross-disciplinary curricula, the areas that are highly emphasized by comprehensive universities. On the contrary, the "academic-oriented" model sets the same standards for academic curricula as those offered by comprehensive universities, but the pedagogical focus and the identity of teachers tend to be deemphasized or left out. Liu and Xie (2002) document that, while some analysts argued that teacher education must be based on a profession-oriented model, others contended that it should focus on an academic-oriented model, and still others insisted on balancing both options at some point (p. 185). The debate is in fact about the different models of teacher education system, i.e., whether or not to have an independent, closed, or an open, hybrid system. On the other hand,

some researchers have argued, from the historical review from the early 1970s up to date, that the landscape of teacher education has not changed considerably in China and that most problems of teacher education have remained unsolved, especially at the micro-institutional level (Zhou, 2014).

Policy Analyses

Policy analysts and other researchers have shown strong interest in the scenarios of China's teacher education reform in recent decades. Paine (1992) observes that China has introduced technical strategies to strengthen its teacher education system to attract better students, to enhance the curriculum and teaching, and to establish high standards (pp. 227–234). Paine (1995) discusses the challenge for Chinese teacher education by looking into two competing discourses, "modernizing" and "nationalizing" perspectives. The "modernizing" view typically links teachers' needs and teacher education reform to economic and technological development or modernization; the "nationalizing" view stresses teachers' moral role and the social obligations of teacher education (pp. 84–92). She argues that the conflicting views share an initial premise about the importance of teacher education and its need for reform but differ from each other in their interpretations of the system's problems and their corresponding solutions (Paine, 1995, p. 89).

Following such accounts, Shen (1994) focuses on teacher education reform in China under the national drive toward modernization and a market-based economy and discussed how the teacher education curriculum is changing in response to the daunting challenges established by the national goals. Li (1999) studies the recent reform of teacher education in China by looking into four primary measures: the establishment of a nationwide network of teacher preparation and professional development, the launching of nationwide upgrading and improvement in the qualifications of in-service teachers, the building of nationwide respect for teachers, and the improvement of the treatment of teachers (salaries, living and working conditions) (pp. 181–183).

Similar to Shen (1994) and Li (1999), Lin and Xun (2001) document the developmental path of China's teacher education system by looking into its economic context. They outlined new trends in the development of teacher education, such as that training senior high schoolteachers would take place in an open system rather than in a closed system, that newly trained elementary schoolteachers would have an elevated academic qualification, and that there would be fewer independently established TEIs (pp. 21–22). Meanwhile, Ashmore and Cao (1997) acknowledge that the large number of unqualified teachers and normal schools creates obstacles for teacher education reform (pp. 75–77).

Appealing for the reconstruction of teacher education system in China (Zhu, 2009), Zhu (2012) identifies ten emergent problems of teacher education, including the separation of the teacher certification system from the open teacher education system, the unfair internal budgeting structure for TEIs, the inefficiency of TEIs, the

lack of an accreditation system and standards of quality assurance for TEIs, the low quality of undergraduate students admitted to teacher education programs, and the snail's pace in the development of a modern teacher education system. Furthermore, Peng et al. (2014) identify that the problems of the provision of good-quality teaching arose largely from the pressures due to changing societal patterns and the demands of far reaching curriculum reform.

Su, Hawkins, Huang, and Zhao (2001) provide empirical findings of some identifiers of equity from a national study of teacher education in China, in comparison to similar data from both the national level and case studies in the USA. They confirm that teacher education students came from less privileged backgrounds in terms of socioeconomic status and academic preparation. Although they shared some altruistic ideas about becoming teachers, the overwhelming majority did not intend to commit to teaching as a lifelong career. The authors cite the low status of the teaching profession and the poor benefits for teachers as primary reasons for leaving teaching and urge policymakers and teacher educators to revise their policies and practices if they hoped to recruit qualified young people into teacher education programs and more importantly to retain good teachers in the profession.

There are a number of other policy analyses that addressed China's reform of teacher education at the local level. Although the teacher education system was largely restored in the 1980s after the chaos of the Cultural Revolution, Ma (2000) pointed out that several major problems greatly hamper the development of the teacher education system, taking the case of teacher education system in Shanghai. For example, current TEIs were managed with little consideration by various governmental offices at different levels, and limited resources for teacher education were not efficiently allocated and utilized (Ma, 2000, pp. 101–102). Most recently, a special issue by *the Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education* provides rich narratives on frontline teachers' responses to China's national reform of teacher education in contexts of challenge and change (Gu, 2015). In particular, Lo, Lai, and Wang (2015) offer the policy context where the dynamics of interacting societal forces have created the dilemmas for the teachers and argue that the continual implementation of the reform has caused much anxiety among teachers.

Additionally, there have some additional analyses that addressed the reform of teacher education at the institutional level. Zhu (2008) reflects on TEIs' institutional transformations with the reconfiguration of teacher education related faculties, schools, colleges, and centers and speculated that the movement was necessary to bring about greater specialization of modern HEIs, to ensure the optimization of resources for teacher education programs, and to explore new models for teacher education in China.

Taking the three cases of East China Normal University (ECNU), Southwest University (SWU), and Yanbian University (YBU), Li (2010) argues that three different "logics" drive TEIs' institutional development, i.e., the internal strategies of the institutions, the economic pressures of the socialist market economy, and the political policies of the state. She illustrates in greater detail the ways in which reliance on government and market resources had put these universities into a dilemma. On the one hand, they wanted to retain their original characteristics so

as to preserve their leading position in the "market" of teacher education, but on the other, they needed to merge, expand, restructure, and enhance their quality as they pursued overall development. The analyses of these cases showed that TEIs' need for self-development, which was the internal determinant, played a critical role in their transformations. At the same time, the socioeconomic environment and national policies influenced them while they demonstrated considerable capacity for self-adjustment. Finally, she concludes that different logics have tended to interact with one another to determine the developmental direction, strategies, and model of universities in different historical periods.

Practical Reflections

Apart from historical reviews and policy analyses, practical deliberations for future policy actions and reflections on the reform have been richly published on China's teacher education reform (Feng, 2001; Gu, 2003; Han, 2003; Hayhoe & Li, 2010; Lian, 2003; Lin, 2003; Liu, 2002; Ye, 2003; Zhang & Xue, 2002; Zhong, 2001, 2003; Zhu, 2001a, b, 2009; Zhu & Han, 2006). The Project Team of East China Normal University (2001) envisaged a dynamic teacher education system with high quality as follows: a dynamic teacher education system is an open teacher education system providing high-quality teacher education, that normal colleges and universities would become the major providers of teacher education, and the new system must be based on the transformation to a professionalized teacher workforce (pp. 2–3). In 2003, the MOE held the National Meeting on Teacher Education Reform and Development. The Meeting envisioned a new teacher education system led by prestigious universities, carried out by TEIs, participated by non-TEIs, and complemented with qualification and non-qualification training (Liu & Xu, 2003, p. 5). These future speculations have been hotly debated by policymakers as well as researchers.

Some researchers are not satisfied with these speculations for teacher education in the future. Instead, they reflect on their own experiments or case studies for teacher development and point to new directions in the efforts of teacher education reform. For instance, "teachers as reflective researchers" has been viewed by them as an alternative to enhance the teacher workforce. Teachers as reflective researchers is generally accepted as a "systematic and intentional inquiry carried out by teachers in their own schools and classrooms" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 7; Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1994, p. 24) and teacher researchers are able to "revolutionize professional practice by viewing themselves as potentially the most sophisticated research instrument available" (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 52). From this point of view, Ye (2000) spells out that a new type of teacher can be nurtured through the practice of school reform (p. 58). In her experiment on combining teaching with research for the NCRBE, Ye (2000) concludes that the combination of theoretical research and practical research in school reform benefits the professional development of the new type of teachers in many ways (pp. 60–62). For example, theoretical research

paves the way for broadening teachers' knowledge and perspectives and provides teachers with basic principles and guidelines for day-to-day practices. In addition, the combination of theoretical research and teaching helps teachers to change their performance. Ye (1997) observes, however, that the strategic priority of teacher education reform is still a far cry from the reality of policy actions today (p. 8). On the other hand, Li (2010) demonstrates how three different "logics," as introduced earlier, have driven the developmental model of TEIs, with detailed comparison of three leading universities for teacher education.

International and Comparative Studies

Teacher education in China has been compared with others in an international context (Hayhoe, 2002; Hayhoe & Li, 2010). Hayhoe distinguishes four models of the modern development of teacher education through a comparative historical analysis of three Western and three Asian societies:

- Model A: normal colleges absorbed into major comprehensive universities as faculties of education (USA, UK, Japan)
- Model B: normal colleges upgraded to become universities of education or local comprehensive universities in which faculties of education play a leading role and shape the ethos (USA, UK, Japan)
- Model C: normal colleges merged into independent university level institutes that cooperate with universities in the training of teachers for primary and secondary schools but have their own separate legal existence (France)
- Model D: normal colleges upgraded to or integrated within normal universities that retain a strong profile as single purpose universities focused on the teaching profession (Mainland China, Taiwan, China; 2002, pp. 16–17)

After comparing the four models of teacher education, Hayhoe (2002) notes that Model D, which is found in Mainland China and Taiwan, tends to see the school sector as separate and distinct from society as a whole and gives little attention to how professional areas of study might relate to the wider needs of a learning society.

Hayhoe's critique is supported by other studies in different ways. Dooley (2001) offered a case study conducted in Shanghai, vividly describing how "obedient students" are mechanically trained by teachers who received professional education from independent, closed and narrowly specified TEIs. As a result, four problems of teacher education were identified by Leung and Xu (2000), including identity crisis, the mismatch between teacher supply and demand, the incongruence between teacher preparation and classroom realities, and the poor appeal of teaching as a career.

Models of teacher education system from other countries are believed to be able to provide valuable international experiences. Chinese scholars have actively examined the transformation of teacher education models in major developed nations such as Australia, Singapore, the UK, and the USA. Zhu (2001b) introduces

to Chinese scholars the USA model of Professional Development Schools (PDS) and the British model of School-Based Education (SBE). Meanwhile, He studies the theoretical background of those models, such as the discourse on teachers as professional learners, teachers as reflective researchers, and teachers as transformative intellectuals (Zhu, 2001b, pp. 55–57). Researchers also extend their attention to the Japanese teacher education system. Based on his comparison of Chinese teacher education with its counterpart in Japan, Xie (1995) articulates that the reform of the teacher education system in China cannot simply follow Japan, which adopted an open model after Second World War, because China currently faced a drastically different situation (p. 22). He hints that the transformation of China's teacher education system should follow a gradual, transitional path from the independent, closed system to an open one.

The Shortage of Implementation Studies

The literature reviewed thus far provides valuable information about the background and issues of China's teacher education reform in recent decades. The persisting national debates surrounding the maintenance of a profession-oriented system as opposed to adoption of an academic-oriented system highlight dilemmas policy-makers and researchers face when examining the reform of teacher education in China. In particular, Lo, Lai, and Wang (2015) offer the policy context where the dynamics of interacting societal forces have created the dilemmas for teachers and argue that the continual implementation of the reform has caused much anxiety among teachers.

Research on the *implementation* of China's teacher education reform, however, is still extremely limited. First, there is a dearth of empirical studies on the implementation of teacher education reform in China. There have been sporadic theoretical debates or general discussions on how to implement the policy of teacher education reform or on the identification of implementation problems, but none has been based on empirical evidence as to how the reform of teacher education had actually been implemented. This is particularly true in examining how China's TEIs have responded to new national initiatives of teacher education reform in recent years. Zhong Binglin (2003), former president of BNU and president of China's Society of Education, proposes several strategies for implementing the national reform of teacher education at the institutional level. He called for leaders to change their perspectives, and for policy implementers to plan scientifically, with sufficient attention to successful foreign experiences (Zhong, 2003, pp. 26–27). However, he does not provide any detailed evidence about how the reform had actually been put into practice and how it had brought about changes in his own university which is a leading institution for teacher education in China.

Secondly, many researchers in Mainland China lack solid training in the disciplinary field of policy studies, especially in the research of implementation. The analyses they presented tend to have been neither rigorously designed with

appropriate analytic frameworks nor conducted by employing a justifiably selected research methodology. Applications of various analytic approaches, such as those exemplified in the pioneering research about the Oakland Project of Social Development by Pressman and Wildavsky (1973), the Cuban Missile Crisis by Allison and Zelikow (1999), or the US Federal Health and Transportation Policymaking by Kingdon (1984), are notably absent in China. In other words, very few studies on China's teacher education reform can be classified as "authentic" policy analyses, simply because only a very limited number of studies tried to apply analytic frameworks commonly used in implementation studies, as similarly observed in the USA in the 1970s by Pressman and Wildavsky (1973, p. 166). Most of these analyses are based on wild personal judgments, bold generalization, or subjective elaboration, without being supported by evidence-based empirical findings. Some are merely policy reviews, personal comments, or judgemental reflections on these national initiatives. Worse still, there is a significant lack of awareness of the need for policy studies of teacher education reform in the Chinese academic community.

Finally, the Chinese policy community tends to cater to the needs of the one-party political system. Critical thinking and alternative theories are hardly attempted in any policy studies. In Chinese academia, it is a common phenomenon that soon after the central government makes a political decision, like the one for teacher education reform, analysts jump into the race of writing articles pledging their unconditional support, citing unconfirmed theories, and producing doubtful findings in an effort to proclaim the "political correctness" of the reform. In this kind of academic culture, there exist no cases of failed implementation as examined by these "policy analysts." Within this research culture, real policy problems are easily neglected or covered up, and unfavorable findings by policy researchers are usually discouraged.

This book attempts to address these gaps. Given the shortage of implementation studies on China's teacher education reform, the research is seriously challenged as an empirical case study by which the complex process of the national policy of teacher education is to be investigated at the micro-institutional level. The next chapter will illustrate how the theories of teachers' roles and identities provide a theoretical base for Chinese policymakers to initiate the national policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s and how the worldwide reforms of teacher education have influenced Chinese policymakers in this period.

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Chapter 4
Why the Policy?

The very core of teacher education reform lies in the redefinition of the identities of the teaching profession in a new global age. It is through teachers' new identities that all other aspects of school system come into contact with learners, making teachers central to any meaningful changes in the practical process of learning, teaching, and schooling. The professional roles of teachers are defined by their identities, which have been a contested ground over decades.

Chinese policymakers have paid serious attention to the international debates around the new identities of teachers, the professional status of teachers, and the worldwide reform of teacher education. Numerous scholarly articles have been published to introduce ideas developed and discussed outside China, and research institutes have been set up in central government offices, universities, and local areas to study trends and changes in teacher education around the world. In their eagerness to build China into a modern country through the development of a high-quality teacher workforce, Chinese policymakers have adopted some ideas for their policymaking from international educational practices.

It is in this context that I will extensively review teachers' new identities and the worldwide trends of teacher education reform to better understand China's policy case. Here I will first review how teachers' new identities are defined by theorists and practitioners from multiple perspectives. Then, I will provide an overview of how worldwide teacher education reform has influenced Chinese policymakers.

New Identities for the Teaching Profession

With industrialization, especially the Second Industrial Revolution in the late nineteenth century, modern school system was born. The mass education campaign in the U.S. led by Horace Mann significantly broadened educational opportunities for all American children, stimulating the need for building a democratic system and

meeting the rising demand for skilled workers in the economy. Growing economic development pressured governments around the world to expand education at primary and secondary levels, and the aggression of capitalism with the globalization movement in the late twentieth century accelerated the process of educational individualization, digitalization, decentralization, and marketization at all levels and in all forms.

These changes resulted in the demand for the transformation of teachers' roles. Furthermore, the radically changing societal context with the advancement of information technology has brought about additional demand for teachers. As OECD's *Teacher Policies: General Report of the Conference* has prescribed:

> The role of the teacher has traditionally been to conserve the values of his society. In pluralistic societies, however, there is no longer a broadly agreed blueprint of values as a guide and the teacher faces rapidly changing patterns of often conflicting versions of the good life . . . .The teacher is no longer one of a small group of educated people in a sea of illiteracy . . . .Teachers are groping for personal and professional authority within changing educational structures. (OECD, 1976, pp. 104–105)

Teachers have become not only the transmitters of moral values, knowledge, and skills but professional agents serving schools and societal development with their professionalism. Day (2013) elaborates on six key reasons that are self-evident to explain why teacher professionalism matters. More concern has been given to the ways in which teachers are prepared by teacher education, as articulated by Darling-Hammond (1995):

> The invention of 21st century schools that can educate all children well rests, first and foremost, upon the development of a highly qualified and committed teaching force. The knowledge, skills, abilities, and commitments of teachers prepared today will shape and inform what is possible for the future generation of students. Though not yet universally recognized, the preparation, induction, and professional development of teachers is the core issue for educational reform. (pp. 9–10)

New identities for the teaching profession and ways in which to transform their roles into classroom practices have become a matter of wide concern in policy arenas all over the world. Numerous debates and discussions encompass such key issues as how teachers' identities are to be redefined at both macro- and micro-levels to benefit learners as well as a democratic society and how teachers are to be developed into professionals by teacher education at preservice and in-service stages. In reviewing these discourses, at least three specific roles of teachers emerge: (a) *professional learners*, (b) *reflective researchers*, and (c) *transformative intellectuals*.

Teachers as Professional Learners

Teachers' identities are usually discussed alongside what teachers learn, for their performance depends largely on their mastery of one or more branches of knowledge as on their ability to inculcate such knowledge and skills (Schwartz,

1976, pp. 114–115). While looking at how teachers are prepared, it makes sense to recall how a well-known proverb in China expects a teacher to be prepared:

> A full pot of water must be prepared before you give students a cup of it.

This saying without a traceable origin expresses the view that teacher learning is the key for students to succeed in learning. Western ideas about teacher learning, in fact, share a similar view to the Chinese notion: "the teacher must have a larger store of information, and have it always ready" (Heidegger 1968, p. 15).

Although it is widely accepted that "professional teachers must be well educated" (Shulman, 1999, p. xiii), the US teacher education was defined primarily as "a learning problem" during the period from the early 1980s through the early 2000s (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 296). For example, the common conviction that professional learning matters to student achievement is missing in policymaking for teacher education. Instead, policy actors tend to believe that reform in curriculum, standards and regulations, assessments, and accountabilities has a positive impact on teachers' performance. But theories on teacher learning, which are comprehensively constructed and empirically validated, that should influence teacher education are not well established. Teacher learning used to be viewed by policymakers as a technical training with particular curricula and methods. In addition, a comprehensive vision and perspective for coordination of professional learning across time, sites, and purposes are needed for the practice of teacher education. As a result, Ball and Cohen (1999) observe that:

> We confront an educational system that seems poorly equipped to produce deeper and more complex learning in students as well as teachers. Weak teacher education, inherited conservative traditions, and little professional capacity for learning and change combine to inhibit reform. (p. 5)

These learning problems, however, are not limited to the US policy arena. They have also drawn wide attention in many other countries.

International Perspectives

What and how prospective teachers should learn have had various answers among policy players in varying international contexts. For instance, Schwartz (1976) identified four principles which teacher education should draw attention to in the French setting (pp. 114–115). In his view, the teacher must be capable of transmitting knowledge and skills, enable students to fit his or her acquired knowledge into a pattern, and develop students' methods of thinking and acting. The teacher must also be able to evaluate the results obtained and to teach the students themselves how to evaluate the opportunities available to them. Long and Long (1999) portray a Russian model of what prospective teachers need to learn (p. 186). In their view, teachers need to be "students of teaching" with three important characteristics: (1) having basic skills that enable them to succeed in the

initial years of teaching, (2) possessing a large stock of teaching techniques and methodologies effective in helping students to learn, and (3) teaching a coherent curriculum that is sustainable.

In Mainland China, theorists have proposed that teachers must learn how to learn, have the "right perspectives" on talents and students, and be capable of nurturing the creative spirit and practical skills of students (Zhu, 2003, pp. 64–65). There is, however, nationwide debate about how the contents of teacher education are programmed, which arise from the question of specialization (Chang & Paine; 1992, p. 81). In Taiwan, Chen (2001) introduces a model of course design and instructional strategies for preparing elementary school teachers. In his model general courses are programmed to increase general understanding of liberal arts, specialized courses enhance deeper understanding of content knowledge based on a students' chosen discipline area, and professional courses build comprehensive understanding of educational foundations and cultivate professional knowledge and skills (Chen, 2001, p. 265).

Perspectives from the USA

American theorists and policy actors have a growing awareness that "what teachers know has substantial influence on what students learn" (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1999, p. 377). Based on her understanding of how students construct their knowledge using multiple intelligences and diverse approaches to learning, Darling-Hammond (1995) calls for teachers to "build a rich knowledge base and develop tools for accessing student thinking, for understanding students' prior knowledge and background, and for connecting to students' families and communities" (pp. 12–13). She specifies a number of factors that matter for teaching: The importance of having the flexibility to teach adaptively, the importance of having close relationships with students in order to know them well and motivate them, and the critical need to focus on learning rather than on the implementation of procedures (1997, pp. 71–91). Darling-Hammond (1997) further advocates a practice-based and leaner-centered teacher learning. For example, she views teaching and learning as "reciprocal" in teaching practice, with learning experiences continually reshaped by students' changing needs and understandings (p. 118).

Some theorists have provided alternative policy orientations for teacher learning. Ball and Cohen (1999) propose five fundamental guidelines for constructing the knowledge teachers need to learn as professional learners (pp. 7–10). They believe that teachers need to learn the subject matter they will teach in ways quite different from those they learned as students. Teachers need to understand, in addition to their knowledge about subjects, what children are like, what they are likely to find interesting, and what they are likely to have trouble with in particular situations. They also believe that teachers need to become acquainted with cultural differences in which languages, classes, families, communities, and gender are taken into

account. In their view, integrating knowledge and teaching practice should be central to teachers' roles. They therefore recommend practice-based professional learning by incorporating professional education with teachers' practice. Their proposal aims at fundamentally changing teaching and teacher education with a "pedagogy of professional development" (1999, p. 25), which is considered as "a continuum of learning, with (the) teacher located at various places along the continuum" (Craig, Kraft, & Plessis, 1998, pp. 1–3).

In the continuum of teachers' professional learning, Sykes (1999) further elaborates on the relationship of teacher professional development and student learning. The teacher-student learning connection should, in his argument, serve as a criterion for selection of professional and school development activity, while policy provides the broad framework for teacher and student learning (pp. 161–171).

In addition to tightening the connection between teacher learning and student learning, policymakers and stakeholders are expected to provide opportunities to integrate teachers' professional learning into a supportive school environment on an organizational basis. Little (1999) identifies the diverse aspects of organizing the school community for teacher learning as follows:

> Teacher learning arises out of close involvement with students and their work, shared responsibility for student progress, sensibly organized time and space, access to the expertise of colleagues inside and [an] overall ethos in which teacher learning is valued. (p. 233)

Apart from detailing these factors that have a direct impact on teacher learning, Little (1999) emphasizes a key shift from discrete staff development activities or programs toward a view of a school's organizational capacity to support teacher learning (p. 257).

Whatever teachers need to learn, policymaking and implementation are likely the keys to providing initiatives for improving teacher preparation, development, and practice. In order to link policymaking with investment in teaching as a learning profession, Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1999) outline specific recommendations for policy actions:

> (1) Attract, recruit, and retain people in teaching who have the ability and disposition to teach well; (2) help teachers – and the profession as a whole – develop strong professional norms, knowledge, and skills; and (3) create incentives and organizational conditions that support teachers' and students' learning in schools. (p. 382)

In addressing these policy orientations, the ultimate challenge to policy players lies in the practicality of the tight connections between teacher learning and student learning, since "student learning is the ultimate justification for teacher learning" (Sykes, 1999, p. 175). Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1999) suggest a number of strategic options for policymakers (pp. 385–390). One example would be standard-based strategies aimed at establishing goals for teachers' professional performance to speed up changes in student learning goals, curriculum, and assessment. The effectiveness of these strategic approaches may vary from one to another, but all depend on the extent to which they create more effective environments for and approaches to teachers' professional learning; they also depend on the extent

to which teachers encounter comprehensive, cumulative, and reinforcing learning opportunities over the course of their careers.

Early in the 1960s, Bruner (1960) revealed that "if the teacher is also learning, teaching takes on a new quality. The teacher is also an immediately personal symbol of the educational process, a figure with whom students can identify and compare themselves" (p. 90). In this sense, the notion of teachers as professional learners has particular meaning to student achievement. Policymakers must first demonstrate close attention to teacher learning and then create a tight connection between policy and teaching.

Teachers as Reflective Researchers

The notion of teachers as reflective researchers has been debated for decades as a new identity for teachers in the policy arena. This section provides the background, definition, and various models of teacher research, compares them with studies on teaching, and discusses the relationship of teacher research and teacher professional development.

Background and Definition

Teacher research has roots in action research. Kurt Lewin, an American social psychologist and educator, employed action research to bring social science directly into a "natural setting" of social practice in the 1940s. Lewin is "credited with coining the term 'action research' to describe work that did not separate the investigation from the action needed to solve the problem" (McFarland & Stansell, 1993, p. 14). Action research is viewed as an effective instrument that improves teacher performance, because teachers will not only put back into practice their own findings and reflections but also they will pragmatically contribute to a general body of theoretical knowledge in education.

Teachers as Researchers appeared as a term first in the late 1960s and was put forward by Lawrence Stenhouse (1985). He advocated that teachers should also work as researchers engaged in activities of "doing" where ethical qualities are integrated in both research and practice. Teacher research has gradually been embraced by teachers, researchers, and policy players because of the difficulties of applying quantitative experimental methodologies to complicated human settings and the rapid rise of qualitative inquiry.

In addition, teachers are not satisfied with research where "teachers are 'studied down' in the sense that those who control the research use their inquiry to inform themselves about their subordinates (mere practitioners), later using their information to manipulate and control them" (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 35). To Kincheloe, McLaren, and Steinberg (2011), promoting teachers as researchers is "a fundamen-

tal way of cleaning up the damage of deskilled models of teaching that infantilize teachers by giving them scripts to read to their students" (p. 166) and to empower teachers to develop their own critical expertise, experiences, and involvements in policy actions.

Teacher research is commonly used as a kind of umbrella term to define a wide range of practices and is generally accepted as "systematic and intentional inquiry carried out by teachers in their own schools and classrooms" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 7; Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1994, p. 24). "Systematic" refers primarily to ordered ways of gathering and recording information, documenting experiences inside and outside of classrooms, and making some kind of written record, while "intentional" deliberates learning. "Inquiry" means to make sense of teachers' experiences in the classroom by generating questions or reflecting their desires (Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1990, p. 84). This definition places teachers at the center of the stage and identifies them as key actors in developing important ideas and carrying out procedures; it emphasizes the need for teachers to have a voice in their classrooms and to reclaim them. Through their own involvement in research, teachers are able to improve their judgment and their own classroom practices (Rudduck & Hopkins, 1985).

Teacher Research and Teacher Professional Development

Teacher researchers are able to "revolutionize professional practice by viewing themselves as potentially the most sophisticated research instrument available" (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 52). Teacher research enhances the roles played by teachers in classrooms, school communities, and society in many ways. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) argue that teacher research has merit for the teaching community as well as the academic community (pp. 18–20).

Zeichner (1994) outlines four contributions of teacher research to generating knowledge. Firstly, teacher research empowers teachers to generate knowledge and theories for teacher education that have traditionally been produced and dominated by university-based academics (Zeichner, 1994, p. 70). Secondly, a large volume of data indicates that teacher research facilitates teacher development by boosting confidence, narrowing the gap between aspirations and realizations, revising personal theories of teaching, and internalizing the need for continuous study of their teaching practice over time (Zeichner, 1994, p. 73). Thirdly, despite criticisms of teachers for the narrowness of their research, there are in fact many cases of teacher research which have resulted in significant changes at the institutional level, such as changes in school policies and authorities (Zeichner, 1994, p. 77). Finally, teacher research helps teachers to play a conscious role in the social environment of schools, to examine the social and political implications of their own actions, and to act in ways which promote the realization of democratic values (Zeichner, 1994, p. 79).

In addition to Zeichner's general suggestions, there are some other specific benefits for teacher development from teacher research. For instance, Hollingsworth

and Miller (1994) argue from feminist perspectives that teacher research provides female teachers the opportunity to challenge, deconstruct, selectively integrate, and/or rewrite some gender-designated roles and explicitly make room for values and perspectives often associated with women's socialized experiences in teaching and research (pp. 126–127; p. 132). Cochran-Smith (1994) contends that teacher research in preservice teacher education must be located within networks of school-university relations (p. 143). She argues that teacher research has "enormous potential in preservice teacher education" but not if considered as one among many "techniques or strategies" for teaching (Cochran-Smith, 1994, p. 161). The real power of teacher research, in the view of Cochran-Smith (1994), lies in the potential to "interrupt the conventional ways student teachers are initiated into the oral and written discourse of teaching, and the powerful images of teaching and learning implicit in that discourse" (p. 161).

The notion of teachers as reflective researchers also carries other important imperatives, such as that of transforming teachers from conventional professionals into reflective actors. It is commonly accepted that "people are moved to learn when they ask themselves questions – questions that demand answers if restlessness or hunger or unhappiness is to be allayed" (Greene, 2001, p. 83). In this sense, reflective teaching has a fundamental impact on student learning. Soon after Donald Schon had published *The Reflective Practitioner* in 1983, American educational reform moved toward forming reflective teachers through preservice and in-service teacher education.

The diversity of reflective perspectives from various practitioners in the field has "ensured a better understanding of issues for social change" (Hollingsworth & Sockett, 1994, p. 6). Conventional research on reflective teaching, however, is "technical," "fragmented," and "shallow" (Lanier & Little, 1986, pp. 527–569). As Valli (1992) comments critically, the process or product research has "failed to generate a substantial and significant set of findings to guide the preparation of teachers" (p. xiii). Its paradigm has been seriously challenged as "an inadequate way" to explain and guide teaching (Richardson, 1990, pp. 3–19; Tom & Valli, 1990, pp. 373–392).

As opposed to the "trickle-down" view of the relationship of theory to practice, reflective epistemology is "learning-by-doing (action)," a term coined by John Dewey for reflective teaching practice (Dewey, 1938). According to Dewey, the process of reflection for teachers begins when they "experience a difficulty, trouble-some event, or experience that cannot be immediately resolved" (Zeichner & Liston, 1996, p. 8). He distinguished action that is reflective from action that is routine in his book, *How We Think* (1910). In a pluralistic society, successful teacher preparation requires critical reflection on the normative issues of teaching and schooling (Valli, 1992, p. xiii). From the perspective of "knowledge-in-action" (Schon, 1983), teacher research is viewed as the vehicle to teacher emancipation.

The notion of teachers as reflective researchers paves a new path for classroom practice to adopt different ways of understanding, different forms of knowledge, and different approaches to research. It brings about fundamental changes by constructing teachers' roles that are largely determined by how teachers are prepared

by the teacher education system and how teachers employ their values, perspectives, knowledge, and skills in classrooms and communities. It also significantly enables the advancement of higher standards and greater accountability for school improvement and teaching excellence.

The notion of teachers as reflective researchers simultaneously poses great challenges for the conventional system of teacher education. These challenges manifest themselves in policymaking of teacher education in preservice and in-service stages and in teachers' transformative learning and practices in classrooms. Finally teachers as reflective researchers impacts a teacher's sense of empowerment related to gaining professional knowledge and being able to reflect and shape his or her own values and perspectives on teaching.

Teachers as Transformative Intellectuals

While various roles teachers play in classrooms, schools, and society are widely debated, critical theorists promote an orientation toward teachers as transformative intellectuals. This section reviews the background, definition, political dimension, and strategies of teachers as transformative intellectuals, presenting a real example of the struggles of teachers as transformative intellectuals in contemporary China. It also compares the new identity of teachers as transformative intellectuals with other roles aforementioned.

Definition and Background

The term of "transformative intellectual" was first used in *Education under Siege* by Aronowitz and Giroux (1985). They later define transformative intellectuals as a body of teachers who can "employ the discourse of self-criticism so as to make the foundations for a critical pedagogy explicit while simultaneously illuminating the relevance of the latter for both students and the larger society" (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993, pp. 45–46). This definition implies that teachers must be capable of critical reflection based on individual learning experience, which is consistent from preservice to in-service teacher education, and on a teaching experience that is constructed either through independent practices or collective actions in classrooms.

Meanwhile, the notion of teachers as transformative intellectuals calls for actions to change power relations not only in classrooms and schools but in such broader domains as communities and society as well. Central to the definition is that teachers as transformative intellectuals must participate in progressive social movements and groups that continue to challenge the multiple relations of exploitation and domination that exist in an "organic" way (Apple, 2000, p. 7).

There are at least three reasons why critical theorists focus on teachers as transformative intellectuals. First, the democratic goals of schooling require teachers

to act as transformative intellectuals, for "any attempt to reformulate the role of educators has to begin with the broader question of how to view the purpose of schooling" (Giroux, 1988, p. xxxii). Second, teacher work is devalued by the redefinition of teachers' roles in classrooms and teachers' relationship to larger society, arising from teacher professionalism and instrumental ideologies of teacher education.

Finally, politicizing the notion of teachers as transformative intellectuals helps clarify their new identity "in producing and legitimating various political, economic and social interests through the pedagogies they endorse and utilize" (Giroux, 1988, p. 125). The vision of teachers as transformative intellectuals enables them to build alliances, empowered with critical pedagogy, to launch a struggle of counter-hegemonic practice of education together with students.

Political Dimension

Critical theorists believe that a *political dimension* is embodied in both teacher education and in teacher socialization, since teachers work and live within relations of power (Ginsburg & Lindsay, 1995, p. 4). The central task for teachers as transformative intellectuals is to make "the pedagogical more political and the political more pedagogical" (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993, p. 46).

On one hand, by making the pedagogical more political, education is envisioned as a central political terrain which provides teachers with numerous opportunities to act as transformative social agents. Apple (2000) reiterates that education is "one of the major sites in which different groups with distinct political, economic, and cultural visions attempt to define what the socially legitimate means and ends of a society are to be" (p. 17). Criticalists have argued that teachers' roles should not be devalued to the passive "banking" of oppressive knowledge in schools (Freire, 2003, p. 72) but proactively serve as a specific militancy in the sense of advocating for students (Freire, 2005, p. 4).

On the other hand, by making the political more pedagogical, teachers are used to develop the creative and reflective thinking and actions of students to transform them into critical agents for emancipation. In other words, classroom teaching should offer students alternative forms of discourse and pedagogical practices in which students' interests are often at odds with the overall hegemonic role of the school and the society it serves.

The notion of teachers as transformative intellectuals greatly challenges the current system of preservice and in-service teacher education. While a given body of knowledge, e.g., curricula and textbooks, is viewed as socially con-structed, strategically recontextualized, systematically reproduced, and officially informed in classrooms (Apple, 1999, 2000; Giroux, 1988, 2001; Popkewitz, 1987), conservative policy actions of teacher education based on instrumental ideologies continue to emphasize a technocratic approach to teacher preparation.

These conservative reforms are usually coupled with, and under the name of, such initiatives as accountability, standardization, productivity and efficiency, cost-effective analysis, quantitative assessment and measurement, and neutrality and subjectivity. Paine (1995) offers her evidence by examining China's rational and technical orientation for teacher education from "modernizing" and "nationalizing" perspectives (pp. 89–92). Li (2012, 2013) adds that the imperative investment of human capital has been used as a rationale for teacher education reform in China.

In daily practices many teachers still keep the "habits" or "instincts" of using the "curriculum on a cart" in its current form (Apple, 2000, p. 131), even though they are clear that this minimizes their capacity to make a difference in classroom teaching.

Ideally, teacher education reform should encourage student teachers' curiosity and reflectivity to interrogate not only how subjectivities and experience are shaped, produced, and regulated through historically formed institutions such as schools and how they carry and embody particular interests but also "how certain apparatuses of power produce forms of knowledge that legitimate a particular kind of truth and way of life" (Giroux, 1988, p. xxxv).

Strategies for Teachers as Transformative Intellectuals

Radical theorists propose some useful strategies for teachers as transformative intellectuals. For instance, Aronowitz and Giroux (1993) indicate that central to the role of the transformative intellectuals are the forms of counter-hegemonic practices that form alliances among transformative (and possibly critical) intellectuals and that actively work with oppositional social movements outside of the schools (p. 50). They discuss teachers functioning as transformative intellectuals, able to engage in various projects aimed at better understanding the critical roles teachers play, at all levels of schooling, in producing, reproducing, and legitimating social relations of power.

Not only would such alliances provide political unity for teachers, fighting against accommodating and hegemonic intellectuals, but they would also open radical and critical actors to the opportunity to communicate and share with each other their common concerns and social constructions. Moreover, such alliances make possible the tightening of the relationship between theory and practice within the alliances' respective contexts of universities, public schools, and communities as well. Still, the alliances have practical value in fundamentally changing the unfavorable working environments and living conditions of teachers under siege.

Teachers are oftentimes isolated in cellular structures and thus have very limited room for collective work and political pursuits under current organizational constraints and ideological conditions. They are reduced to functioning as obedient technicians or instruments of delivering "official knowledge," who have little say over the decisions of what should be taught in classrooms and how it should be taught. Their workload is heavy, demanding, and oftentimes overwhelmed by too

many tasks and projects. Their living conditions worldwide are worse than those of the average salaried individual or government officials, and their salaries are far lower than those of comparably educated professionals (Sizer, 1984, p. 185).

Tao Xingzhi as a Pioneer of Transformative Intellectuals

There have been numerous real-life examples of teachers' proactive role as transformative intellectuals, and Tao Xingzhi (1891–1946) was a pioneer of them in early twentieth-century China.

Tao was a renowned intellectual teacher and widely respected educator in China, born to a disadvantaged farmer's family in a mountainous village in South Anhui Province, East China. In the late 1910s, he studied education under the supervision of John Dewey and Paul Monroe at Teachers College, Columbia University. Tao returned to China in 1917 and devoted his whole life to adult literacy and life education in hopes of achieving his dream of a democratic China. His life education theory espoused "an education of life, by life and for life" (Li, 1998, p. 268), an idea for education inspired by "a new birth of freedom ... of the people, by the people, for the people" in Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address.

Tao's theory of life education consisted of three components: life is education, society is school, and teaching and learning by doing (Li, 1998, pp. 265–276). Tao saw the traditional schooling in China at the time as an education for elites and upper classes to maintain the status quo of inequality in power relations, instead of an education for the ordinary Chinese people to promote a free and democratic society.

More importantly, he put his theory into practice by setting up normal schools and HEIs in the most difficult times between 1920 and 1940. The first school he established was Xiaozhuang Normal School (*Xiaozhuang Shifan Xuexiao*) in 1927, now Nanjing Xiaozhuang College. That time Tao himself was also teaching as a professor of education at Nanjing Higher Normal School (*Nanjing Gaodeng Shifan Xuexiao*). He paid special attention to teacher education on which life education was based. In his critical view, both teachers and students must have an understanding of the real social needs, e.g., democratic life, and must be involved in their life contexts for social transformation (Li, 1998, p. 265–276).

Without a doubt, Tao Xingzhi, an earlier Paulo Freire in China, actively advocated for democracy and social transformation in various educational and social movements in China and was indeed a pioneering role model of transformative intellectuals.

Teachers as transformative intellectuals redirect our thinking about teachers' identities – the teaching profession should go from simple learning professionals to politically involved agents of social change. It shares common ground with the notions of teachers as professional learners and as reflective researchers in that the quality of teachers is to be fostered for the same of a democratic society. It differs from these notions by virtue of its self-consciousness, self-criticism, and

social action for democratic goals of teaching and schooling. The notion greatly challenges how teachers redefine their identities within school communities and outside campus as well and poses deeper questions about teacher education reform.

Teacher Professionalism and Worldwide Teacher Education Reform

By examining the above discourses by which teachers' identities have been developed and redefined in dissimilar sociopolitical and cultural contexts, it is widely noted that teaching is professional work performed by a certain group of people who own specific knowledge and skills and that it is also a contested and fiercely conflicted political arena where schooling is institutionalized. While teachers are swept up in the vortex of political conflict, their role is examined under diverse terms by various interest groups. These discourses pave the way for teacher professionalism and teacher education reform in an age of globalization.

Teacher Professionalism

From an institutional perspective, there are important attributes of the teaching profession distinguishing teachers from other kinds of workers, which can be termed as teacher professionalism (Carr, 1992; Hall, 1968; Hargreaves, 2000; Hughes, 1965; Turner, 1997; Vollmer & Mills, 1966; Wallace, 1994). In addition to the three key dimensions reviewed earlier, the attributes of teacher professionalism also include rigorous training requirements, favorable working conditions, high prestige and autonomy, ethical and moral grounding, substantial authority, relatively high compensation, and an active professional organization or association. From this point of view, teachers can be assessed according to the degree to which they do or do not demonstrate these attributes. The process whereby teachers seek to upgrade their professional status by adopting these attributes is known as teacher professionalization. In other words, teacher professionalization is an educational and societal process by which teachers gain professional quality, characteristics, status, and privilege.

Teacher professionalism has been a worldwide educational concern since the 1960s, aiming to promote the professional status of teachers and improve the quality of the teacher workforce. Early in 1934, the International Bureau of Education, for the first time, directed attention to the professional, social, and economic problems of the teaching profession (The World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession & the Japan Teachers' Union, 1972, p. 2). It was on October 5, 1966, that *The ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers* was adopted by the Special Intergovernmental Conference on the Status

of Teachers in Paris.[1] This document creatively proposed the notion of teaching as a profession:

> Teaching should be regarded as a profession: it is a form of public service which requires of teachers expert knowledge and specialized skills, acquired and maintained through rigorous and continuing study; it calls also for a sense of personal and corporate responsibility for the education and welfare of the pupils in their charge. (THE UNESCO, 1966, p. 6)

In addition to the above guiding principle, the *ILO/UNESCO Recommendation* set some basic standards of preparation programs for the profession (THE UNESCO, 1966, pp. 11–16). ILO/UNESCO reiterated that the professional knowledge and skills of teachers must be included in these preparation programs in teacher-preparation institutions.

In 1972, the Faure-led International Commission on the Development of Education released its final report, *Learning to Be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow*. This report observed many significant changes in teachers' roles, such as changes to less and less "inculcate knowledge and more and more to encourage thinking" (The International Commission on the Development of Education [ICDE], 1972, p. 77). For training the "very important socio-professional group" (The ICDE, 1972, p. 17), *Learning to Be* clarified the following principle and recommended a teacher preparation strategy for policymakers worldwide:

> One of the essential tasks for educators at present is to change the mentalities and qualifications inherent in all professions; thus they should be the first to be ready to rethink and change the criteria and basic situation of the teaching profession .... Conditions in which teachers are trained should be profoundly changed so that, essentially, they become educators rather than specialists in transmitting pre-established curricula. (The ICDE, 1972, pp. 216–217)

In 1974, OECD held the Intergovernmental Conference on Teacher Policies for teacher preparation.[2] The conference report called for the examination of teachers' changing roles and appealed for fundamental changes in the policies of training, recruitment, and utilization of teachers. It confirmed:

> the remarkable unanimity that exists on the dimensions of the new education that children in the latter part of the twentieth should be entitled to receive. These dimensions included the development of individuality, the opportunity to be creative, the exercise of judgment, in short the capacity to be able to participate fully in the whole range of life activities in work, home and community. The teacher's role was seen essentially to be one that allowed such

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[1]The ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers was made based on the conclusions of the ILO Expert Meetings on Social and Economical Conditions of Primary and Secondary schoolteachers in Geneva in 1963 and of the ILO Expert Meeting on the Status of Teachers in Paris in 1964. For detailed formulation and adoption of The Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers, please refer to The World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession & the Japan Teachers' Union, 1972, p. 2–6.

[2]The OECD organized, in the framework of the Program of Work of the Education Committee, the Intergovernmental Conference on Teacher Policies, which took place in Paris, November 26–29, 1974. Teacher Policies: General Report of the Conference was released by OECD later in 1976.

development through appropriate patterns of teaching, curriculum organization, pastoral care and guidance. (OECD, 1976, pp. 108–109)

By this notion, the report took into account the access to the teaching profession and gave priority to teachers' continuing education which was required to "meet the needs of teachers and school administrators as well as the wishes and needs of pupils and their parents" (OECD, 1976, p. 135).

Persisting efforts were made by the UNESCO to improve teacher professionalism and bring about teacher education reform. The UNESCO Thirty-Fifth Session of the International Conference on Education held in Geneva in 1975 adopted *The Changing Role of the Teacher and Its Influence on Preparation for the Profession and on In-service Training*. This document first identified the following factors as the societal and educational causes to the changes in teachers' roles: industrialization, urbanization and geographic mobility, modern technology, greater community involvement, educational aims and objectives, educational structures, and teaching content and methods (THE UNESCO, 1975, pp. 8–16).

The document then concluded eight main trends in the evolution of teachers' roles such as more diversified functions in the teaching process, more responsibility for the content of learning and teaching, a shift in emphasis from transmission of knowledge to organization of the pupils' learning, wider use of modern educational technology, necessary knowledge and skills, more involvement in community life particularly with parents and other key community members, more participation in school services and extracurricular activities, and so on (THE UNESCO, 1975, pp. 17).

This report concluded that "there is a substantial level of discordance between the rapid changes in the educational systems followed by changes in the role of the teacher and the slow rate at which the teacher training systems respond to these changes" (THE UNESCO, 1975, p. 24). Based on such a diagnosis, the report suggested that the changing roles of teachers must be taken into consideration in teacher education reform and that there should be corresponding changes in approaches to teacher education.

As a result, the UNESCO Thirty-Fifth Session proposed a series of suggestions for teacher education reform as the following:

- Since society and education will continuously evolve in ways that will influence the role and functions of the teacher, it is essential that future teachers become adaptable and capable of responding to this evolution. In teacher education, personality development should be stressed in this sense, encouraging young teachers to not only accept but seek change and to seek self-education and self-development.
- The traditional pattern by which teachers are trained for work in a specific type of educational institution should be changed.
- The academic level of general knowledge and specific subject matter expertise for teacher preparation must be raised.
- A better pedagogical preparation must be provided by TEIs.

- Teacher education reforms are required to emphasize the use of educational technology.
- Teacher education reform should respond to national development (THE UNESCO, 1975, pp. 23–27).

The officially recognized notion of teaching as a profession and recommendations for reform made by ILO, UNESCO, and OECD threw light on teacher professionalism and teacher education policy actions worldwide.

Worldwide Teacher Education Reform

Japan

In Japan, a report was submitted to the Minister of Education in 1971 by the Central Council of Education (CCE), delineating the policies for the Third Educational Reform.[3] This report, *The Fundamental Policies for Education Reform*, recognized that teaching requires high professional knowledge and skills and suggested that elementary schoolteachers should be trained in teachers colleges, teachers colleges should be expanded, a 1-year internship program should be considered, and the teaching certification system should be enhanced (The Central Council of Education, 1971).

In 1984, the National Council on Education Reform (NCER) came into being as an advisory panel directly attached to the Prime Minister's Office. The NCER paid special attention to teacher education reform in its consecutive four reports since 1985 (Mizoue & Inoue, 1993, p. 23; Takakura, 1993, p. 16). The NCER's (1986) report was the most important driving force for the 1988 amendment of *The Educational Personnel Certification Law* which was originally enacted in 1949. In its 1986 report, NCER emphasized improving the quality of teachers by such measures as reform of the teacher education and certification system and systematization of the in-service education for teachers (The NCER, 1986).

In the new century, the Japanese government continues to prioritize teacher education as one of the seven strategies for its national education initiative (The NCER, 2002). In addition, Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has come up with a new policy to merge and reform colleges and schools of education since April 2003. This plan transforms all national or public HEIs into the so-called independent administrative institutions which run like independent public organizations (*Dokuritsu Gyosei Hojinka*). Recent teacher

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[3]Japan's First Education Reform was undertaken in the early years of the Meiji Era and the second in the years after the Second World War (The UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia, 1975, p. 4).

education policy actions in Japan are directed at improving the overall quality of the profession instead of achieving a quantitative increase in the labor force (Arimoto, 2002; Besso & Suzuki, 2002).

Canada

In Canada, teacher education reform varies across geographic areas due to two traditional factors. One is that education is a provincial responsibility and teachers are not government employees. Another is that teachers are comparatively well organized into provincial and territorial teacher associations which basically function as a teacher union and provide professional development for teachers (Connelly & Clandinin, 2001, p. 2).

In 1990, the Ontario Teacher Education Review Steering Committee's report, *Teacher Education in Ontario: Current Practice and Options for the Future* (Fullan, Connelly, & Watson, 1990), is a blueprint for teacher education in Ontario (Kosnik & Beck, 2001, p. 57). The report notes that one of teachers' roles is professional learning: "Instead of trying to 'make' a good teacher through teacher education, as one might make a sculpture, we need to do as John Dewey suggested, and think of teachers as learners" (Fullan et al., 1990, p. 57). *Teacher Education in Ontario* proposes a number of themes that teacher education reform should address. Among these themes is that teacher education is viewed as a lifelong learning process:

> One of the assumptions we make about teacher education is that it is a matter of life-long learning. We extend the idea of teacher education backwards in time from the faculty of education to include teachers' general education and social origins. As is well known, these origins are critical to the quality not only of the teaching profession but of teacher educators. (Fullan et al., 1990, p. 57)

In 1997, the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) was established for setting up standards of teaching practice and conduct, issuing and administering teaching certificates, and accrediting teacher education programs and courses. In 2000, the OCT released a *Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession* which states: the goal of professional learning is the ongoing improvement of practice and teacher learning is directly correlated to student learning. The report supported standard-based professional learning (The OCT, 2012, pp. 11–13).[4] These policy actions have significantly shaped the teaching profession and the practice of teacher education in Ontario.

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[4]The OCT has released a series of guidelines for teaching and teacher education. For example, the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession were approved by the OCT Council on November 19, 1999. The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession were approved by the OCT Council on June 8, 2000. The Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession was approved by the OCT Council in October 2000 and revised in 2012 (The OCT, 2012, pp. 21–24).

The USA

When compared to Canada, the US federal government's role in the preparation of teachers has been traditionally regarded as "modest, limited and of short duration" (Jordan & Borkow, 1985, as cited in Earley & Schneider, 1996, p. 306; Earley, 2000, p. 25), but this does not necessarily mean that the reform of the teaching profession and the reform of teacher education systems in the USA have not been addressed.

In April 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education formed by then-US Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell released a highly critical report, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for School Reform*, which began a pursuit-for-excellent movement in the USA with an emphasis on teacher professionalism (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). In response to *A Nation at Risk*, *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* was released by the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession (1986). The Carnegie Task Force reaffirmed teachers as the best hope for ensuring educational excellence in schooling and called for the redesign and revitalization of the teaching profession. An outgrowth of this report was the establishment of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards for attracting able candidates to the profession.

Riding the momentum, since 1986 up to 1995, the Holmes Group released a trilogy of reports for teacher professionalization and teacher education reform, i.e., *Tomorrow's Teachers* (1986), *Tomorrow's Schools* (1990), and *Tomorrow's Schools of Education* (1995), aiming at the twin goals of the reform of the teaching profession and the reform of teacher education itself. By these influential reports, the Holmes Group identifies the following serious problems existing in the teaching profession and teacher education systems in the USA:

> Unhappily, teaching and teacher education have a long history of mutual impairment. Teacher education long has been intellectually weak; this further eroded the prestige of an already poorly esteemed profession, and it encouraged many inadequately prepared people to enter teaching. But teaching long has been an underpaid and overworked occupation, making it difficult for universities to recruit good students to teacher education or to take it as seriously as they have taken education for more prestigious professions. Teaching, after all, comes with large responsibilities but modest material rewards. Good teachers must be knowledgeable, but they have few opportunities to use that knowledge to improve their profession, or to help their colleagues improve. And, despite their considerable skill and knowledge, good teachers have few opportunities to advance within their profession. (The Holmes Group, 1986, p. 6)

To enhance the quality of teaching and the preparation of professionals by research and development, the Holmes Group set five goals for policy initiatives of teacher education reform. These are to make teaching intellectually sound; to recognize differences in teachers' knowledge, skill, and commitment; to create relevant and intellectually defensible standards of entry to teaching; to connect schools of education to the schools where teachers work; and to make schools better places for practicing teachers to work and learn (The Holmes Group, 1995, pp. iii–vi).

Tomorrow's Teachers envisions that the established professional status of teachers rests on a compound of subject matter knowledge, systematic knowledge of teaching, and reflective practical experience (The Holmes Group, 1986, pp. 62–63). *Tomorrow's Schools* creatively proposes the idea of establishing professional development schools as an alternative for the development of novice professionals and experienced professionals and for the research and development of the teaching profession (The Holmes Group, 1990, p. 1).

Tomorrow's Schools of Education criticizes the status quo of teacher education systems for preparing the professionals who have for too long been learning too little of the right things in the wrong place at the wrong time (The Holmes Group, 1995, p. 9). For the preparation of a highly qualified teaching profession, the Holmes Group further advocates a complete restructuring of HEIs for designing a new curriculum, developing a new faculty, recruiting a new student body, creating new locations for much of their work, and building a new set of connections to those they serve (The Holmes Group, 1995, pp. 9–10). Over decades, both the Carnegie Task Force and the Holmes Group have directed their concerns and efforts toward the professional nature of teaching and the reform of educational systems preparing students for the profession (Engvall, 1997, p. 47).

Since the 1990s, there have been a number of federal policy actions addressing the reform of the profession or the reform of teacher education systems, e.g., *The Higher Education Amendments of 1992*, *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*, *National Board for Professional Teaching Standards*, and so forth (Earley & Schneider, 1996; Sikula, 2001). Central to these efforts are contradictorily to (a) build an effective system of teacher education within colleges and universities and (b) reduce the role of or to dismantle the college and university system of teacher education (Zeichner, 2013).

The UK

Besides Japan, Canada, and the USA, the UK offers another example of a country paying high attention to the reform of the teaching profession and the reform of teacher education. The UK has sought to strengthen and support the professional skills of teachers (The Department for Education & Skills, 2001). Day (2007) hints in England that what has happened to teacher education is "one outcome of a larger ideological debate on the costs and management of the public services in general" and teacher education "as a public service was also the test bed for a raft of radical reforms from the mid 70's which were born of political 'new right' ideology and economic pragmatism" (p. 597).

The international movement to improve teacher professionalism and teacher education reform speeded up the new round of China's teacher education reform launched from the early 1990s. Traditionally, there was no real profession of teaching in ancient China, though the nation has a heavy tradition of respecting teachers for thousands of years (Hayhoe, 2002, p. 6). A licensing system for elementary schoolteachers was set up only in the late 1910s (Kuo, 1915, p. 158),

and it was not until the mid-1980s that the Chinese government realized that an emphasis on the professional nature of teaching is key to improving the quality of the workforce (The CPCCC & the State Council, 1985, May 27). On Oct. 31, 1993, a teacher licensing system was re-adopted (The NPC Standing Committee, 1993, October 31). Nowadays, the teaching profession and the education for the teaching professionals are still under development in China.

New Identities, Professionalism, and Teacher Education Reform in the China Policy Case

The new teachers' identities discussed by Western theorists and practitioners and the worldwide movement toward teaching as a profession have had profound influence on China's national reform for world-class teacher education. The following section outlines how Chinese policymakers have integrated these discourses into the Chinese sociopolitical context to initiate their reform of teacher education.

Traditional Chinese Perspectives on Teachers' Roles

In traditional Chinese culture, typically represented in Confucian values, teachers are known to be valued as the most important actors in transmitting knowledge and skills to students and as the ideal role models for ordinary people, especially for the young generation. Teachers have become respected cultural symbols, and there is a strong tradition in China of respecting them as the major instrument in providing education for both the private and the public good. In particularly, Lo (1984) documents that three qualities were required of the ideal teachers in ancient China: competence in subject matter, teaching ability, and moral character (p. 156).

Confucius (551–479 BC) first addressed knowledge as a prerequisite for teachers: "Reviewing the old and exploring the new make a teacher" (*The Analects*, n.d., 2.11). He realized that all students have potential for intellectual and moral development (*The Analects*, n.d., 9.22) and that teachers and students need to learn from each other (*The Analects*, n.d., 15.35). Moreover, he viewed teaching and learning as an interactive process with teachers playing key roles as co-learners, cheerleaders, mentors, and moral role models. As a pioneer teacher in ancient China, Confucius greatly contributed to the formation of the traditional values of *Zunshi* (respecting teacher) and the formation of the teaching profession (Li, 1998, pp. 43–44).

The Confucian values of teachers' roles were further developed by later Confucians. The authors of *Xueji* clearly prescribed that a true teacher must be someone knowledgeable who is a gentleperson (or a *good* person) and is adept at enlightening students, instead of suffocating the dynamism of students' active learning. Han Yu (768–824) in the Tang Dynasty specified teachers' roles as *Chuandao* (transmitting

moral values and principles), *Shouye* (delivering knowledge and skills), and *Jiehuo* (solving puzzles of learning) (as cited in Li, 1998, p. 163).[5] Lee (2000) observes that "the Chinese people have since cherished this famous dictum as the best characterization of a model teacher" (p. 258).

From the early nineteenth century, the Qing Dynasty had seriously suffered from the invasion and exploitation of Western powers. Politicians and theorists that time tried hard to look for pathways of self-strengthening to save the future of China. Among them, Liang Qichao, a prominent politician and scholar, first advocated the development of a modern teacher education system, warning that "only after normal schools are instituted, will the whole learning system have its support" (Liang, 1896, as cited in Li, 1998, p. 245). He argued that teachers trained by traditional Confucian education were incapable of teaching students in modern science and technology. Recognizing the Confucian viewpoint of teachers as enlighteners, knowledge transmitters, and moral role models, Liang redefined knowledge as both traditional Confucian principles and the Western concepts of science and technology in the new global times. Teachers, in his view, should play a key role in delivering Western knowledge for national self-strengthening and revival.

The Influences of Western Theories on China's Policy of Teacher Education Reform

The traditional Chinese perspective of teachers' roles has profoundly influenced on the national policy of teacher education reform. Chinese policymakers have strongly believed that teachers are a powerful instrument in achieving national modernization. For example, the leaders of the Chinese central government stated clearly in the policy documents that "education is the hope for rejuvenating our nation, and the hope for rejuvenating education is teachers" (The CPCCC & the State Council, 1993, February 13). Later in 1996, the State Commission of Education articulated the rationales for teacher education reform as the following:

> Making teacher education a success and training a highly qualified teaching profession shall have profound impact on the development of schooling, the quality improvement of the whole Chinese people as a nation, the implementation of the strategy of national rejuvenation through science and education and that of sustainable development, and propelling economic development and promoting all-round social progress. (The SCE, 1996, December 5)

The Chinese leaders, as previously discussed in Chap. 3, have taken a Confucian approach of *Zhong-Yong* (Li, 2016b) and theorized that teachers are the foundation for educational development, national achievement, and competitiveness (i.e., TE → CT → QE/SA → QLF → MD/EG → NAC). It is obvious that Chinese policymakers have viewed teachers pragmatically as a means to achieve their policy goals.

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[5]Please also refer to the section of "Teachers as Respected Cultural Symbols" in Chap. 2 (pp. 17–18).

Although Chinese policymakers have adhered to the traditional Chinese perspectives on teachers' roles, they have also embraced the new identities developed in Western discourses in the national initiative of teacher education reform. In most of the relevant policy documents for the policy, Chinese policymakers have reiterated that teachers must first be lifelong learners and researchers. For example, *The Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education during the Tenth Five-year National Plan* required that teachers

> must promote their awareness of lifetime learning; continue extending their professional knowledge and skills . . . actively participate in teaching and educational research, and be encouraged for the exploration and innovation of knowledge and skills. (The MOE, 2002, February 6)

Similar imperatives can be easily found in other policy documents or policy-makers' appeals. Guan Peijun (2003), MOE's formal Director of the Department of Teacher Education, has advocated that "teachers must be the pioneers and role models for a learning society." In his view, teachers bear responsibility to not only be professional learners or reflective researchers but the advocates of professional learning and reflective research as well.

Although Chinese policymakers have embraced Western theories of teachers as professional learners and reflective researchers, they adapted them into Chinese soil from a Confucian perspective of instrumentalism of *Zhong-Yong* (Li, 2016b),[6] which will be further discussed in the following chapters. It is interesting that they appeared not to have much interest in theories of teachers as transformative intellectuals. No single word or statement in these policy documents or leaders' appeals mentioned the roles of teachers as transformative intellectuals. There may have many reasons to explain why, but among these factors would be the persistent adherence to the state centralized policy context.

The Worldwide Movement of Teacher Professionalization and China's Policy of Teacher Education Reform

Obviously, Chinese policymakers have seen teacher professionalization as one major trend of international educational reform. For example, Guan Peijun (2003) states:

> Since the 1980s, teacher professionalization has become a strong trend worldwide. It has significantly speeded up the establishment of new theories and new systems of teacher education in the world. A highly qualified teacher must not only have professional knowledge with appropriate moral conduct and passion, but also be able to learn and pursue new knowledge and skills throughout their lifetime . . . .These new teachers' roles require a fundamental change of the current system for teacher administration and teacher

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[6]For more details on this Confucian instrumentalism, please refer to "Final Remarks: A Chinese Zhong-Yong Model of Policy Implementation" in the last chapter (pp. 203–205).

education . . . .We must seriously study the experiences and development trends of teacher education in other countries, examine the reality of teacher education in our country and promote its development.

As one of the major strategies to promote teacher professionalism, China has adopted a licensing system for the teaching profession since 1995. *The Ordinance of Teacher Qualification* (The State Council, 1995, December 12) has mandated that a licensing system be established to ensure that all teachers receive corresponding teacher education for schools at different levels. The licensing system requires that every schoolteacher in high schools must receive a bachelor's degree. This requirement brought about significant changes of the teaching occupation, as during the 1970s and the early 1980s, many teachers who taught in senior high schools only had a senior high school education and junior high schools only had a junior high school education. In 2000, the MOE promulgated *The Regulations of the Ordinance of Teacher Qualification* to enhance the implementation of the licensing system nationwide.

The comprehensive review of teachers' new identities and teacher professionalization gives an overall understanding of how the teaching profession and teacher education have developed worldwide and how the theories about teachers, including China's own heritage, and the worldwide movement of teacher professionalization, have profoundly impacted the national reform for world-class teacher education in China. It also delineates the limitations of Western theories about teachers' roles and identities in the Chinese sociopolitical context. The next chapter will explore theoretical perspectives of policy studies and introduce a functional analytic model for this case study.

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Chapter 5
The Multiperspectival Approach and the Operational Analytic Model

Policy analysis is usually defined as "an applied social science discipline that employs multiple methods of inquiry, in contexts of argumentation and public debate, to create, critically assess, and communicate policy-relevant knowledge" (Dunn, 1994, pp. xiii–xiv). The multiplicity of disciplinary inquiries often empowers researchers to more diversely look into the rationality, dynamism, and complexity of the implementation process. This chapter constructs and employs the multiperspectival approach, exploring theoretical perspectives and analytic frameworks that can provide a specific guidance for scrutinizing the implementation jigsaw puzzle of China's policy of teacher education reform. Additionally, it also introduces an operational instrument with six variables for data collection, analysis, and the presentation of findings.

The Concept of Perspective and the Multiperspectival Approach

A *perspective* (or a *paradigm*) is "a way of looking at the world" (Mertens, 2015, p. 8), which is composed of certain philosophical assumptions that guide and direct policy thinking and actions. American sociologist Joel Charon (2010) defines a perspective simply as "an angle on reality, a place where the individual stands as he or she looks at and tries to understand reality" (p. 4). He assumes that human beings always get to understand societal reality through various perspectives. A research perspective in a disciplinary inquiry usually means to examine and make sense of a societal phenomenon (whatever it might be) in a theoretical way. To him, social science can be viewed "as a perspective" (Charon, 2010, pp. 14–26).

Similarly, policy studies can be also seen as perspectives, which enable policy researchers to investigate and interpret the reality of policy through certain specific, disciplinary ways. Charon (2010) warns, however, that a perspective "always limits

what one sees, since other perspectives – many of which may also be right – cannot be considered at the same time" (p. 4). Therefore, a multiperspectival approach is in great need to multidisciplinarily problematize and scrutinize the rationality, dynamism, and complexity of policy issues.

The *multiperspectival approach*, or the *humanistic bricolage* of multiple perspectives, can be described as a fictive and imaginative process of "getting down to the nuts and bolts of multidisciplinary research" (Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011, p. 168), mobilizing a wide array of interdisciplinary inquiries to look at societal reality more comprehensively and complementarily. The approach was identified by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (2000) and has been advocated recently by such criticalists as Kincheloe et al. et al. (2011) to "generate meaningful and useful social knowledge and reform and to develop valid theories and method" (Levin & Greenwood, 2011, p. 28). In the field of education policy studies, Betty Malen and Michael Knapp (1997) have also theorized and validated the similar concept of multiple perspectives approach.

Furthermore, a research perspective in social sciences is often used interchangeably with a research framework, which is merely "a simplified representation" of some aspects of the real world (Dye, 2013, p. 15), guided by certain epistemological paradigm for disciplinary inquiry. Ostrom (1999) clarifies the differences between frameworks and models for policy analysis. According to her, general frameworks help to

> identify the elements and relationships among these elements that one needs to consider for institutional analysis. Frameworks organize diagnostic and prescriptive inquiry. They provide the most general list of variables that should be used to analyze all types of institutional arrangements . . . .thus, the elements contained in a framework help analysts generate the questions that need to be addressed when they first conduct an analysis . . . .models make precise assumptions about a limited set of parameters and variables. Logic, mathematics, game theory, experimentation and simulation, and other means are used to explore systematically the consequences of these assumptions in a limited set of outcomes. (Ostrom, 1999, pp. 39–40)

Taking these concepts, a research perspective is defined here as more like a comprehensive, theoretical way of disciplinary inquiry based on one or more epistemological assumptions, whereas an analytic model is more like an *operational instrument* for analysis grounded on one or more particular research perspectives.

Overview of Theoretical Perspectives for Policy Studies

There is never a shortage of research perspectives for policy studies in relevant literature (i.e., Dubnick & Bardes, 1983, p. 264; Dye, 2013, pp. 15–31; Jones, 2013; Lester & Stewart, 2000, pp. 36–42). Dubnick and Bardes (1983) classify five distinct research perspectives for policy researchers as scientific, professional, political, administrative, and personal (p. 264). Lester and Stewart (2000) lay out an array of nine specific research perspectives for policy analyses as the following:

1. Process approach (to examine a part of the policy process)
2. Substantive approach (to examine a substantive area)
3. Logical-positivist approach (to examine the causes and consequences of policy using scientific methods)
4. Econometric approach (to test economic theories)
5. Phenomenological (post-positivist) approach (to analyze events through an intuitive process)
6. Participatory approach (to examine the role of multiple actors in policymaking)
7. Normative or prescriptive approach (to prescribe policy to decision makers or others)
8. Ideological approach (to analyze from a liberal or conservative point of view)
9. Historical approach (to examine policy over time) (Lester & Stewart, 2000, pp. 36–42)

Dye (2013) further summarizes eight conceptual research perspectives for policy studies (pp. 15–31):

1. Process model (policy as political activity)
2. Institutional model (policy as institutional output)
3. Rational model (policy as maximum social gain)
4. Incremental model (policy as variations on the past)
5. Group model (policy as equilibrium in the group struggle)
6. Elite model (policy as elite preference)
7. Public choice model (policy as collective decision making by self-interested individuals)
8. Game theory model (policy as rational choice in competitive situations)

The research perspectives presented by various analysts suggest different theoretical paradigms for policy studies, but they also share similarities in many dimensions. In other words, they are sometimes independent, but most of the time they overlap each other.

As introduced in Chap. 1, public policy is widely accepted as a purposeful course of action advanced or authorized by higher institutional levels of the policy system in pursuit of influencing or not influencing lower levels or units of the system. From this point of view, it holds at least two basic assumptions. First, a public policy is a rational, collective behavior aiming to achieve proposed policy goals. Second, it is also a conflicting political action redistributing scarce resources to satisfy or not satisfy certain groups. Among the miscellaneous models of analysis introduced above, the rational and critical perspectives have a long tradition in, and a profound impact on, policy studies.

The Rational Framework

The Rational Framework originates from classical models in economics. Rationality "refers to consistent, value-maximizing choice within specified constraints"

(Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 18). It assumes that human behavior, including policymaking process, is at least purposively rational. Further, Weberians hold that organizations are hierarchically structured based on the principle of legal rationality (Baldridge, Curtis, Ecker, & Riley, 1977, p. 9). From these assumptions, a government is thought of as "a single individual or as a group functioning as a corporate actor" (Ostrom, 1999, p. 44). In other words, a government behaves as a unitary agent, who seeks to maximize policy outcomes. Allison and Zelikow (1999) write:

> Governmental behavior can be most satisfactorily understood by analogy with the purposive acts of individuals . . . .Treating national governments as if they were centrally coordinated, purposive individuals provides a useful shorthand for understanding policy choices and actions. (p. 3)

Governmental policy actions are thus regarded, from this angle, "as purposive, goal-directed activity" by rational and collective policy actors (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 17).

A number of central assumptions are embedded in the Rational Framework. First of all, a means-ends-driven and goal-directed principle, by which the cause-effect relationship is identified and linearly constructed, is practiced by policy players and is evident throughout the policy process: "first the ends are isolated, then the means to achieve them are sought" (Lindblom, 1959, p. 81). Policy then "is cast as the instrumental means for achieving the stated ends" (Malen & Knapp, 1997, p. 423), and action is thus "chosen in response to the strategic situation the actor faces" (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 24). Beyond the means-ends-driven and goal-directed principle, the Rational Framework assumes the "cause-effect" link as the theories of action, which refer to "the premises regarding how policy is formed and how it 'works' to produce effects" (Malen & Knapp, 1997, p. 420). Policy action is cast as the instrumental means to achieve the stated outcomes by identifying and eliminating the "causes" of substantial problems. In other words, theories of action can serve as "a conceptual scheme" (Parsons & Shils, 1951, p. 53), "to uncover and inspect the officially stated and logically related assumptions regarding the means-ends relationships" embodied in the policy (Malen, Croninger, Muncey, & Redmond-Jones, 2002, p. 114). Moreover, values are embedded and evident in but not limited to the theories of action. Rather than ignored, emphasized, or pursued, values are laden behind the theories of action.

Since the Rational Framework is characterized by the identification of substantial policy problems and "systematic, data-driven, 'cost-benefit' calculations of policy options" (Malen & Knapp, 1997, p. 423), comprehensive literature reviews, needs assessments, and causal analysis of policy problems are required, and information collection becomes extremely important. But a "partial ignorance" is tolerable (Kerr, 1976, p. 107), as there are always certain constraints in collecting available information. The diagnosis of policy problems involves extensive, empirical collection of relevant information and intensive data analysis based on available information collected. An optimal choice is then chosen in the policymaking process to resolve the substantial policy problems based on comprehensive analysis of

social development, policy needs and benefits, causal links, etc. Along with the identification of policy problems and the selection of optimal strategies as the best choice, some key normative values are recognized and agreed by unitary policy players, while other values may be sacrificed, neglected, or simply ignored in the policy process.

In addition to the above assumptions, the Rational Framework holds public policy as a linearly advanced process, usually unfolded in a series of stages, e.g., agenda setting, policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation, which can be termed as the "stage heuristic" (Sabatier, 2007, p. 6). To achieve the policy ends through means, a policy process usually starts its linear journey with first identifying the substantial policy problems. Then, alternative strategies are considered, evaluated, and compared. Optimal strategies as the most efficient choice are finally chosen to solve the identified policy problems. Policy outcomes are evaluated, assessed, and judged by the degree of consistency between the intended resolutions "relative to a particular action" (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 17) and the originally identified substantial problems. There exist various theories about how a policy process is developed in distinct stages. For example, Sabatier and Mazmanian (1978) proposed a five-stage model (p. 26, as cited in Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984, p. 229; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980, p. 542), and Heineman, Bluhm, Peterson, and Kearny (1997) echo with a three-stage model (pp. 54–60). Jenkins (1978) detailed a seven-stage rational model conceptualized initially by Harold Laswell as initiation, information, consideration, decision, implementation, evaluation, and termination (see Fig. 5.1).

The Jenkins's rational model of policy process assumes that the following logical path exists in policy process:

> Basically, it assumes that policy emerges via a logical path; an issue moves through the political system in a processual way from point of entry, through decision and implementation, until a final choice is made to proceed with or terminate a course of action. (Jenkins, 1978, pp. 17–18)
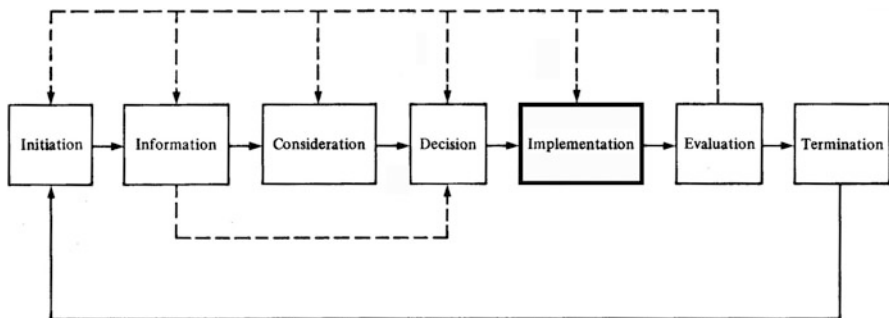
Fig. 5.1 Linear stages of policy process from the Rational Framework (Adapted from *Policy Analysis*: *A Political and Organisational Perspective* by W. I. Jenkins (1978), London: M. Robertson, p. 17)
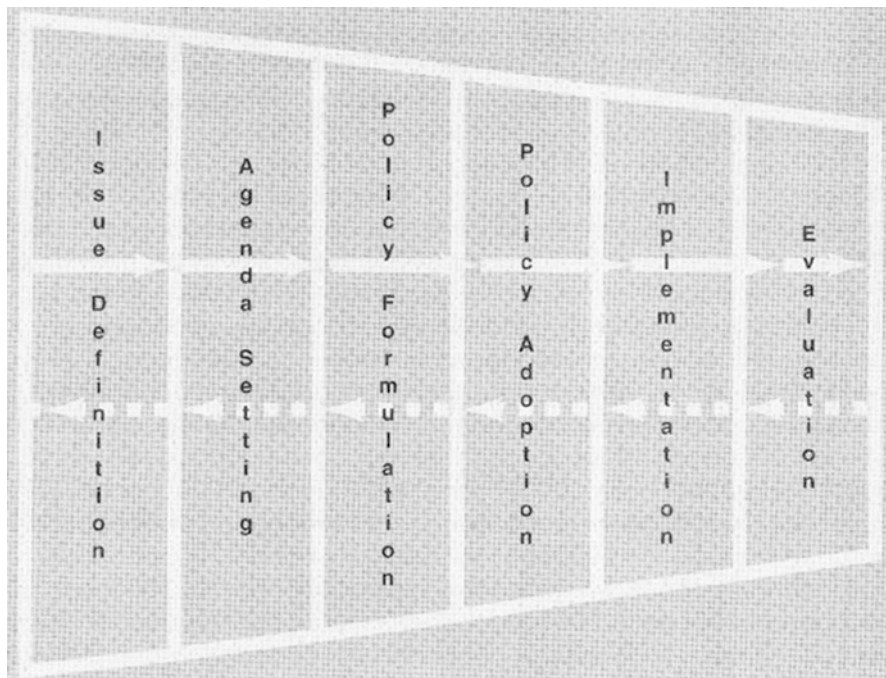
Fig. 5.2 A diagram of funnel policy process from the Rational Framework (From Fowler (2013))

Fowler (2013) continues to use a six-stage, funnel model which begins with issue definition (problem identification); moves to agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, implementation; and ends at evaluation (Fig. 5.2). She highlights the flow in the order of the classic rational model, with a dotted arrows indicating that a policy process advances for a time but may move back to an earlier stage. The funnel-shaped diagram illustrates that fewer issues or policies are involved at each successive stage.

Jekin's logical path and Fowler's funnel-shaped diagram are useful in looking at the policy process for implementation studies. But these rational models are often criticized as rather unrealistic and weak at the examination, explanation, and evaluation of the policy process for several reasons. First, the Rational Framework disregards a basic element common to public policy implementation, e.g., organizations are usually bureaucratic, hierarchical, and political systems with various conflicting benefits and actors. Regardless of how "scientifically" or "rationally" a policy is designed, as long as more than one administrative layers and actors are involved in the policy process, the directives of authority become much more blurred, since most policies are usually practiced by one layer but formulated by another (Hill, 2003, p. 91). Secondly, the Rational Framework is based on normative recognition of implementation practice and is designed to satisfy how organizations ought to function but not necessarily how they actually do function. Thirdly, the

Rational Framework fails to recognize that any policy implemented usually benefits some specific groups rather than the society as a whole. Fourthly, information, costs, and benefits for policy implementation are never accurately calculable due to incomplete or biased information and many uncertainties in policy action and its consequences. Lastly but not least, the Rational Framework originates from classical economics and sometimes appears obsolescent in responding to the new demands of policy analysis in a politically changing globe where human world is unforeseeably individualized (Beck, 2003). These weaknesses of the Rational Framework call for alternative perspectives to better understand the rationality, dynamism, and complexity of the implementation process of a public policy.

The Critical Framework

Public policy is never value-free and after all is a "dynamic and value-laden process through which a political system handles a public problem" (Fowler, 2013, p. 5). Since public policy is "a social and political activity" (Bardach, 2012, p. xv), it is natural to study the policy implementation process by focusing on its sociopolitical dimension (Brodkin, 1990; Dye, 2013; Jenkins, 1978; Matland, 1995; Yanow, 1990). For example, Dardach (1977) argued that "the bargaining and maneuvering, the pulling and hauling, of the policy-adoption process carries over into the policy-implementation process" (p. 38). Traditional research perspectives including the rational model, however, have been criticized as

> grounded in a narrow, falsely objective, overly instrumental view of rationality that masks its latent biases and allows policy elites and technocrats to present analyses and plans as neutral and objective when they are actually tied to prevailing relations of power. (Schram, 1995, p. 375)

Since the late 1980s, critical policy analysis, coined by Brobow and Dryzek (1987), has questioned "the predominant notion of instrumental rationality" (Torres & Heertum, 2009, p. 233) and has been used to address the constrained perspectives as well as the partial and perverse understandings "from limited theoretical and political frameworks – greatly in need of dismantling" (Marshall, 1997, p. 3). It seeks to interrogate how policy actions should be exercised "against new forms of domination" in a rapidly changing world and illuminates how unequal power has shaped the policy reality and what it should be and possible (Dumas & Anyon, 2006, p. 151). The Critical Framework for the studies of implementation processes, however, is still in its infancy.

The Critical Framework examines the sociopolitical process by inquiring into "the nature of relationships in social systems, with the purposes of eliminating those relationships that maintain privilege and oppression" (Ryan, 2001, pp. 315–319). Grounded in the premise that "men and women are essentially unfree and inhabit a world rife with contradictions and asymmetries of power and privilege" (McLaren, 1998, p. 171), the criticality strongly believes that it can be employed as a tool of reason by which the real world can be transformed and changed (Rasmussen, 1996, p. 11).

Since the Critical Framework is particularly concerned "with issues of power and justice and the ways that the economy; matters of race, class, and gender; ideologies; discourses; education; religion and other social institutions; and cultural dynamics interact to construct a social system" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000, p. 281), the criticality offers unique applications for framing research questions, uncovering socially constructed reality, and looking for alternative interpretations in policy analysis.

The Critical Framework views policy process, including implementation, as a means to question and challenge repressive power hierarchies (Jones, 2013, pp. 39–43), redistribute scarce social resources, and transform conventional institutions so that the status quo of social inequality can be changed (Bensimon & Marshall, 1997, p. 10), for "class interests can become embedded in policy-making" (Ball, 2003, p. 46). In other words, public policy is one type of political struggle by which the oppressed or marginalized groups bargain and negotiate with or fight against dominant or elite classes to achieve the freedom of humanity and "social justice" (Marshall & Gerstl-Pepin, 2005, pp. 70–72). Hypolito (2004) reports, for example, that the meaning of teacher professionalism can vary depending on "who is using the word and under what circumstances" (p. 218) and that the professionalization of teachers is a process "immersed in unequal relations of . . . social class" (p. 208), closely related to the process of proletarianization.

More broadly, public policy is deemed to be "tied to the twin anchors of market and state" (Klees, 1999), and either market or state is, after all, a primary domain of political struggles. In this regard, the Critical Framework places at the center of policy analysis the power, institutions, and structures that restrict access, i.e., the equal interest and benefit of disadvantageous social groups or classes (Marshall, 1997, p. 9). In other words, the examination of the systematically distorted unequal access to power and benefits within an institutional system becomes the prior task for the criticality. Giroux (2001) further points critical policy researchers toward:

> A mode of analysis that stresses the breaks, discontinuities, and tensions in history, all of which become valuable in that they highlight the centrality of human agency and struggle while simultaneously revealing the gap between society as it presently exists and society as it might be. (p. 36)

In the cases of the USA as well as other developed nations, education policy is aimed primarily at "satisfying the concerns and interests of the middle class" (Ball, 2003, p. 25), but those of minorities in terms of race, gender, and socioeconomic status are disadvantaged, underrepresented, or even oppressed. China's sociopolitical context is of course very distinct from that in the USA, and socioeconomic and political advantages become the central issue. Finding the possibilities and options for revealing and closing the gap between these socioeconomic and political inequalities becomes the major task of empirical studies using the Critical Framework.

The Critical Framework holds a number of important assumptions which overlap with political perspectives. First and foremost, policy action is a dynamic and

complex process (Honig, 2006, 2009), in which institutional transformations are driven by various benefits and power relationships. Throughout the power-coercive, benefit-based interactions, the reality of inequality in terms of socioeconomic and political status becomes the forefront for problem identification. Critical policy analysis, from the viewpoint of Brobow and Dryzek (1987), becomes "an extremely ambitious undertaking, requiring nothing less than a wholesale reconstruction of political institutions and public life" (p. 181).

The Critical Framework therefore stands as "a search for improvement of the human condition, an emancipatory social science" (Marshall, 1997, p. 10). From the Critical Framework, the purpose of policy analysis is to raise and facilitate the awareness of the structural determinants of oppression and social injustice and form a cohesive political strategy for social change (Beckmann, Cooper, & Hill, 2009, p. 336), by which class-, gender-, and race-based inequalities are resolved, but not to pursue scientifically planned rational goals, or the retaining of "institutional legitimacy" (Malen & Knapp, 1997, p. 428). Policy authorities, including those who lead or implement a policy, are to be critically interrogated for the purpose of changing the unjust social reality.

In the Critical Framework, socioeconomic and political tensions and conflicts in the process of implementation are seen as universal, pervasive, and enduring in the "pulling and hauling" (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, pp. 304–305) or even fighting process, since policy actors are "political creatures (a fact that too many policy analysts forget) in political communities" (Marshall, 1997, p. 5), consisted of diverse social groups or classes. They always try to influence the implementation process for their own special interests and values (Baldridge et al., 1977, p. 14, 1983, p. 51). From policy planning and implementation to outcome and evaluation, interest groups, especially disadvantaged individuals or groups, fight against the status quo and strive for change in their sociopolitical and economic status. Given that neutrality is abandoned, values "create the power that drives choices" and provide an important template for implementation (Marshall, 1997, p. 5).

From criticalists, policy problems are identified as to how privilege is maintained and how the disempowered and silenced are kept that way, raising "serious questions about the role of schools in the social and cultural reproduction of social classes, gender roles, and racial and ethnic prejudice" (Anderson, 1989, p. 251). Problems are considered resolved if the political tensions and conflicts are eliminated, and the social status of disadvantaged groups is promoted to an equitable extent in the implementation process. Information plays an important role as "the medium of exchange" (Marshall, 1997, p. 5), in terms of distributing power, compromising conflict, alleviating pressure, fighting for benefits, and taking responsibilities.

In addition to the above assumptions, the Critical Framework views the implementation process as a political arena converged with its environment and contextual factors. Jenkins (1978) argued that "public policy is best understood by considering the operation of a political system in its environment and by examining how such a system maintains itself and changes over time" (p. 21). His simplified variables for looking into policy process are (a) the policy environment and (b) the political

system itself. He further warned the researcher to pay serious attention to the role of institutional characteristics and sociopolitical influences in policy implementation. The Critical Framework has been widely employed to interrogate issues in teacher education (e.g., Diniz-Pereira, 2005; Hill & Boxley, 2007).

The Selection of the Multiperspectival Approach

At this point two alternative perspectives have been identified and developed as the multiperspectival approach for implementation studies in general and for this study in particular. Here is necessary to justify why this research is situated in the multiperspectival position.

Dror (1984) recommended nine general guidelines for better policy researchers. These include gaining historical and comparative perspective, knowing policy-making realities, studying the analyst's own society in depth, multiplying the analyst's disciplinary bases, and so on (pp. 13–18). Dye (2013) continuously sets forth six general criteria for evaluating the usefulness of an operational framework (pp. 29–30). Basically it needs to:

1. Order and simplify reality
2. Identify what is significant
3. Be congruent with reality
4. Provide meaningful communication
5. Direct inquiry and research
6. Suggest explanations

Central to these guidelines and criteria is a basic understanding of policy process and relationships in a specific sociopolitical context and the appropriateness of modeling for a specific analytic perspective. They serve as starting points for me to reason why the bricolage of the multiperspectival approach, combined of the rational and critical frameworks, is constructed and employed for this research.

First, the multiperspectival approach I have selected matches the purpose of my research. As introduced in Chap. 1, this study looks into the very complex implementation process of China's teacher education reform since the 1990s. It has been designed to investigate and understand how a teacher education institution has responded to the national policy at the micro-level, with multiple elements and dimensions to be investigated. To accomplish this challenging task, an in-depth examination of the linearly developed but fiercely contested implementation process of China's teacher education reform is highly desirable. The rational and critical perspectives enable my research to focus on these dimensions of the implementation process.

Second, the multiperspectival approach matches the unique nature of implementation in China's societal context with which the researcher is familiar. The national policy of teacher education reform and its implementation in China have been guided by a strong "scientific orientation" toward the nation's drive

for modernization, as stated repeatedly in China's national policy documents.[1] The Rational Framework is adopted because it serves as a powerful lens for looking into the rational implementation process of the policy case in China. Meanwhile, although China has a long history of rationally centralized control, the implementation of the national reform for world-class teacher education is indeed a dynamic process of institutional transformation with significant levels of power conflicts. The Critical Framework allows this study to address the conflicting side of the implementation process.

Third, China's reform for world-class teacher education since the 1990s is a nationwide, complex policy action that has lasted over two decades. Any single lens is unable to comprehensively uncover and problematize the rationality, dynamism, and complexity of the implementation process. Because the rational and critical perspectives can help complementarily unearth "aspects and intricacies of policy that would be easily missed with a single lens look" (Malen & Knapp, 1997, p. 435), the rational and critical perspectives together offer a richer and fuller understanding of the intricacies of the implementation process.

The multiperspectival approach empowers this research with more encompassing, diverse, multi-faceted analysis to more diversely understand the implementation process of China's national policy. In addition, it is expected to bring in complementary, meaningful insights for examining important, sometimes invisible aspects in the implementation process, which might be overlooked or even ignored by one single framework otherwise.

But to say that no single perspective is able to adequately capture the full rationality, dynamism, and complexity of implementation process is not necessarily to agree on that the more research perspectives one has, the better a policy study would be. The rationale for the multiperspectival approach depends largely on the relevance of a perspective to the research question and context, as well as the manageability of research tasks, which should be well balanced and situated. With these principles in mind, I believe that the multiperspectival approach best meets the needs of this study.

The Operational Analytic Model and Variables for This Study

The multiperspectival approach offers a suitable starting point for this study. Yet, an operational analytic model helps establish analytic components to technically address the research questions with the two selected research frameworks.

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[1]Please see "The Rationales behind Teacher Education Reform" in Chap. 3 (pp. 48–52), i.e., "Policy Actions for World-Class Teachers."

The Exploration of Operational Analytic Models

Policy implementation process varies from case to case and from time to time, depending on the nature of the policy to be carried out. Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) proposed a two-dimensional model to look into factors that affect policy implementation (see Fig. 5.3). The two dimensions they classified are the amount of change involved and the extent to which there is goal consensus among the participants in the implementation process.

Figure 5.3 illustrates that the amount of change set by policy goals and the extent to which implementers hold consensus on such policy goals affect how effective an implementation process is (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 461). With these hypotheses in mind, Van Meter and Van Horn proposed a systems model involving a complicated set of variables in the implementation process, as shown in Fig. 5.4.

As shown in Fig. 5.4, Van Meter and Van Horn's model has six factors or independent variables affecting the implementation process:

1. Policy standards and objectives
2. Policy resources
3. Interorganizational communication and enforcement activities
4. Characteristics of the implementing agencies
5. Economic, social, and political conditions
6. Disposition of implementers

In this model, significant attention is paid to the linkages between individual components involved in the implementation process. For example, the model views that standards and objectives exert indirect impact on the disposition of
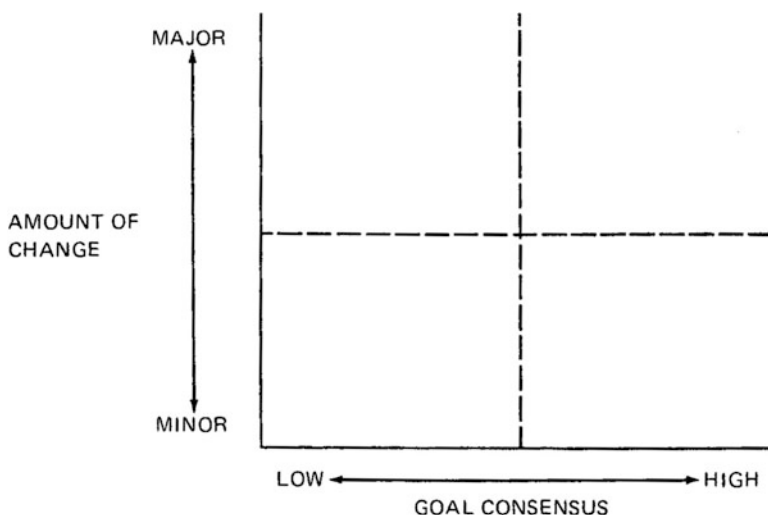
Fig. 5.3 Dimensions of policy affecting implementation (From Van Meter and Van Horn (1975))

INTERORGANIZATIONAL
COMMUNICATION AND
ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

STANDARDS AND
OBJECTIVES

POLICY

CHARACTERISTICS OF
THE IMPLEMENTING
AGENCIES

THE DISPOSITION
OF IMPLEMENTORS

PERFORMANCE

RESOURCES

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL,
AND POLITICAL
CONDITIONS
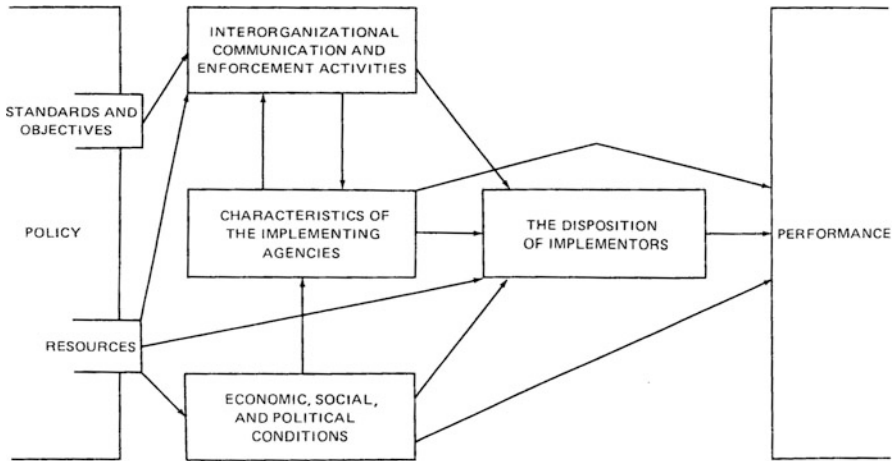
Fig. 5.4 A systems model of policy implementation process (From Van Meter and Van Horn (1975))

implementers through interorganizational communication activities (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 474). But the environment of implementation is only limited to economic, social, and political conditions, instead of cultural factors.

Van Meter and Van Horn's systems model is criticized by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) for having narrowly defined implementation process and its unlikeliness to be of much use to policy analysts due to the traditional defects of abstract systems models (p. 540). Sabatier and Mazmanian instead propose an alternative map for looking into the implementation components from a top-down approach (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983; Sabatier, 1986; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980). They grouped seventeen independent variables affecting the achievement of policy objectives into three broad categories: the tractability or manageability of the problem being addressed by policy, the ability of the policy to favorably structure and control the implementation process, and the political or environmental effects on the implementation process. Sabatier and Mazmanian's model is supported by Browne and Wildavsky (1983a, p. 229), but Hill and Hupe (2002) contended that it is the interactions between these variables and the efforts to coordinate the implementation process that may be crucial (pp. 49–55).

The two analytic models developed respectively by Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) and Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) are both from a predominantly top-down and forward mapping perspective. The top-down perspective is powerful in explaining how an implementation process is affected by a downward flow of policy process; however, it has been criticized for overemphasizing the ability of policy proponents to structure implementation while at the same time ignoring the ability of policy opponents to interfere in this structuring process. Further, it neglects the influence the frontline staff and field workers have on the delivery of policies and the inability of politicians and administrators to control the implementation process (Winter, 2003, pp. 213–214).

A bottom-up or backward mapping perspective is therefore also required for this study, since its purpose is to look into how a higher teacher education institution has responded to the national policy of teacher education reform in China. From a bottom-up perspective, Elmore (1978) developed four organizational models for examining the implementation process:

1. Systems management model
2. Bureaucratic process model
3. Organizational development model
4. Conflict and bargaining model

Of them, the Systems Management Model and the Conflict and Bargaining Model are of primary interest to this study.

The Systems Management Model captures the rationalist tradition of policy analysis. In this model, organizations should be structured on the principle of hierarchical control and operate as "rational value maximizers" (Elmore, 1978, p. 191). Implementation consists of defining a detailed set of objectives and assigning responsibilities and performance standards to subunits. It is considered effective when central goals and objectives are achieved; it is considered a failure if it is made up of poorly defined policy goals, unclearly assigned responsibilities, and uncompleted outcomes. In other words, the success or failure of an implementation is judged by "observing the discrepancy between the policy declaration and subordinate behavior" (Elmore, 1978, p. 195).

The Conflict and Bargaining Model addresses how people with individual interests coalesce in a conflicting implementation process. Organizations are political arenas of conflict in which individuals or interest groups compete for public resources. Implementation is considered to be a dynamic process in which the distribution of power and benefits is never really equal. Interdependency exists and there is a tacit consensus among all parties that is not enormously destructive to all sides. The success or failure of the implementation process can only be judged relative to the social justice goal temporarily achieved in the bargaining process. Local implementers usually adopt policy goals and strategies to enforce state policies in part with compliance and in part with countermeasures.

Elmore's two specific models for implementation studies along with the previously introduced models advocated by Van Meter, Van Horn, Sabatier, and Mazmanian together inspired this study to build an operational analytic model as illustrated by Fig. 5.5.

First, implementation and policymaking are one interwoven process by which policy goals are associated with political outcomes, responding to sociopolitical changes. The implementation process should be viewed at least a rational, collectively unitary activity from the Rational Framework, and a political conflict from the Critical Framework.

Second, since the purpose of this study is to explore and interrogate how a higher TEI has responded to China's policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s, the roles of stakeholders and their understanding and perceptions

of the implementation process need to be probed in great depth. Third, both a bottom-up perspective and a top-down perspective are required to reveal individual interpretations of the sophisticated implementation process.

Finally, although some major variables are adapted from the models introduced earlier to address the rationality, dynamism, and complexity of the implementation process, this study is not aimed to evaluate the implementation process in any sense. Instead, it is an exploratory and explanatory research intended to offer interpretations on how a nationwide policy has been implemented by a single TEI.

The Operational Analytic Map

Bearing in mind the above contemplations, the operational analytic model constructed for this study is sketched in Fig. 5.5. It illustrates a two-way policy flow, with top-down direction and communications as its core features, and focuses on the rationality, dynamism, and complexity of the implementation process by paying special attention to policy actors' background, involvement, interactions, and attitudes as well. Additionally, the confluence of various educational policies for social change, sociopolitical and cultural patterns, and institutional contexts is seen comprehensively as indispensable environmental factors that all play key role together in the implementation process.
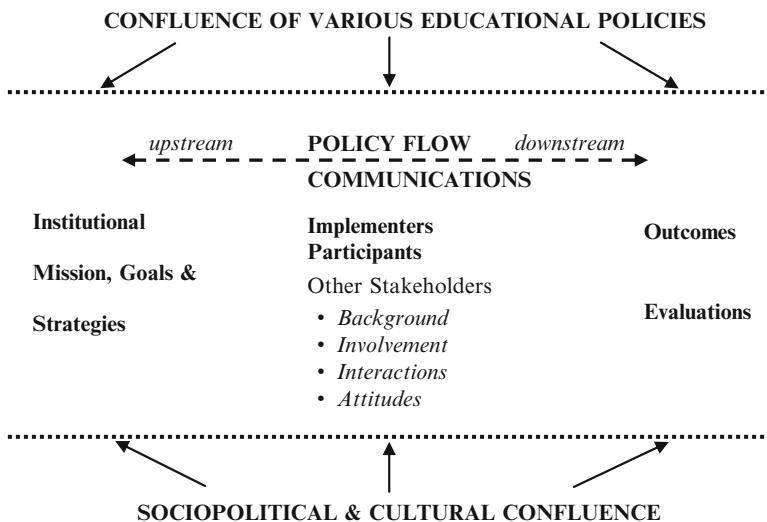
Fig. 5.5 The Operational Analytic Map for the study of the implementation process of China's teacher education reform (Modelled from Van Meter and Van Horn (1975))

This Operational Analytic Map adapts the major components from Van Meter and Van Horn's Systems Management Model of the implementation process, such as institutional objectives, communication, sociopolitical influences, etc. But it also differs from theirs significantly in the following aspects.

Comparatively speaking, the operational analytic model for this study draws components from both the rational and critical perspectives. In addition to policy goals and strategies, policy flow and communications, policy actors, outcomes, evaluations, and challenges, it also directs more specific attention to the rationality, dynamism, and complexity of the implementation process – the so-called black box – as well as the confluence of various educational policies concurrently being implemented in China.

These analytic units enable the study to look into some unfavorable institutional factors in and barriers to the implementation process, such as its intersections with the NCRBE, the higher education expansion policy, the NEBPP, and the NCEE. Furthermore, the operational analytic model differentiates the contrasting roles the implementers and participants played and economic and political interactions between them, helping better understand the rationality, dynamism, and complexity of the implementation process.

In addition, neither Jenkins (1978), nor Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), nor Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) have paid sufficient attention to the contextual factors of *culture* in the implementation process. According to Hofstede (2001), culture "collectively" programs human behaviors (p. 9), including those typical in policy process. More specifically, Rueda and Stillman (2012) suggest recently that all teaching and learning is cultural and that cultural factors are an important factor for all learners. The operational analytic model employed by this study includes culture as an important contextual dimension, since China has carried on a heavy cultural tradition of central governance and a long heritage of education over thousands of years. The significance of this study relies in part on its discovery of how Chinese culture contributes to the implementation process.

The Six Key Dimensions Identified

As shown in Fig. 5.5, six key dimensions are identified as units of analysis in the implementation process for this research: (1) policy flow and communications; (2) institutional mission, goals, and strategies; (3) implementers and participants as stakeholders; (4) outcomes and evaluations; (5) sociopolitical and cultural confluence; and (6) confluence with various educational policies.

Policy Flow and Communications

How a public policy is delivered and interacted in its process is a core concern for policy analysts (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1978, p. 26, as cited in Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984, p. 229; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980, p. 542). For example,

Jenkins (1978) deemed that there is a logical path by which policy is initiated, implemented, and terminated (pp. 17–18). Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) pinpointed that effective implementation usually requires policy goals to be clearly understood by implementers: "It is vital that we concern ourselves with the clarity of standards and objectives, the accuracy of their communication to implementers, and the consistency (or uniformity) with which they are communicated by various sources of information" (p. 466). In other words, an examination of policy flow and communications is very important to understand the complexity of implementation.

The first unit of analysis adopted by this study is the policy delivery structure and the communication channels for the implementation. It looks into how the national policy of teacher education reform was delivered to and within a TEI. It also examines the communication strategies by which the national policy was mapped to local implementation institutions and how stakeholders were kept informed.

Institutional Mission, Goals, and Strategies

Implementation processes may vary from one to another, but the success or failure of an implementation process is commonly studied by examining the consistency between policy goals and outcomes (Elmore, 1978, p. 195; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980, p. 542; Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 459). As Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) articulated, "Essentially, the performance indicators assess the extent to which the policy's standards and objectives are realized" (pp. 463–464). In addition, institutional strategies are also important because they control in what ways the policy is to be carried out in the implementation process.

This study adopts institutional mission, goals, and strategies for the policy implementation as the second unit of analysis. The institutional mission and goals designate implementation tasks, and the institutional strategies are adopted as an instrument to achieve implementation goals. In this book, the institutional mission sets the ultimate goals which orient the development and reform of the university toward meeting the national goal of teacher education reform. The institutional strategies vary from enhancing teaching for prospective teachers to strengthening the distinguishing feature of teacher education and to restructuring academic departments.

Implementers and Participants as Stakeholders

As I have mentioned, the implementation process can be viewed as either a rational unitary activity from the Rational Framework or a fiercely conflicting political arena from the Critical Framework. Both frameworks view implementation as a process involving an intensive and extensive participation and engagement by various policy actors and other stakeholders. This variable looks into how the implementers (leaders and administrators) and participants (faculty) were involved in the implementation process.

Elmore (1978) argued that implementer's role is a crucial factor affecting the implementation process, citing the implementation of federal educational programs as a best example:

> Local implementers designed their actions around expectations about the willingness of federal administrators to enforce the policy. When federal administrators were forced to take a different posture, local administrators responded in part with compliance and in part with counter-pressure. (p. 224)

In addition, Winter (1990) points out that the implementation process is very much affected by the way in which the street-level bureaucrats and target-groups (implementers and participants) respond to the policy (pp. 31–35). Street-level bureaucrats, defined by Lipsky (1980), occupy a uniquely influential position in the implementation process (Meyers & Vorsanger, 2003, p. 245). By focusing on individual and collective roles of implementers, participants, and other stakeholders as well, it becomes possible to examine how the national policy is *rationally* carried out but *politically* complicated in the implementation process.

Outcomes and Evaluations

Policy outcomes are usually measured in an evaluation process which examines the consistency of policy goals and outputs from a Rational Framework. Policy outcomes are also judged relatively by social justice temporarily achieved in the bargaining and conflicting process from a Critical Framework. Regardless of which perspective is adopted, evaluation is widely considered to be a crucial stage in the implementation process. Browne and Wildavsky (1983b) committed a whole chapter in their classic book *Implementation*, discussing the role of evaluation in the implementation process (pp. 181–205). To them, evaluation "can contribute to a continuing refinement in comprehension of why programs and policies do or do not work" and "evaluation is a necessary component of program development and implementation" (Browne & Wildavsky, 1983b, p. 182; p. 201).

The outcomes and evaluations as units of analysis in this study are to be focused on the two dimensions below:

- Institutional changes brought about by the implementation process
- Official evaluations and personal accounts on the policy outcomes

The first dimension addresses institutional changes brought about by the implementation in terms of the change of power relations and social status. The second dimension unearths perspectives from official and personal channels which presented varied views on the results of the national policy of teacher education reform.

Sociopolitical and Cultural Confluence

Some policy theorists have paid according attention to stakeholder's understanding and attitudes toward a policy action, which are often constrained by a specific setting of sociopolitical and cultural pattern. For example, Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) proposed that "attitudes and resources of constituency groups" are one of their six non-statutory variables affecting the implementation process (pp. 550–551). In Van Meter and Van Horn's Systems Management Model (Fig. 5.4), the disposition of implementers is critical for policies to be effectively delivered since all other components must be filtered through the perceptions of the implementers. From their view, three elements of the implementers' response have great impact on their ability and willingness to carry out the policy. The three elements include their cognition (comprehension, understanding) of the policy, the direction of their response toward it (acceptance, neutrality, rejection), and the intensity of that response (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 472).

This study examines a number of sociopolitical and cultural factors, such as sociopolitical power structure and tensions, cultural values, as well as behavioral patterns, as units of analysis, to investigate how the implementers and participants have culturally interacted with each other in the implementation process of the national reform for world-class teacher education.

Confluence with Various Educational Policies

The confluence with various policies for institutional changes has specific significance for this book, since it intends to serve "as an instrument to identify hidden policy problems neglected by policymakers in the planning stage" as stated in Chap. 1. In this sense, this research scrutinizes the institutional confluence that may negatively hamper, positively facilitate, or negatively *and* positively affect the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform.

The multiperspectival approach guides this study to examine important pieces of the implementation jigsaw of China's national policy for world-class teacher education from two divergent and oftentimes contrasting, theoretical perspectives. The operational analytic model introduced enables this study to focus on its key units of analysis and the practical operation of the inquiry. It must be also noted that China's policy for world-class teacher education since the 1990s has been an ultra-large-scale and extremely labyrinthine institutional transformation. Equally important is that the reality of any implementation process is much more complex than can be captured simply by an analytic map. The next chapter plans to address how this case study was designed and carried out in the field.

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Chapter 6
The Implementation Case: Yangtze Normal University

In order to better understand the implementation jigsaw of China's policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s, this study employed case study as its primary methodological approach. This chapter first explicates in great details why the case study approach was used, how the case study site was selected and accessed, and how the interviewees were identified by following rigorously strictly the principles of qualitative research. It further details the multiple field trips in the site for data collection and follow-ups and how the data collected were analyzed with validity and ethical considerations. The chapter then turns to the description of the case, introducing its history and institutional development in recent years and portraying its organizational settings and sociopolitical context.

Research Design

Case study approach is widely accepted as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (Yin, 2014, p. 16). Although generalization of findings is not the primary purpose of this study, this case study will help the understanding of "a larger class of (similar) units" (Gerring, 2004, p. 342), that is, how the national policy of teacher education reform has been implemented in TEIs in China since the 1990s.

The case study approach was adopted for several specific reasons. First, there is a tradition that the case study approach has been intensively employed by implementation studies, as Goggin, Bowman, Lester, and O'Toole, Jr. (1990) concluded below:

> Systematically studying the dynamics of implementation is a particularly difficult task. Until recently, most implementation research relied heavily on the case study method to capture the dynamics of implementation (p. 182).

This is mostly because the case study approach explores "the realities of implementation" (Fox, 1990, p. 210).

The implementation process of China's policy of teacher education reform is a labyrinth interwoven deeply in its sociopolitical and cultural context. The case study approach seeks to examine a phenomenon in its "important circumstances" (Stake, 1995, p. xi) and can help the researcher better understand the implementation process within its broader social context in China.

The case study approach can serve as a powerful tool to answer "what," "how," and "why" questions (Yin, 2014, p. 10–15). It is well suited to the research interest of this study, as this research intended to look for answers for *how* the national policy of teacher education reform had been implemented in the Chinese context.

Finally, sometimes knowing more about less is much more important than knowing less about more, and this is particularly meaningful for this qualitative research. The case study approach has the virtue of offering "the depth of analysis" (Gerring, 2004, p. 348) and even "thick description" as proposed by Gilbert Ryle (Geertz, 1973, p. 6). With the case study approach, this study sought rich descriptions and interpretations for the implementation process of the teacher education reform in China.

Sampling and Access

A good policy researcher should know policy realities and study his or her own society in great depth (Dror, 1984, p. 13–14). Dror's suggestion makes particular sense to this study, in terms of making appropriate decisions on the selection of cases and participants. The following section explains how these were done, meaning how I selected a provincial normal university and why this particular one. Subsequently, I will describe how I identified interviewees from the case.

The Case Identified

For a case study like this one, sampling techniques of the case and interviews are crucial for fulfilling its research purpose. Sampling techniques known as probability sampling and purposeful sampling are interchangeably used nowadays for quantitative or qualitative studies (Kemper, Stringfield, & Teddlie, 2003, p. 277). Silverman (2001) assumes that purposeful sampling "allows us to choose a case because it illustrates some feature or process in which we are interested" (p. 250). Specifically, Patton (2002) postulates:

> The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting *information-rich cases* for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry. (p. 230)

Since this study looked for in-depth descriptive interpretations of the labyrinthine implementation of China's national reform of teacher education, it adopted the theoretical sampling technique with multiple strategies for the selection of interviewees. Specifically, it applied Patton's typical-case sampling approach to capture the local circumstances and conditions of a commonplace situation in China. Through using a typical-case sampling approach, the vital statistical characteristics of provincial normal universities were reviewed to identify an "average" case (Patton, 2002, p. 236). One *representative* or *typical* provincial normal university was thus purposively chosen as the case for this study, because provincial normal universities provided the largest base for teacher education in China.

By *representative* or *typical*, a case is referred to allow for an understanding of the implementation process that has broader relevance in "an everyday situation" (Yin, 2014, p. 52). As a result, the site of the case was limited to a medium-sized city in a mid-level-developed province in inland China. Since the gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national income (GNI) are usually used by economists as the cardinal indicators for measuring the socioeconomic development of a country (Ahuja, 1999, p. 13), the gross regional product (GRP) and per capita net income of households were used by this study to measure the socioeconomic development of a region. The term "mid-level-developed province" in this study refers to provinces where the GRP ranged in the middle of the 27 selected provinces, autonomous regions, or municipalities directly under the central government.[1]

Similarly, the case was carefully limited to a provincial normal university due to the limited time the researcher had for fieldwork. Generally, the number of students enrolled, the number of faculty members, and the number of collected books in university libraries were considered key indicators referring to the developmental level of a university. By mid-level-developed provincial normal university, this study defined that its enrollment of undergraduates fell into the middle range of the 27 selected provincial normal universities.

Based on the above criteria, the Yangtze[2] province was finally selected as the site and Yangtze Normal University (YNU) as the case for this study. Several reasons were behind this decision-making process. First, the GRP of Yangtze province ranked in the mid-level of national economic and social development among the 27 provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the central

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[1]The ranges are defined by an interval of GRP less than US$64.4 billion (RMB¥399.9 billion), between US$64.4 and 161.0 billion (RMB¥400.00–999.9 billion), and above US$161.0 billion (RMB¥1,000.0 billion), based on *China's Statistical Yearbook 2005* (The National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2005, p. 347; p. 361). The exchange rate was RMB¥1 = US$0.161021 (Jan. 16, 2015). Twenty-seven provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the central government were selected for comparison because only their corresponding 27 provincial normal universities had available statistics for analysis. In 2014 mainland China has 34 provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the central government. Hubei province, Shaanxi province, and the autonomous regions of Tibet and Ningxia were excluded because they either did not have a provincial normal university or they only had a merged national key normal university.

[2]Yangtze is a pseudonym here and throughout the book.

government; YNU's enrollment fell in the middle of the 27 provincial normal universities selected. Second, I only had limited time for fieldwork in mainland China over the past years, and a single normal university was large enough for me to collect sufficient data within constrained timeframes.

Third, YNU had a common administrative system and similar organizational missions with all other provincial normal universities in China. For example, it was also directly administered under the provincial department of education and monitored by the MOE and primarily aimed at preservice training for teachers. Meeting these criteria, YNU was qualified as a *representative* or *typical* case for this study.

Identification of Interviewees

As mentioned previously, the theoretical sampling technique was also adopted by this study with multiple strategies for identifying information sources. The multiple strategies included convenience sampling, opportunistic sampling, snowball sampling, and critical case sampling (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2002, pp. 179–181; Mertens, 2015, pp. 318–360; Patton, 2002, pp. 237–242). Convenience sampling allowed the study to target samples that were easily accessible, but its disadvantage was obvious: the easily accessed samples might not be the theoretically wanted ones. Its disadvantage was minimal in this study in fact, as I as the researcher was very familiar with YNU and its key participants who had been involved in the implementation process.

Meanwhile, this study used opportunistic sampling and snowball sampling, which both involved taking "advantage of circumstances and events as they arise while undergoing the data collection process" and using "insider knowledge to maximize the chance that the units included in the final sample are strong (highly appropriate) cases to include in the study" (Kemper et al., 2003, p. 283). In addition, the critical case sampling strategy was employed as a strategy to pick participants who could possibly yield the most information and have the greatest impact on the development of knowledge. Patton (2002) defines critical cases (information sources) as:

> those that can make a point quite dramatically or are, for some reason, particularly important in the scheme of things. A clue to the existence of a critical case is a statement to the effect that "if it happens there, it will happen anywhere," or, vice versa....While studying one or a few critical cases does not technically permit broad generalizations to all possible cases, *logical generalizations* can often be made from the weight of evidence produced in studying a single, critical case. (pp. 236–237)

Critical case sampling strategy was particularly well suited for this study in identifying possible interviewees. As the administrators and faculty members at the department or college of educational sciences of normal universities were much more affected by, and had to be much more responsive to, the national policy of teacher education reform, most of the interviewees were identified in YNU's CES.

Table 6.1 Statistics of participants

Categories		Number (gender distribution)	Percentage
I: Policy actors	Implementers (administrators)	11 (M 9/F 2)	65 %
	Participants (faculty members)	6 (M 5/F 1)	35 %
II: Forms of interview	Informal interviews	2 (M 2/F 0)	12 %
	Formal interviews	15 (M 12/F 3)	88 %
III: Types of interview	Individual interviews	13 (M 12/F 1)	76 %
	Focus group interviews	4 (M 2/F 2)	24 %
IV: Gender	Male interviewees	14	82 %
	Female interviewees	3	18 %
Total		**17 (M 14/F 3)**	**100** %

The total number of interviewees and percentage is calculated based on each category, respectively

To comprehensively examine YNU's implementation of the national teacher education reform, interviewees were stratified to cover three levels (university, college, and department) with two major groups of stakeholders, i.e., implementers (leaders or administrators) and participants (faculty members).

The absolute majority of the interviewees graduated from YNU's Department of Educational Science. Some of them used to work (or by the time they were interviewed were working) as university administrators such as an assistant to the president or director of the Office of Scientific Research.

A total of 17 interviewees were successfully recruited from YNU's CES. Among the 17 interviewees, as shown in Table 6.1, nearly two-thirds were academic leaders or administrators such as an assistant to YNU's president office, dean or assistant dean of the college, department chairs, etc. More than one-third were professors of education, and near one-fifth were females. I deliberately recruited more administrators than faculty because the nature of this study intended to probe into the implementation, and university administrators were generally more involved in the process.

Five key interviewees were identified for this study, since they were "particularly knowledgeable about the inquiry setting and articulate about their knowledge – people whose insights can prove particularly useful in helping an observer understand what is happening and why" (Patton, 2002, p. 321). As shown in Table 6.2, the five key interviewees with special involvement and knowledge of the implementation included two assistant deans of the CES and a department chair and two faculty members in the Department of Educational Science.

The above sampling strategies enabled this study to recruit interviewees who were involved in the implementation. It allowed me to deliberately examine those who were critical to the frameworks developed by this study and to establish

Table 6.2 Profiles of interviewees

Category	Pseudonym	Title	Gender	Age range
Implementers (leaders or administrators)	Anping	Department Chair and Associate Professor	M	41–45
	Beihua[a]	Department Chair and Associate Professor	M	41–45
	Kaifei	Department Associate Chair and Professor	M	66–70
	Daijing	Department Associate Chair and Associate Professor	F	66–70
	Enwei[a]	College Associate Dean and Professor	M	41–45
	Futang	Institute Director and Associate Professor	M	46–50
	Gangyang	Office Director and Professor	M	41–45
	Hengtang[a]	College Assistant Dean and Professor	M	51–55
	Inling	Department Chair and Associate Professor	F	36–40
	Jiliang	Vice President and Professor	M	66–70
	Minglai	College Dean and Professor	M	41–45
Participants (faculty members)	Laimin	Associate Professor	M	41–45
	Mawei	Associate Professor	M	71–75
	Ningdong[a]	Associate Professor	M	36–40
	Ouying	Associate Professor	F	41–45
	Peishi[a]	Associate Professor	M	41–45
	Huguo	Associate Professor	M	41–45

All are pseudonyms here and throughout the book
[a]Key interviewees

particular comparisons to illuminate the reasons for commonalities and differences between interviewees and among individual groups.

Access

I had some advantages in terms of access to YNU and interviewees, because of my social networks had previously established in the academic community in China. I graduated in the field of education from a key provincial normal university and used to work as a faculty member in this field in a key national normal university for almost a decade. As a "quasi-insider" of the system, I was very familiar with the YNU context, though I was no longer affiliated with any of the two TEIs. In addition, I had many former classmates and colleagues in the field of education who were then working as deans, directors, or leading professors in China's TEIs. They helped me

to obtain easy access to the case selected. More importantly, many of them later became my key interviewees since an intimate and trustworthy relationship had existed between them and me for years.

Fieldwork for Data Collection

Data collection primarily consisted of, but was not limited to, interviews because the interviews are generally regarded as "one of the most important sources of case study evidence" (Yin, 2014, p. 110). At the same time, documentation and archival records provided other important data sources for this study.

Collection of Interview Data

Interviews allowed me to collect data based on individual observations, personal perspectives, and participants' involvements of the implementation process. This type of data was obviously not obtainable by questionnaire surveys. To better collect interview data, I adopted a common-sense hypothetico-inductivist model popularized by Wengraf in his *Qualitative Research Interview* (2001, p. 2). Adapted from the tradition of grounded theory, the common-sense hypothetico-inductivist model collects "all the relevant facts" in order to build up possible theory induced from the relevant facts (Wengraf, 2001, p. 2).

Wengraf (2001) recommends four principles for in-depth interviewing which are research oriented, a face-to-face interactive conversation, semi-structured, and going into matters in detail (pp. 3–6). As I expected "thick description" for this study, the four principles were therefore rigorously observed in the process of data collection. For example, an intensive interviewing strategy was applied (Murphy, 1980, pp. 75–78), and all the interview questions focused on my topic-oriented sub-questions were designed to be sufficiently open ended, semi-structured, flexible, and improvisatory, as suggested by Wengraf (2001, p. 5).

Starting from late August 2005, I began to communicate with some key interviewees via phone calls and email exchanges for the preparation of my fieldwork. Before formal interviews were conducted, a one-hour rehearsal, as recommended by Stake (1995, p. 65), was conducted with a volunteer on site to test my interview guide and procedures. This completed interview process involved a combination of Patton's three basic approaches for open-ended interviews, i.e., the informal conversational interview, the general interview guide, and the standardized open-ended interview.

The informal conversational interview offered maximum flexibility in the natural flow of an interaction "to pursue information in whatever direction appears to be appropriate" (Patton, 2002, p. 342). The general interview guide approach ensured that all relevant topics were covered with limited time available during an interview,

whereas the standardized open-ended interview approach conversely interacts with interviewees with carefully worded questions and rigidly ordered procedures to minimize variation in interviewing (Patton, 2002, pp. 341–348).

Among the 17 interviewees, two were interviewed informally due to their sensitive administrative positions. The remaining 15 were interviewed by first outlining the interview questions and then asking each of them the same questions with similar sequence based on the interview guide. Most interviews were conducted face-to-face in a quiet and comfortable hotel room located on YNU's main campus. Except for the two informal interviews, all interviews were audio-recorded based on their voluntary consent. The consent form was distributed to them for their signature before interviews began. The oral consents were also obtained from the two interviews conducted informally. In addition, written notes were taken and reviewed for each interview on my interview guide on the same days.

Collection of Documents

Documents and archived records included anything that has some relevance to the case (Bardach, 2012, p. 83): books, journal articles, newspapers and magazines, official reports, statistical archives, interoffice memoranda, position papers, bulletins, and so on. These data sources were recommended by such experienced researchers as Murphy (1980, pp. 121–128) and Yin (2014, pp. 105–110–89). Murphy (1980) argued that "document analysis is better than interviewing for collecting some kinds of retrospective data" (p. 121), and Yin (2014) recommends that "the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources" (p. 107).

Apart from the firsthand data collection of interviews and observations, this study extensively collected and analyzed various documents and archival records about the implementation process at YNU. For example, I gleaned many key policy documents or event archives which were highly relevant to YNU's implementation of the national reform of teacher education. These documents and archives included *The Yangtze Normal University Strategic Plan for Eleventh Five-year and for 2015*, *The University Newspaper*, *The Yangtze Normal University Gazette* and *The Yangtze Normal University Newsletter of Teaching*, etc. They helped me build up a more comprehensive understanding of the case with accurate retrospective data for major actions and events in YNU's implementation.

Data Analysis and Coding Strategies

The analysis of primary data usually began immediately after interviews were finished on site. After I had returned from field trips each time, I spent much time transcribing the written notes and audio-recordings myself. This decision was

made for two reasons. The procedure enabled me to get more familiar with the information the interviewees provided, especially their tones and feelings which would otherwise not be available if the transcription had been done by a third party. Another consideration was that it provided additional opportunities for me to review and verify the information by repeatedly listening to or reading the interview contents, although the process itself was mentally and physically tedious.

The results were a total of 245 pages of transcripts in Chinese, which have served as a rich dataset for the exploration of the nature of the research. During the process of data analysis, some transcripts were sent back to respective interviewees for the verification of their accuracy and reliability.

More accurate data analysis with coding was done continuously after the transcripts were completed. As qualitative data coding is "the formal representation of analytic thinking" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 155), I tried to explore suitable coding strategies to better present my findings. The master codes included five key variables and their corresponding subunits of analysis based on the functional analytic model: policy flow and communications in the implementation; institutional goals and strategies of the implementation; involvement and interactions of various stakeholders in the implementation process; outcomes, evaluations, and challenges of the implementation; and institutional settings and environment of the implementation (please refer to Chap. 5).

The second level of codes was based on Bogdan and Biklen's ten coding categories, i.e., setting or context codes, definition of the situation codes, perspectives held by subjects, subjects' ways of thinking about people and objects, process codes, activity codes, event codes, strategy codes, and relationship and social structure codes (1998, pp. 172–177). This study used most of the ten categories in general, but focused on interviewees' perspectives on and involvement in the implementation process in particular.

In addition, three types of codes, descriptive, interpretive, and pattern (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 57), were used in the study's coding system. Specifically, the pattern coding strategy was applied to understand "the patterns, the recurrences, and the plausible whys" from interview data (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 69).

For the purpose of efficiency, the coding process was based on the transcripts in Chinese, but when necessary the bits and pieces of the transcripts were translated into English for the purpose of writing this book.

Triangulation and Reliability

Multiple sources of evidence are often suggested to be used for data triangulation, as "a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence" (Yin, 2014, p. 119). The interviews and documents collected in this study were triangulated with each other to assure the accuracy of data and interpretations. Furthermore, this study invited some key interviewees for "member checking" (Stake, 1995, p. 115). The procedure included several follow-up

interviews and verifications via phone calls and email exchanges. Additionally, about one-fourth of the transcribed drafts were sent back to their corresponding interviewees via email attachments for verifications. Through this process, the accuracy and validity of data collected in the field were ensured to the greatest extent possible.

On the other hand, as agreed by many researchers, triangulation also serves the purpose to clarify interpretations by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being seen (Flick, 2014; Silverman, 2001). In other words, triangulation provides great opportunities to look into the phenomenon in complimentary ways and verify the facts by various sources. In this study, interview data collected from different sources and documents collected in the field were triangulated to reveal various perceptions, individual standpoints, and subjectivities for the policy implementation process.

To enhance the reliability of this case study, "a chain of evidence" (Yin, 2014, pp. 127–128) was maintained. This process allowed me to trace how the "case study protocol" (Yin, 2014, pp. 84–94) was based on research questions, how data were collected from multiple sources according to the protocol, and how the final report was inferred from the database. Although it was a rigorous and complicated process step by step, this study saw it as a key quality control for data collection, analysis, and reporting.

Limitations

There are many advantages with a case study approach, whereas disadvantages are also inborn with it. For this study, there are two likely limitations embedded in the nature of the research. The first limitation lies in the generalization of findings. China has the largest teacher education system in the world and has significant regional and institutional differences. The selection of the case for this study was based on recent rankings of socioeconomic development and student enrollment, but indicators for socioeconomic development and the development of a university could be more complicated and therefore may vary significantly from one to another. Findings from a selected single case may reveal some major dimensions in the nationwide policy implementation process, but they cannot be extensively generalized or applied to other settings without considering various local conditions and other issues associated with generalizing across contexts.

The second limitation is about the trustworthiness of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290) or its validity. Data collected from interviews might have some untrustworthy or untrue accounts about the implementation process, as a result of human nature in general as well as the particular sociopolitical context of reform in China. For example, although the madness of the Cultural Revolution ended three decades ago (Lin, 1991), some Chinese people are still afraid of writing down or publicly sharing with others their real thoughts, judgments, or feelings

about political and policy issues. Interviewees may have perceived some interview questions as threatening or politically sensitive, though they had voluntarily agreed in advance to participate in the study. These minor examples of a lack of credibility to a certain degree may reduce the trustworthiness of the study overall. To maximize the trustworthiness of the study, interview questions were designed with as less political sensitivity as possible.

Ethical Concerns

Because of the nature of the research questions and I was an outsider studying YNU's implementation process, there was very minimal threat to the interviewees of the study. For example, I was not involved in any political process related to the national policy, including what happened in YNU. I could not present a "threat" to the interviewees on site in any possible way.

The study might face some ethical issues, such as possible risks and confidentiality issues associated with the dissemination of my findings, but every possible effort has been made to minimize these threats. The study rigorously adopted the criteria of the American Anthropological Association and strictly complied with the University of Maryland's Institutional Review Board requirements at the initial stage and later the Hong Kong Institute of Education's Ethical Review Codes for conducting research that involves human subjects. There were no known risks and/or discomforts associated with the study. In various disseminations of my findings, including this book, interviewees' and institutional identities investigated have never been exposed in any form, as their identities have been kept known only to me as the researcher. Before I conducted or audio-recorded interviews, interviewees were requested to sign a voluntary consent form which provided details and risks associated with the research and the interview. The next section will introduce to readers the implementation case – YNU.

Yangtze Normal University

As I have mentioned in Chap. 2, normal universities were reestablished in China after 1949 as an independent teacher education system. By 1953 after the radical Reorganization of Departments and Colleges (*Yuanxi Tiaozheng*), there were a total of 31 independent normal colleges and universities (China National Institute for Educational Research, 1984, pp. 90–91). Among them, YNU was one of the earliest. This section first sketches YNU's history and institutional development, then portrays the institution's organizational settings and the CES, and finally outlines the relationship YNU has with the central and local governments.

Brief History and Institutional Development

YNU is a provincial TEI, located in a busy inland metropolitan area in Eastern China. Though it has been a national comprehensive university in its early history, it was reconstructed as a key provincial TEI in the early 1950s.

In the mid-1950s, YNU had five departments, majoring in Chinese language, history, mathematics, physics, and chemistry, respectively. Meanwhile, there were six independent *Jiaoyanshi* (units of teaching and research), such as *Jiaoyanshi* of pedagogy and *Jiaoyanshi* of psychology which provided required courses for prospective teachers. By that time, there were over 200 faculty members and roughly 1,000 registered students. In the early 1960s, the contingent of faculty doubled and that of students tripled. YNU recovered from the ten chaotic years of the Cultural Revolution which ended in 1976 and rapidly enlarged its faculty to approximately 1,000 by the mid-1980s. At that time student enrollment jumped to more than 5,000.

Today YNU has around 20 schools on three urban campuses,[3] with a total of 490 acres of land. More than 300 professors and another 1100 full-time teachers are teaching around 37,000 students studying in over 30 graduate programs and 90 undergraduate programs. The faculty-student ratio is about 1:26 on average. With about 2.8 million volumes of books and three libraries on campuses, the university's library system is one of the two largest in the province of Yangtze.

Organizational Settings

Since the reorganization of departments and colleges in the early 1950s, YNU has fundamentally revamped its mission and teaching programs; once housed in a comprehensive university, they are now found in an independent normal university which mission is to bear the responsibility for training teachers in the province. In fact, it has produced the largest number of teaching graduates in the province.

Since the late 1990s when the national policy of higher education expansion was carried out, YNU has taken many actions to significantly expand its academic programs and student enrollment.[4] It now consists of 20 colleges or schools, such as the CES, the College of Language and Humanities, the College of Foreign Language, the College of International Education, the Institute of Economics and Management, the School of Law and Politics, the School of Music, the Academy of Arts, the College of Territorial Resources and Tourism, the College of Computer and Mathematical Sciences, the College of Physics and Electronic Communications, the College of Life Sciences, the College of Environment Science, the College of

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[3]Among the three campuses, the new campus is the largest in terms of geographical space.
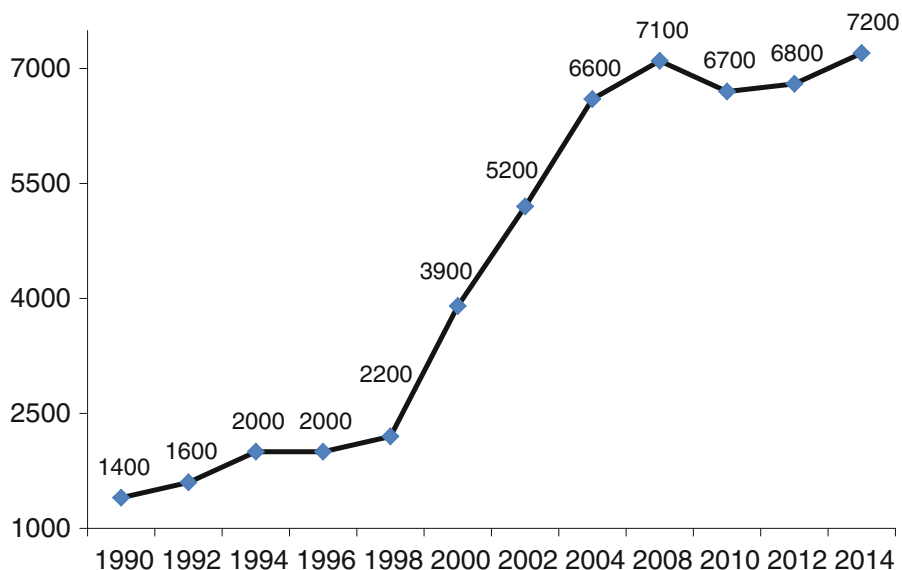
Fig. 6.1 Historical trends of New Entrants at YNU (1990–2014) (Data from the YNU website)

Chemistry and Materials Science, etc. Some of these colleges are well established and have prestigious academic status in China.

At the same time, YNU has upgraded its teaching programs for both undergraduate and graduate students. In 2015 it offers over 110 programs covering a range of undergraduate and Ph.D. courses. By contrast in 1983, there were only 13 undergraduate programs, no doctoral program, and only 20 graduate students were registered in its M.A. programs. In the late 1990s, YNU began to radically expand its capacity to provide more learning opportunities. Figure 6.1 shows the historical trend of student recruitment from 1990 to 2014.

Like any other normal universities in China, three clusters of courses are provided to students who are majored in teacher education programs at YNU. These courses include: (1) disciplinary courses, e.g., educational theories, psychology, and pedagogy; (2) professional specialty courses, e.g., classical Chinese language, history of Chinese literature in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature; and (3) ideological-political education in Marxism and Leninism and Mao Zedong's thoughts. These courses provide future teachers with the foundations of educational and psychological theories and practice, theories and applications of professional disciplines, and Marxist perspectives to understand the relationship between education and human development in a socialist society. Among the three clusters of courses, the CES provides the first cluster, the disciplinary courses for students of teacher education.

Administrative Relationships with Central and Local Governments

YNU is a key provincial university. Traditionally, key universities in China are given priority of public resources from either central or local government or both,[5] and in reality key universities always take advantage of their according status to consume much more public budget. YNU is no exception. Generally, more budgets are allocated to it every year by the provincial government for its daily operation and development. In other words, it is financially controlled by Yangtze Provincial Bureau of Education (YPBE). Meanwhile, it is directly under YPBE's administration and indirectly monitored and supervised by the MOE. Because of such relationships with the YPBE and the MOE, respectively, YNU must actively carry out various policies promulgated by the central and provincial governments.

In addition, YNU and the local government also have a tight bilateral relationship. The university is located in the downtown area of Yangtze city[6] but has no direct aegis under the local government. In fact, both the university and the government of the city are managed in parallel by the provincial government. In this arrangement, the relationship between the two is equal and independent of each other.

However, the local government has had significant political and economic influence on YNU. For example, Yangtze city has recently been under reconstruction following a new plan for urban development. This plan included a relocation of the main campus of YNU to a new development district. YNU has occupied the area of the main campus for decades and is reluctant to move out. The local government has to request the provincial government to exert pressures on YNU and meanwhile offers huge financial compensations including long-term loans for YNU's construction of a new campus. Both sides finally agreed on the new plan for the development of the city as well as the university.

On the other hand, YNU also plays an important role in local socioeconomic development. Since the late 1990s, the university has been able to recruit more than 2,000 students every year. Currently, as many as 37,000 students plus 2,500 staff and faculty are living on the university's main campus. The total population and the campus create a lot more job opportunities and bring many business options to the local community.

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[5] About the key school system in China, please refer to Footnote 8 in Chap. 2 (pp. 31–32).

[6] Yangtze city is a pseudo city here and throughout the book.

The College of Educational Sciences

The CES is one of the fastest growing schools at YNU. It was founded in the earlier 2000s, upgraded from the former Department of Education, one of the earliest departments at YNU. Accredited and approved by the MOE, the College's programs aim to prepare educators, counselors, psychologists, administrators, researchers, and educational specialists. By 2015, the College had 70 fulltime faculty members working in four departments, i.e., the Department of Education, the Department of Psychology, the Department of Preschool Education, and the Department of Educational Technologies. Around 2,000 students were studying in 6 undergraduate degree programs and 8 postgraduate degree programs. The College has become the largest base for educational research and training in Yangtze province.

Since the mid-2000s, YNU has been preparing for the establishment of a new College of Teacher Education (CTE) to deepen the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. The new college was to be based on the current CES but would also consolidate all the programs related to teacher education at YNU, including the programs of discipline-based teaching theories for teacher education from each department on campus.

This brief introduction of YNU provides readers a basic understanding of what a typical TEI looks like in China. The next chapters will explore how YNU has implemented the national policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s.

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Chapter 7
The Policy Flow and Institutional Mission for the Implementation

This chapter examines how China's policy of teacher education reform was channeled from the national level to the institutional level at YNU, and YNU's institutional mission has been reoriented to implement the national policy for the reform. These mechanisms serve as the first few pieces that are to be interlocked in the implementation jigsaw. It begins with an introduction on how the administrative model works at YNU.

YNU's Administration

According to *The Higher Education Law*, promulgated on August 29, 1998, public institutions of higher education in China are mandated to adopt "the president responsibility system under the leadership of the grass-roots committees of the Chinese Communist Party" (The NPC Standing Committee, 1998, August 29, *Article 39*). This president responsibility system in HEIs has been followed in China since the early 1960s (Yu & Zhao, 1981). Like any other public universities in China, YNU has observed this national regulation by adopting a common president responsibility system under the CPC's leadership (*Dangwei Lingdao xiade Xiaozhang Fuzezhi*), i.e., the supervisory leadership by the CPC Committee and the executive leadership by the university president. In fact, the incorporated dual systems are a typical administrative model for all government agencies, public institutions, and state-owned enterprises in China.

The Supervisory Leadership of the Communist Party of China

The CPC has been the sole party in power in the country since 1949, as mentioned in Chap. 2. In public HEIs, *The Higher Education Law* stipulates the responsibilities and functions of the CPC as the following:

> In higher education institutions run by the State, the system shall be applied under which the presidents take over-all responsibility under the leadership of the primary committees of the Communist Party of China in higher education institutions. Such committees shall, in accordance with CPC's Constitution and relevant regulations, exercise unified leadership over the work of the institutions and support the presidents in exercising their functions and powers independently and responsibly. In exercising leadership, the committees shall chiefly perform the following duties: to adhere to the lines, principles and policies of the Chinese Communist Party, to keep to the socialist orientation in running the schools, to provide guidance to ideological and political work and moral education in the institutions, to discuss and decide on the internal structure and directors of departments of the institutions, reform, development and basic management systems of the institutions and other important matters, and to ensure fulfilment of all the tasks centering on the training of students.
>
> The internal management systems of HEIs run by different sectors of society shall be established by such sectors in accordance with the regulations of the State governing such institutions. (The NPC Standing Committee, 1998, August 29, *Article 39*)[1]

By this law, the CPC effectively plays a dominant role in the administration of public higher learning institutions. Within this administrative model, university leaders and administrators must first be a CPC member before they can take their corresponding administrative positions.

In the case of YNU, the CPC leadership has been exercised by the Standing Committee which is elected by the University CPC Congress and is approved by the Provincial CPC Congress. As regulated in *The Higher Education Law*, the University CPC Standing Committee is responsible for executing or implementing the guidelines and policies of the Central or Provincial Committee of the CPC.

In this arrangement, the CPC Standing Committee functions as the main instrument in carrying out national and provincial policies. In reality, the secretary of the CPC Standing Committee has the dominant leadership power over campus, though this power is supervised by the University CPC Standing Committee and the CPC Congress, in addition to the upper-level CPC Commission for Discipline Inspection along with the new anti-corruption movement launched by Xi Jinping since 2012. Currently, YNU has one secretary and two associate secretaries of the CPC Standing Committee, all of whom were elected at the Tenth Plenary Session of YNU CPC Congress in June of 2014 (see Fig. 7.1).

By the same token, all departments and colleges at YNU follow a similar administrative model but with a simpler structure. For example, the CES has a College CPC Subcommittee which is responsible for executing or implementing the

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[1]This English quotation was retrieved May 15, 2016 from the MOE website: http://www.moe.edu. cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/moe/moe_2803/200905/48454.html.

Fig. 7.1 The CPC's simplified supervisory system at YNU. The supervisory leadership of all departments and colleges at YNU is similarly modeled (Adapted from the YNU website)

guidelines and policies of the CPC University Committee. Currently, the body of college CPC supervisory leadership includes one secretary, one associate secretary, and six CPC committee members.

The Executive Leadership of the Presidency

Similar to the national administrative system in which the State Council assumes overall responsibility for the national governmental work under the CPC's supervision, the executive leadership of YNU president assumes overall responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the university. Under the supervision of the CPC Standing Committee and regulated by *The Higher Education Law*, the president is fully responsible for the teaching, scientific research, and other administrative work of the university and is expected to perform the following functions:

- To draft development plans, formulate specific rules and regulations, create the annual work plan, and organize activities for implementation
- To organize teaching activities, scientific research, and ideological and moral education
- To draft plans for the establishment of internal organizations, recommend candidates for vice presidency, and appoint and relieve persons in charge of internal organizations
- To employ and dismiss teachers and other internal workers, administer student affairs, and give rewards and impose penalties
- To draft and implement the annual budget proposal, protect and manage school properties, and safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of the school
- To exercise other duties and powers provided for in the articles of association (The NPC Standing Committee, 1998, August 29, *Article 41*)

In addition, the president chairs the university's administrative meetings and handles other major matters. Under such a model, YNU has a range of administrative offices and units executing various routine and emergent jobs on campus (see Fig. 7.2). For example, the Office of Financial Services is primarily responsible for performing various financial functions such as budgeting and accounting
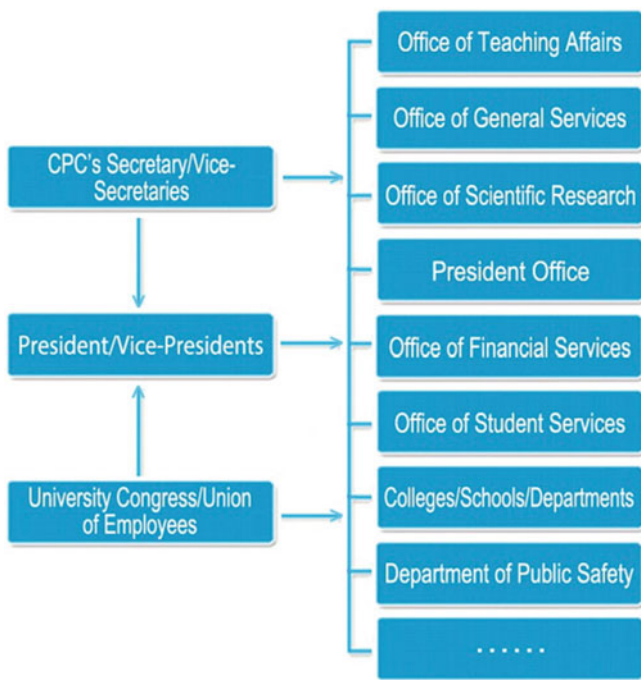
Fig. 7.2 The administration system at YNU. The executive leadership of all departments and colleges at YNU is similarly modeled (Adapted from the YNU website)

management and overall financial management of the university. The Office of Teaching Affairs bears overall responsibility for coordinating teaching and curricula and administering student learning. The Office of Scientific Research coordinates research, development, knowledge transfer, strategic planning, etc.

The executive leadership of various departments and colleges follows a similar administrative model but with a simpler structure and staffing, as it is a case of establishing CPC's supervisory leadership at the same level. In the case of the CES, the executive body includes a dean, three associate deans, and five administrative secretaries.

Top-Down Policy Flow in the Implementation Process

In China, it is a national mandate since 1949 that all HEIs are under the direct leadership of the MOE or the PBE, and the CPC at its according levels supervises them, respectively. Generally, national policies are linearly channeled to HEIs from the MOE or the PBE in two ways. Oftentimes, before a national policy of education is formally publicized, university leaders will be summoned for a special meeting

to the MOE or the PBE. After the meeting, university leaders will plan how to implement the policy on campus based on policy guidelines and their requirements.

Sometimes a national policy is delivered via the official delivery system with two models: (1) from the MOE to universities directly or (2) via the PBE indirectly. In the second situation, the PBE serves as a conveyor or a buffer agency. As a key provincial normal university, YNU usually follows the second model and receives national policies from the YPBE.

Once national policies are officially passed down, typically YNU would hold a special working meeting or multiple ones to implement them, especially for major national policies. For example, on Sept. 18, 2004, the university held the Third Working Meeting on Teaching, in order to implement the requirements of *The Rejuvenation Action Plan for Education 2003–2007* by the MOE (February 10, 2004). The implementation goals and strategies were put into place soon after these working meetings. As shown in Fig. 7.3, the policy flow at YNU for the implementation of the national policy is usually top-down and linear. This has been taken as a rational, efficient, and systematic way for policy delivery to an individual institution.
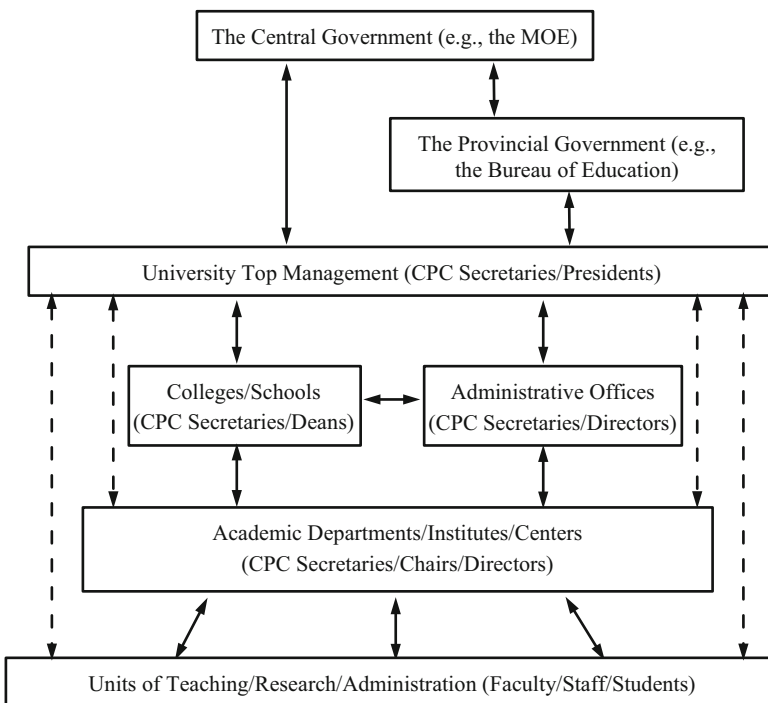
Fig. 7.3 The policy flow at YNU (Based on Figs. 7.1 and 7.2 from the YNU website, and adapted from Li (2006, 2013) © Australian Teacher Education Association reprinted by permission of Taylor & Francis Ltd, http://www.tandfonline.com, on behalf of Australian Teacher Education Association)

Communications to Frontline Actors

Communication is a key process by which policy goals and strategies are mapped out for such policy actors as implementers and participants. YNU has routinely adopted a common form of communication, *Chuanda*, for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform.

Literally, *Chuan* means "passing on" and *Da* means "reach". *Chuanda* is a regular, official communication system characterized by an asymmetrical top-down flow of policies, laws, other legislations, or political mandates. Generally, *Chuanda* is characterized by the CPC and other leaders engaging government agencies and offices at all levels, in schools, universities, military organizations, factories, companies, etc., in getting acquainted with latest policies formed or made by the upper level of government.

Chuanda has been adopted as a powerful political system by the CPC since its birth in 1927 to deliver or publicize the CPC's policies and ideologies. On some occasions, it has been employed as a collective form to focus on national leaders' works, e.g., *The Selections of Mao Zedong*, *The Selections of Deng Xiaoping*, *The Selections of Jiang Zemin*, etc. Under many circumstances, *Chuanda* has been used as a dominant way to exert ideological or political control by the CPC on the populace, whenever it is necessary.

In effect, *Chuanda* is generally considered a powerful and effective communication system for Chinese government to deliver key national policies or legislations, since it is a regular, institutional, and systematic communication form of policy flow. Although *Chuanda* is generally asymmetrical and top-down at YNU and at any other public universities in China, it serves as a political channel for CPC members, administrators and implementers, as well as participants in the community to communicate with each other for the effective implementation of the national teacher education reform.

Chuanda has involved various forms of communication. One major form is holding special meetings or workshops for those who are involved, more often the CPC members or administrators. The Third Working Meeting on Teaching held by YNU on September 18, 2004, as mentioned above, is a good example of this form of *Chuanda*.

Another form, probably the most often-used one, as required by the CPC, is political studies (*Zhengzhi Xuexi*). *Zhengzhi Xuexi* is generally based on a teaching or research unit at grassroots level, or on an academic department or across campus, depending on how important the mandate is. A similar form exists in local governments, public or government-run institutions or enterprise, etc. One of its major functions is to serve as an official mechanism of communication to pass on governmental policies, legislations, and the like to faculty members, staff, and students as well. It is also used to collect recommendations, comments, and feedback for upper-level authorities.

In terms of routines, the officially organized *Zhengzhi Xuexi* is often held once a week, usually in the afternoon on Wednesdays or Fridays. Attendance is mandatory for all faculty, leaders, staff, and students, respectively. Subgroup meetings based on the nature of a group are also held frequently, such as faculty's *Zhengzhi Xuexi*, leaders' *Zhengzhi Xuexi*, students' *Zhengzhi Xuexi*, etc.

Since the late 1990s, with a general loosening of the political environment in favor of free market forces taking shape in China, this official communication form has been gradually watered down, though it is still being held in most universities or governmental offices every week. According to most participants, mainly university and college leaders, YNU adopted *Zhengzhi Xuexi* as the major communication mechanism to deliver the national policy of teacher education reform. At YNU, *Zhengzhi Xuexi* has never been really suspended.

When interviewees were asked about the specific communication means employed at YNU to implement the national policy, two deans responded that *Zhengzhi Xuexi* was the most popular channel through which the national policy was disseminated. Chair Kaifei noted that once the national policy was formed and publicized, government at all levels, as well as YNU, had to implement it with detailed plans and strategies. To him, *Zhengzhi Xuexi* served as the major source for his faculty members to learn about the national policy of teacher education reform. Dean Enwei also explained:

> The most important channel is *Zhengzhi Xuexi* which is generally organized from the upper level to the lower level. As long as our university organizes it – whatever it is about, we have to participate.

While the university officials claimed *Zhengzhi Xuexi* had been employed as the most important way to relay the national policy of teacher education reform to everybody on campus, other sources agreed in general but with different observations. Professor Ouying questioned the effectiveness of this system and pointed out that it was "not effective at all." Most other interviewees saw that both the mass media and the university's official communication system were important policy sources for them, but the mass media was definitely their primary channel to learn about the national policy. Other information channels for policy delivery included academic journals, special meetings, word of mouth, etc.

Chair Beihua observed that the university did not employ its official communication system to publicize the national policy except for *The Teachers' Law* and *The Educational Law*, and his personal knowledge of the national policy was mainly obtained from the mass media. Director Futang further added:

> I actually had the information through the media even before it was conveyed in teaching and research activities . . . .
>   My impression is that, it is very rare that the university publicizes [the national policy] via the official routes. Sometimes, there is an offprint of policy document distributed to teachers' mailboxes through their respective colleges or departments, and that's it . . . . [As to *zhengzhi xuexi*], its key function is definitely watered down.

In fact, there is a big difference between the university's official communication system and the mass media. The university's official communication system tended

to be a politically mandated form through which all stakeholders *passively* received official information, whereas the mass media provided omnipresent resources, and they can *actively* select and accept what they wanted to know. Professor Huguo supported Director Futang's observations:

> *Zhengzhi xuexi* only seems to be a major way [of getting the information of central government policies], but it has actually become an insignificant way. Most of our teachers actively seek out information about the national policy by following the media, i.e., the mass media including newspapers, TV programs, the Internet, etc. Before, as professors we were usually uninformed about government policies. For instance, we don't know if we ever studied *The Teachers' Law*, *The Higher Education Law*, or *The Vocational Education Law*, etc. . . . .
>
>   It seemed that administrators didn't care about this issue, or they assumed that these [policies] should be made known to professors anyway.

Chair Inling, Professor Huguo's wife, was even angry at having no official access on campus to learn about the national policy of teacher education:

> There is no way to have organized studies on these specific policies. I have more opportunities [than my husband] to participate in [college or university] meetings, for I am a CPC member. There is also no way to have access to these specific policies by the official *Zhengzhi Xuexi* or the similar.

Although most interviewees agreed that the mass media and university's official communication system were the two sources by which they got familiar with the national policy of teacher education reform, some of them called for a cautious, acritical attitude toward mass media, as Dean Hengtang put it:

> The media usually functions as an entertainment tool for the public, thus it is neither accurate nor authoritative. To ensure that information is authentic and authoritative, [we] have to see what the policy document says. The central government's policy and its implementation have to be passed on through the provincial government – this is what media cannot do.

Dean Hengtang made a good point for understanding the university's official communication system: Although its effectiveness was under question, the official channel is still the major form of authority and power in the delivery of the national policy.

It appeared that YNU has adopted what is believed to be the most effective form of communication for the implementation of the national policy. However, most implementers and participants viewed it critically, claiming it an ineffective way, out of the original expectation of YNU's top management. Still, the national policy of teacher education was successfully delivered to the frontline participants at YNU, who tended to more or less follow the official *Chuanda* system, no matter how they responded to it individually. Such collective behaviors are actually "integrated not only horizontally but also vertically", as pointed out by Hofstede (2001, p. 228). They are often considered as normal and are widely observable in a Confucian society.

Alignment of Institutional Goals for the Implementation

Ambiguity in the University Mission

YNU's original mission before the 1990s was very typical, just like that of any other provincial universities in China. For example, it was stated in one of YNU's official documents published in October 1983:

> Yangtze Normal University is a key provincial normal university with a long history, providing comparatively comprehensive programs in science and liberal arts for training teachers. It aims to produce more qualified talents for socialist construction and contribute to the socialist country.

The university's leaders and implementers met from July 30 to August 2, 2003, to plan for the future development of YNU. Heated debates took place on topics such as what type of university, fully comprehensive or focused on teacher education, should YNU become and how to construct one or the either. In April 2005, the university's *Strategic Plan for the Eleventh Five-Year Plan and the Year of 2015* reshaped its mission as follows:

> We will strive to build up a comprehensive teaching and research university primarily featured with teacher education, to become a key base for producing high-level talents in research and technology innovation in the province and, to contribute to the revitalization of Yangtze province through science and education.

The new mission clearly kept its original statement that the university aimed to be a key provincial TEI and a research base for teacher education. The original meaning of a *normal university*,[2] however, was no longer attached to the new mission statement. Instead, after the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform for more than two decades, YNU was gradually losing its original identity as a normal university and was evolving toward a more comprehensive direction of university featuring teacher education. The newly revised mission statement became ambiguous in terms of defining its teacher education identity and seemed to be contradictory to the rational requirements of the national policy of teacher education reform.

This ambiguity was chiefly the result of the national policy of higher education expansion since the late 1990s. Dean Hengtang observed that the university had wanted to keep its distinguishing feature as a teacher education institution. However, after the radical expansion of enrollment since the early 1990s,[3] teacher education programs have been incapable of accommodating the large number of students or meeting the needs for socioeconomic development in Yangtze province. Therefore, YNU had to open new programs, e.g., non-teacher education programs.

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[2]Please refer to: Hayhoe and Li (2010). The idea of a normal university in the twenty-first century. *Frontiers of Education in China*, *5*(1), 74–103.

[3]As to the expansion of higher education and the enrollment expansion of YNU since the 1990s, please refer to Table 3.1 and Fig. 3.1 in Chap. 3 (p. 47) and Fig. 6.1 in Chap. 6 (p. 135), respectively.

Dean Hentang envisioned that the overall trend in the future would be that the teacher education programs would retain their original size instead of undergoing major expansion and the non-teacher education programs would be expanded significantly. Professor Mawei was a retired senior professor in history of education. He also noted that the ambiguity of teacher education identity was to be traced to the radical expansion of student enrollment in higher education:

> We have to recruit students [for survival], so we could not limit student admission to teacher education. Like our college, teacher education students are only one-third, and all the rest are non-teacher education students. Our identity is ambiguous now – the title we have is a normal university, but in fact we are no longer focusing just on teacher education.

While some interviewees deemed that it was unavoidable for institutional goals to go astray, Professor Peishi was very critical about it. He held that the ambiguity in YNU's identity had led to conditions challenging the legitimacy and status of teacher education. That is, teacher education as the traditional feature and strength of YNU was being undermined. He opined that neglecting the university's distinguishing characteristic had caused the significant decline in teaching quality:

> The problem that comes with it is: We are very embarrassed by the teaching quality of our university. Our students have become not as competitive in academic achievement as those from comprehensive universities, and they are also not as competitive either when compared with those from less prestigious normal universities in their learning in teacher education. Especially in recent years, the feedback we have received told us that the teaching ability and educational skills of our students were not competitive with those of students from less prestigious normal universities. This clearly indicates that, we have severely neglected the importance of teacher education. Our leaders definitely know the problem, but nobody cares enough to deal with it.

Professor Peishi's critical review strongly underscored that the institutional goals of YNU had significantly deviated from the requirements of the national policy of teacher education reform, even though teacher education was still cited in policy documents as its primary focus. The university's ambivalence toward teacher education had a negative impact on the implementation of the national reform.

For example, in 2013 there were around 16,000 undergraduate students who were not registered in teacher education programs, whereas there were only 6,000 undergraduate students enrolled in such programs, much fewer as they did before the late 1990s. If viewed from this statistical fact, YNU had substantially changed its identity from being a TEI to that of a comprehensive university, as Chair Beihua expressed his criticism in the following way:

> We are a *normal* university, right? Most of our students should be studying in teacher education programs for [our goals are to] prepare prospective teachers. But now our non-teacher education programs do not prepare teachers, and students in these programs are more than half of the total students registered.

It is observed that the institutional goals at YNU have deviated from the requirements of the national reform. It is also true that the unique focus and distinct tradition of teacher education which once defined YNU has been gradually lost due to its shifting mission. Despite the ambiguity, the institutional goals were

still widely recognized by both implementers and participants, who shared lofty Confucian values of the common good for YNU's institutional development and implementation advancement.

The New Mission of the College of Educational Sciences

As Professor Peishi and Chair Beihua have pointed out, to a certain extent, the status of teacher education has changed at YNU. However, at another level, the university has taken substantial steps in the early 2000s to set up the CES, as a key strategy to implement the national policy of teacher education. The CES' new mission reflected the comprehensive requirements of the national policy of teacher education reform.

The College's mission was based on three national policy documents of teacher education reform: *The CPCCC and the State Council's Decision on the Deepening of Educational Reform and the Full Promotion of Quality Education* (1999, June 13), *The Decision on the Reform and Development of Basic Education* (The State Council, 2001, May 29), and *The Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education during the Tenth Five-Year National Plan* (The MOE, 2002, February 6). It aimed at promoting teacher education and the optimizing teacher education resources, improving the quality of the teacher workforce and promoting teacher professionalization, building a prestigious college of teacher education in the province, and becoming one of the bases for teacher education in the country.

After the new CES was established, as Dean Hengtang suggested, the enrollments of teacher education programs at YNU remained their original size. But he believed that the teaching quality of teacher education programs was considerably enhanced, and so was the status of teacher education at YNU. The new college optimized all resources for teacher education programs at YNU.

Thus far, this chapter has examined YNU's administration system and how it maintained a top-down, linear policy delivery system for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. It further reveals how YNU employed its official communication mechanism, i.e., *Zhengzhi Xuexi*, to ensure the success of policy delivery. However, many implementers and participants viewed this mechanism as a "watered down," ineffective means of communicating the national policy at the grassroots level. In addition, due to the national policy of higher education expansion, the implementation goals at YNU deviated from the original expectation of the national policy of teacher education reform. Implementers and participants who criticized the university for deviating from its teacher education mission created political pressure on the university to consider enhancing teacher education by establishing a new CTE in the future. The next chapter will look into YNU's more complex, dynamic implementation jigsaw of the national policy of teacher education reform.

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Chapter 8
The Implementation in Complications: A Dynamic Process

This chapter probes into the dynamic pieces of the implementation jigsaw at the micro-institutional level in China. It first presents how stakeholders at YNU involved themselves in motley ways in the implementation process. It also details the implementation strategies and actions the university has taken, and how these strategies and actions have changed its social status and public image. In addition, the chapter investigates how the outcomes of the implementation process were evaluated officially and individually by YNU's stakeholders.

Stakeholders' Involvement

Stakeholders in YNU's implementation of the national policy consisted of *implementers*, including university and college leaders and administrators, and *participants*, i.e., professors (faculty members), other staff, and students as well. Due to the nature of different groups, I limited my focus only on leaders and professors since they were two groups of key players in the implementation process. Both the university and the national policy required leaders as implementers and faculty members as participants to get involved in the implementation process, though their roles were different, and in many cases contradictory.

The Roles of Implementers

YNU relied heavily on its administrative team to implement the national policy of teacher education reform. The administrative team was consisted primarily of YNU's CPC leaders, presidents, and other administrators. As previously mentioned, the administrative team was under the direct supervisory leadership of the university

CPC secretary and Standing Committee. The roles these leaders played can be categorized as (1) a routine job for them given their leadership and administrative roles, since their main responsibility was to implement policies delivered from the upper level government; (2) a special involvement related to strategic planning for creating and implementing national policies by organizing or participating in meetings, workshops, or discussions; and (3) an effort to integrate policy goals into YNU's teaching and curricular reform.

The primary role the CPC leaders played in a leadership or administrative position was to routinely take actions to implement the national policy according to their various positions and associated political power. Usually, the university-level CPC leaders played dominant roles in making decisions and planning for the implementation, while the college and department-level leaders played assistant yet substantial roles for carrying out whatever measures were required by their senior administrators.

For example, YNU made the decision to establish the new CTE as an important strategy for implementing the national policy of teacher education reform. A vice president, a university CPC Standing Committee member, was assigned to take charge of the overall planning for the initiative and acted as the dean of the proposed new college. The CES' dean was required to assist the vice president's preparations. Together, they worked on planning the establishment of the CTE, which included examining needs and environmental conditions, reviewing the challenges the new college may encounter, and proposing specific guidelines, strategies, and steps for its establishment.

Many participants interviewed in this study had played leading roles as CPC leaders in the implementation process. For example, Vice President Jiliang indicated that he had taken the responsibility of decision-making and planning for teaching affairs for YNU's implementation of national policies. When the national policy of teacher education reform was delivered to YNU, he summoned key implementers such as deans, department chairs, and office directors to discuss how to make institutional plans and strategies for the implementation.

Generally, department chairs and deans were the major implementers at a lower level on campus. Chair Kaifei detailed his role in these words: "I have to get involved [as the department chair]. When the policy comes, I as an administrator and a professor must get to know it and carry it out." When he was asked which identity, as an administrator or a senior professor, allowed him to be more actively involved in the implementation process, he responded in this way:

> Of course, as an administrator [you] are more active, [for] you are not only required to get to know your own stuff, you also have to know others', and you have to carry out the expectation of your supervisor and the national policy. The role an administrator plays is definitely much more [than that of a professor], and this role is critical . . . .Administrators must know [about the policy] much more than professors. Thus, in terms of administration, [administrators] should have more awareness of the policy and be involved comprehensively. As a professor, you can only focus on what you should know. But as an administrator, it's definitely impossible.

Chair Kaifei sketched the role an administrator generally played in the implementation process. In his dual roles as an administrator and a professor, his comparison revealed the role difference between implementers and participants in the implementation process, which was repeatedly confirmed by most other interviewees. Such concurrently dual roles were called *Shuangjiantiao* in China.

Dean Enwei and Director Gangyang, both taking responsibility of *Shuangjiantiao* as an administrator and a professor, testified that their experiences were very similar to Chair Kaifei's. Dean Enwei detailed that, after taking both the leadership and administration of the college, his role changed in at least two aspects: he had to look more intently into what the national policy required, *and* he had to take note of how people at his college responded to it. This required Dean Enwei to act as a mediator in the implementation process, which, being a professor, he was not accustomed to doing.

The second role the leaders play was to act as a consultant for strategic planning of policy actions, by participating in related working meetings and workshops or joining strategic planning groups. For instance, Director Futang was engaged in provincial strategic planning for teacher education reform for the tenth five-year plan. This provincial plan affected YNU's implementation of national policies, as it usually set the major directions for YNU's responses. In addition, when the university needed leaders with expertise in initiating and drafting certain reports, plans, or policy documents, he was usually among those invited to join through the College of Educational Science. This was true for most implementers at YNU. Both Chair Beihua and Director Gangyang mentioned that they were often invited as consultants when the university needed to take key policy actions.

The third role the leaders play was actively to engage in teaching one or two courses by themselves and thereby taking measures to reform teaching. This role is typical and common for many leaders, including presidents, deans, and chairs or directors. Chair Beihua detailed his role in the implementation process in the following way:

> [I have been involved] more or less in all kinds of work for the policy's implementation. On this campus, I am probably among those who get most intensely involved. First, I played my role through drafting new course plans for my college and department . . . .
>
> Second, whether it is a required course or a core course, I always pay special attention to introducing to students the importance of educational science or theories in classroom teaching. I can give you a very simple example. When I taught a required course in Educational Theories to students from the Department of Chemistry, I kicked off the course from the perspective of teachers' professional development, [instead of only introducing the significance of knowing the subject knowledge of chemistry].

In addition, Chair Beihua viewed teaching internship as a critical step to assure the quality of teacher education. He was proud he set tough requirements for student interns.

In sum, integrating goals of the national policy into teaching and curricular reform was an important way for leaders to get actively engaged in the implementation of the national policy. Such a way of integrating of policy goals and

implementation actions is inherited from the *Shuyuan* tradition that is centered on the Confucian synergism of knowledge and action (Li, 2016b, 2016c), as indicated in Chap. 2.

The Roles of Participants

Although participants were required to work toward achieving the same policy goals as implementers, their roles were indeed quite different from implementers'.

The majority of participants were professors whose main jobs were teaching and research. As a result, they played specific, limited roles in the implementation of the national policy. Generally, there were two formal ways and one informal way by which professors were involved.

The first formal way was to officially participate in some critical policy action, such as being a part of the credit system reform the university implemented in 2003. Usually, only administrators were required to participate in such kinds of activities, but some faculty members, especially policy specialists or senior professors, were also officially invited to be involved in this process.

Professor Peishi noted his involvement in the credit system reform, saying that several of his proposals were accepted by the top implementers at YNU. Professor Ningdong witnessed that he knew some faculty members who were invited to discuss certain policy actions for implementing teaching reforms, including initiating new teaching plans in the CES.

The second formal way for professors to participate was by accepting a call to attend meetings or seminars in order to comment upon some strategic plan or major decision. For example, on April 22, 2005, the university invited many professors to discuss *The University's Strategic Plan for the Eleventh Five-Year Period* at the University Congress of Teachers. This strategic plan was vital as it delineated the university mission as well as a series of substantial strategies for the implementation of the national policy.

The third way of participation was informal. This involvement depended on the relationship between a faculty member and leaders or administrators. If a professor had a close relationship with a leader or a group of leaders, he or she may easily get involved in the implementation process.

Professor Peishi reported that he was often invited to provide his consultation for implementation strategies for the national policy of teacher education reform, because he had close relationships with the university leaders such as the presidents and several directors of university administrative offices.

Although participants had multiple ways to be involved in the implementation process, their roles were in fact passive and limited. In reality, many of them only played a technical or instrumental role in the implementation process. Professor Peishi explained in the following what a technical role looked like:

> That is to say, we are only consulted about whether a statement [of a policy document] is reasonable or not. To see if a statement is reasonable or not is to check if the statement drafted by leaders is inconsistent with national policies of teacher education reform, or if it fits the real circumstance of our university, and if it is consistent with the commonly accepted educational assumptions.

Professor Peishi's remarks stressed that although participants were consulted, the university and college leaders tended to make their own decisions beforehand. Apparently, Professor Peishi was actively involved in the implementation process of the national policy, but at the same time, he was frustrated with the limited role he could play as a participant.

Worse than that, some participants who were interviewed perceived the current administrative system as a bureaucratic stronghold discouraging or even suppressing the faculty's involvement in the implementation process. For example, Professor Ouying experienced very limited opportunities to be involved in the implementation process of the national policy. She observed that professors' participation was generally passive and technical, e.g., they were merely participating in whatever the leaders wanted or had planned. She gave her personal negative experience as an example:

> Let's talk about the issue of young teachers pursuing higher degree studies. Before [the national policy of teacher education reform was issued], I was not encouraged to do that. But now the university has made a 180-degree change of attitude, for it needs a highly-qualified faculty [to meet the requirement of the national policy]. This change of attitude actually gives little options for teachers to make their own decision. I did not have any options when the university did not encourage me to do that. Now I still do not have any options, when I could not enroll myself in a further study program, yet I have no choice. Teachers are just passive doers, instead of being active players in the implementation process.

Obviously there was strong political tension between implementers and participants, with each side competing for their own political advantage. Compared with the active, dominant roles the leaders played in the implementation process, Professor Ouying's negative experience challenged the official-centered bureaucracy of YNU's administration system and illustrated how she was still involved as a passive and technical participant in the implementation process at YNU.

Institutional Strategies

To effectively implement the national policy of teacher education reform, YNU tried to strictly follow the requirements of the reform. These requirements urged TEIs to "build up a highly qualified teacher workforce" by redoubling their efforts toward the structural adjustment of teacher education programs, continuously enforcing the reform on training models and curricular systems, and improving training quality (The MOE, 2002, February 6).

Based on such requirements, YNU adopted what was perceived to be the most effective strategies with alternatives for substantial policy actions, presuming them to be logical, collective, and pragmatic choices in China's cultural environment of Confucianism. These strategies encompassed a wide range of efforts for teaching enhancements, intensifying the university's distinguishing feature of teacher education and reorganizing academic departments to support teacher education programs.

Enhancing Teaching for Prospective Teachers

In order to implement the national teacher education reform and to enhance the quality of teaching, YNU's leaders held seven campus-wide working meetings on teaching from 1996 up to 2013. At the 3rd Meeting on Teaching in 2004, YNU's President warned that the quality and quantity of the faculty of YNU did not meet the needs of the university's development and the goals of the national reform. In the same year, *The Opinions on Deepening Teaching Reform, Speeding up Teaching Innovation, and Improving Teaching Quality in Yangtze Normal University* was formally published.

In this document, the leaders reviewed and assessed the challenges YNU had faced in improving teaching quality and viewed the problematic teaching quality in the programs of various departments as the bottleneck restricting the development of YNU. They proposed various strategies for the implementation of the national reform in order to build a stronger and larger faculty for the university in the near term. These strategies included starting new degree programs; systematically transforming from the academic-year system, which the university had long used, to a new credit system; strengthening the teaching workforce and its management; upgrading teaching facilities; and improving the learning environment.

At the latest Meeting on Teaching in 2013, YNU's President spoke satisfactorily about the enhancement of teaching quality, such as that the overall culture and environment of teaching and learning have been improved. His report, entitled *Deepening Teaching Reform, Enhancing Internal Construction, and Aiming at the First-class Undergraduate Education*, still demanded the further reform of teaching management, the renovation of teaching approaches, as well as the supportive mechanism behind them.

Starting New Degree Programs

Since 1994, YNU has offered new programs for undergraduate and graduate students, in addition to its traditional ones. Six years later, YNU started to provide undergraduate students such courses as modern educational technologies to address

new challenges in education from information technologies. In addition, many new graduate programs have been offered since the 2000s. These programs include master's programs in Aesthetics, Modern Chinese Literature, General Theory of Education, Analytic Chemistry, Physical Chemistry, Applied Mathematics, etc. Doctoral programs have been offered as well, such as those in Ancient Chinese History, Ancient Chinese Literature, Ecology, Organic Chemistry, etc.

Since 1999, YNU has been accredited by the MOE to confer the Educational Master's Degree in Subject Teaching (M.Ed.), which covers three graduate programs: Educational Administration, Subject Teaching of Chemistry, and Subject Teaching of Chinese Language. The newly started master's degree programs show that YNU has employed substantial strategies in implementing the national reform of teacher education to fulfill its own goal of structural adjustment of teacher education programs. In 2014, there were around 1,000 students enrolled in various postgraduate programs and in the CES.

Adopting a New Credit System

Until the early 1990s, universities in China had been using an academic-year system adopted from the former Soviet Union. The biggest disadvantage of the academic-year system was that it limited students the flexibility to choose favorable courses and to adjust their learning schedule, in addition to incomparable learning hours of programs among HEIs. Therefore, the academic-year system was seen as inadequate in order to meet the new requirements set by the national reform of teacher education.

In 2002, YNU decided to give up its outdated academic-year system, which had been in practice for nearly 50 years, and to adopt a new credit system as a major strategy to systematically improve its quality of teacher education. On December 26th, 2002, *The Opinions on Kicking off the Credit System for Deepening Teaching Reform in Yangtze Normal University* was promulgated. The policy document clearly claimed that the adoption of the new credit system was to enhance YNU's distinguishing feature of teacher education.

Specifically, the policy document indicated that the new credit system was instituted to meet the needs of the rapidly changing environment of education and to innovate teacher education. Furthermore, it was needed in order to educate highly qualified talents and to deepen YNU's initiatives of improving educational quality for new teachers.

In the ensuing years, YNU set up a series of guidelines for regulating teaching plans of all degree programs and for administering credits acquired by undergraduate students upon successful completion of their studies. Most interviewees viewed the adoption of the new credit system as a significant enhancement to teacher education reform, providing more flexibility and potentials for students' learning.

Strengthening the Teaching Workforce and Management

To improve its teaching quality, YNU has taken substantial actions to strengthen the teaching workforce and to tighten its management for them. In 2003, the university held a special meeting on the teaching workforce. About 230 administrators and faculty members from all over the campus gathered together to discuss how to recruit new, qualified faculty members and how to retain the current faculty. Two critical policies, i.e., *The University's Opinions on Further Strengthening the Faculty Workforce* and *The University Plan of Faculty Workforce Construction in 2003–2008*, were enforced after the meeting. As a new policy starting from 2014, the recruitment of all new faculty members across YNU campuses has been required to have doctoral degrees.

YNU has also tightened the management process to ensure its higher expectations for teaching quality. For example, from 2000 to 2005, 64 regulatory documents were issued, focusing on teaching regulations and administration. Key regulations included *The University's Opinions on Enhancing Undergraduate Teaching for Improving Teaching Quality* and *The University's Opinions on Further Enhancing Student Internship* in 2002 and *The University's Opinions on Further Strengthening the Quality Monitoring of Undergraduate Teaching*, *The Regulations on Faculty's Teaching Work*, and *The University's Regulations on Teaching Administration* in 2004. Comprehensive teaching reforms were also introduced in such degree programs as chemistry, biology, law, sociology, college English, college physical education, etc.

Central to these experiments was harder management of teaching. For instance, YNU has adopted new, quantifiable indicators to measure job performance of professors. Some interviewees were proud of these measures, because YNU was among a few pioneering institutions that had made this reform in China. These measures, routinely undertaken at the end of each semester, evaluated professors' job performance in classroom teaching and research by a list of quantifiable indicators. For example, the measures on professors' classroom performance cover a wide range of indicators from teaching aims, to teaching attitudes and preparation, to teaching methods and teaching effectiveness. The assessment forms were required to be filled out by students and administrators.

YNU implementers reasoned that these quantifiable measures should serve well the goal of strengthening the teaching workforce and the management for them. The indicators were taken as rational steps to set higher standards for the assurance of teaching quality.

These strategies and actions, especially the recently enforced quantifiable measures for assessing teachers' job performance, however, are widely viewed by faculty members as political instruments being used by implementers to oppress them. They were pressured against their will to respond to these instrumental measures initiated by those in dominant power, along the lines noted by Aronowitz and Giroux in their critical discussion of the issue (1993, p. 50).

Professor Ningdong reported that the real purposes of these quantifiable measures were solely to determine if a faculty member could be promoted or not in the near future. For example, the university set 85 % as the eligible score for the promotion to full professor. If a faculty member who was applying for the position of full professor only earned a score of 84 %, his or her application would be rejected no matter how excellent the job performance was in other areas. This is called "one vote vetoes all" (*yipiao foujue*). On the contrary, the university did not have any similar measures to evaluate the job performance of leaders and administrators.

Upgrading Teaching Facilities and Improving Learning Environment

From 1999 to 2005, YNU invested more than 66 million RMB[1] in upgrading its teaching facilities. By the end of the period, the university had more than 102 multimedia classrooms, 26 newly finished teaching labs, 11 newly finished multimedia classrooms, and 67 newly established bases for internship.

To create a better learning environment for prospective teachers, YNU has tripled its campus size to 500 acres with a total construction area of 8.5 million square feet. The newly constructed campus space provided students and faculty a comfortable and convenient learning and living area with a modern design and look. Up to 34,000 students were pursuing their learning opportunities on the new campus alone.

In addition to YNU's upgrading of infrastructure, IT has been a key area for renovation. Anping, Chair of the Department of Educational Technologies, observed that IT applications in his department were remarkably expanded for improving the efficiency and quality of classroom teaching. He also noted that the status and resources of his department were considerably enhanced because of YNU's decision to upgrade its teaching facilities and to improve the learning environment due to the implementation of the national policy.

Many participants believed that YNU had made as many reasonable rational efforts as it could have to implement the national policy of teacher education reform. However, they also believed that the teaching quality and preparation of teachers in the university were not necessarily enhanced accordingly by these efforts.

For example, new programs may not have addressed the new roles and identities of teachers as professional learners and researchers, or as transformative intellectuals. Rather, the quantifiable measurements, focusing on numbers more than on student learning experience and other nonquantifiable ways to promote teaching excellence, reinforced the traditional roles of teachers as a technical instrument for transmitting factual knowledge to students.

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[1]The exchange rate of the US dollars and Chinese RMB has been kept constant at around 1:8 between 1990 and 2005.

Although being institutionally possible, the effectiveness of the strategies YNU adopted for institutional transformations has given rise to wide doubt. For instance, Professor Peishi shared his concerns about how the above strategies were severely mitigated by the political tensions and unfavorable factors in the implementation process. In his view, there were many: the overemphasis on quantifiable measurements to evaluate teachers' job performance, the radical expansion of student enrollment since the late 1990s, the decline in quality of the newly admitted students, and the implementation of the national reform as more of a formality than genuine change.

Strengthening Teacher Education as a Key Institutional Feature

As a *normal* university, YNU focused its teacher education programs to implement the national policy of teacher education reform. After the new credit system was adopted, a campus-wide change has happened to students in terms of requirements of teacher education courses. For bachelor's degrees, the ratio of teacher education courses required of undergraduate students jumped from 6 % up to 16 % in the total required credits. At YNU, this was a key step in enhancing teacher education and teacher professionalism through the implementation of the national policy.

Like any other normal university in China, YNU had historically provided required core courses in teacher education in three areas: A General Introduction to Education, Psychology, and Disciplinary Teaching Methodology. The teaching contents were usually edited by senior professors in related fields. In the implementation process, YNU has upgraded the contents and requirements of teacher education courses.

For example, the General Introduction to Education, a course intended for all undergraduate students in teacher education programs, used to consist of four major components adopted from the Soviet theorist Kairov's model: basic theories, pedagogy, moral education, and school administration. Today those four components have been replaced with new ones such as the relationship of teachers and students, society and education, modern learning theories, etc. To the original trio mentioned above, YNU added a fourth required core course: educational technologies. This was a significant gesture aimed at enhancing teacher quality in response to rapid, worldwide IT development.

Additionally, in 2003, the same year the new credit system was adopted, YNU decided to provide more options in teacher education courses in an effort to expand students' knowledge coverage. Apart from the first category of subject core courses such as physical education, foreign language, computer science, and political theory which were required by the MOE, YNU provided additional core courses based on broader disciplines in social science and science. Nowadays, the CES provides such new core courses in teacher education as educational evaluation, learning methodology for undergraduate students, psychological health education for college students, educational statistics, learning theory, and methodology of educational research.

In addition to making available more choices of teacher education courses for prospective teachers, new in-service training programs have been recently added for school teachers, principals, and administrators of high schools, as noted by Professor Mawei, a recently retired senior professor.

Dean Hengtang pointed out the strand of new teacher education courses at YNU would never have come into being if it were not for the implementation of the national policy. His point was widely taken by implementers most of whom viewed the enhancement of YNU featured teacher education programs as a rational choice for the implementation of the national policy.

However, some faculty members viewed this strategy as insufficient to enhance student learning of teacher education. Meanwhile, most interviewees saw it as a political tactic that some implementers adopted for the narrow purpose of promoting the status of the CES, rather than fulfilling the lofty goal of improving the level of teacher education as expected in the national reform.

Restructuring Academic Departments for Teacher Education

Early in 1992, YNU was authorized by the PBE to establish the School of Adult Education which was the first school of continuing education in Yangtze province. It was also YNU's first attempt to reorganize academic departments for teacher education since the 1990s. In 2002, YNU underwent a radical reorganization of its academic departments. All seven colleges were established to adapt to the new demands arising from the radically changing society in China.

The CES was founded in 2000, by merging the Department of Educational Technologies, the Institute of Higher Education, and the Department of Educational Sciences. Since 2004, YNU has planned for the establishment of the new CTE based on the existing CES. The new CTE had been planned to accommodate all the programs related to teacher education on campus, including the programs of discipline-based teaching theories from each department. As proposed by *The Plan of Establishing the College of Teacher Education of Yangtze Normal University*, the new CTE aims to meet the overall requirements of the national policy of teacher education reform and to serve as one of the national bases in teacher education. The central government was expected to invest sizable financial resources once it was established.

Most interviewees, such as Chair Anping and Professors Ningdong, Ouying, and Peishi, saw the establishment of the CES and the current planning for the new CTE as an optimization of strengths (*Qiangqiang Lianhe*) intended to generate a new superpower to improve the quality of YNU's teacher education. Dean Hengtang, however, harbored a deep concern that the new CTE may not necessarily lead to the improvement of the quality of teacher education at YNU, as the building of a culture of excellence usually takes a long time, according to him. The effectiveness of these institutional strategies was also questioned by many on campus, especially those

participants represented by faculty members. Professor Peishi criticized YNU's strategies for the implementation of the national policy as a typical act of formality:

> Simply put, [the major strategy] is nothing but moves to follow upper level administrative orders. That is, these strategies are made by following exactly what the central government requires. Here is an issue related to political studies. Let's first put aside the argument that the administrative order is rational or not, and just assume the administrative order itself is rational, but how much of it will be implemented? In my opinion, there is more said than done.

The restructuring of academic departments for teacher education was adopted by YNU as a natural way of optimizing academic strengths in order to implement the national policy. Beyond this lofty goal, however, implementers and participants as well in the CES took advantage of YNU's institutional strategy to raise their own political and economic status on campus, though the harmony among different parties was still maintained to certain acceptable extent. The next section will focus on how their political and economic status has been improved in the implementation process of the national policy.

Institutional Changes Brought About by the Implementation

The national policy of teacher education reform has been in effect for more than two decades on the YNU campus. There are remarkable institutional changes, such as the establishment of new degree programs, the new credit system, the adoption of a quantitative system of assessing teaching performance, and the strengthening of teacher education programs as a distinguishing feature of the university. In addition, YNU has extensively reorganized its academic departments, largely upgraded its teaching facilities and infrastructure, and considerably expanded its campus for more educational capacity.

Apart from the above visible changes, there are also institutional measures to improve YNU's social status and public image. Unfortunately, as perceived by most implementers and participants, these efforts have not produced expected outcomes. Rather, university's social status and public image dropped in fact, to the perception of some stakeholders.

Chair Kaifei observed that YNU was no longer among the four most prestigious universities in Yangtze province. He compared it with other prestigious universities from four aspects: public funding, leadership and administration, academic strengths, and campus location. He concluded that YNU had lagged behind others in all of the four. Director Gangyang added that the decline in the quality of undergraduate teaching explained why the university had lagged behind:

> The reasons may be multiple. The biggest contribution [to these unsatisfactory outcomes] is probably the decline of undergraduate teaching quality. As we have talked about just now, there are many reasons to explain why the teaching quality of the undergraduate is declining: It may be the radical expansion of recruitment, the low quality of the new students, the

decline of investment in teacher workforce, etc. Thus, the whole social status [of YNU] is declining somewhat. The decline can be confirmed by some operational statistics, I think.

Director Gangyang continued:

One most relevant indicator is that the quality of the applicants to YNU is declining. Now it's impossible to keep a ratio of admitting one student out of five or more applicants, which is what we used to have in the past. Rather, the ratio has been declining to one out of three or two

. . . .The data means that YNU's social status and public image have significantly dropped. Another [indicator] is the employment rate of our graduates. I'll say that, in terms of quantity and quality, YNU's graduates do not have a high rate of acceptance in the job market. This also means that YNU's social status and public image has dropped.

Most interviewees concurred with Chair Kaifei and Director Gangyang, but some others had different perceptions. For example, Professor Ningdong noted that:

I feel that the social status of our university is actually rising overall. Of course, there are some traditional reasons for our positive image [such as the university is historically prestigious], but it has something to do with the promotion of teacher education by the national policy.

Most interviewees felt that the university's social status and public image was declining, though there were opposite observations.

On the other hand, all interviewees viewed the establishment of the CES and the planning for the new CTE as a boon to their institutional and personal status on campus. For instance, Chair Beihua remarked that his department would not even have been noticed on campus if there had been no implementation of the national policy. Chair Kaifei added that both the social and financial status of the college was significantly improved.

As the national policy of teacher education reform required higher qualifications or certificates for the teaching profession, the CES has provided several regular training programs for school teachers, principals, and administrators. In addition, fees charged for registering in these programs significantly benefited the college from an economic point of view. Professor Ningdong shared:

On the actual benefits earned, one is that the courses in teacher education have been increased,[2] though not enough. The biggest benefit brought to our college by the recent reform of teacher education is the pecuniary condition . . . .Since 1995, the whole pecuniary condition of our college as a collective unit has been the best [on campus], and no other colleges can compare with us on that.

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[2]In general, a professor's salary in China consists of three major parts: regular salary from government budget, stable post subsidy from financial sources of the university, and adjustable bonus earned by his or her individual teaching or research grants. Professors usually earn extra income including remuneration and bonus based on how many courses they teach and how much they bring in through research grants. Generally, more courses or more research grants mean more bonuses to faculty members (please also refer to Footnote 4 in Chap. 9). In the case of the CES, a professor's annual bonus was commonly equivalent to the total sum of regular salary and post subsidy. This proportion is considered standard in most higher education institutions in China nowadays.

Obviously, the CES took advantage of the implementation of the national policy to uplift its political and economic status on campus. Meanwhile, YNU used it as a justification for optimizing its teaching resources for teacher education. Still, there were some interviewees who continued to complain that the improvement in status of the CES was not ideal enough, as compared with that of similar colleges at other key provincial normal universities. Both implementers and participants, however, were motivated to work together for YNU's institutional transformations, which is actually commonplace human interaction centered on Confucian values in China.

Evaluations on Implementation Outcomes

Evaluation is a critical process, which provides feedback for policy implementation and policy revision (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980, p. 542). YNU has employed an official evaluation system to assess the implementation outcomes of the national policy, but how have these official evaluations been put into practice and how personal accounts from case study participants differed?

Official Evaluations

Generally, YNU had three official forms of evaluation on the implementation outcomes of the national reform of teacher education. One official form was an annual comprehensive review of the overall performance (*shuzhi ceping dahui*) of leaders and administrators as implementers. Another official form was the university-driven regular or occasional evaluation on certain special categories of job performance such as teaching quality or research. The third official form was through ad hoc evaluations conducted by the provincial or the MOE.

The first official form was the official evaluation of the overall job performance of YNU's leaders and administrators, including presidents, CPC secretaries and committee members, directors of offices, college deans, department chairs, etc. Because the system was to evaluate the job performance of leaders and administrators, it also serves by default as an official evaluation on the implementation outcomes of the national policy.

Generally, evaluations were directed and organized by the PBE on a yearly basis. The university chronicle of events recorded that several official evaluation meetings were held for the university leaders and administrators at college level and university level from 2003 up to 2014. In the 2005 evaluation on leaders' work performance, all department chairs, college deans, office directors, and presidents, including some CPC secretaries, were required to attend the evaluation meeting. Various quantifiable survey forms were provided for them to evaluate the overall performance of each leader.

The university official evaluation system on the job performance of implementers has been criticized as "not being really vigorous," as Chair Anping put. That means that the evaluation was usually just like running a political show, instead of being an "authentic evaluation." Chair Anping also observed that this kind of evaluation had lost its original intention and was merely a kind of formality. He criticized is as a complete waste of time and effort.

The second official form, the regular or occasional evaluation on certain special categories of job performance, was usually organized or conducted by such administration offices as the Office of Teaching Affairs. For research, quantifiable measures were emphasized such as the number and prestige of publications and research projects. For teaching, there were also quantifiable and monitoring measures.

For instance, the Office of Teaching Affairs has been constantly monitoring teachers' classroom teaching. In 2004, the office publicized *The Opinion on Further Enhancing the Quality Monitoring of Teaching for Undergraduates*. According to *The University Newsletter of Teaching Affairs*, the Office of Teaching Affairs organized a campus-wide inspection and evaluation on teaching at YNU over 2 weeks. These official evaluations of special categories of job performance were criticized by some faculty members as an additional job pressure put on faculty, producing more paperwork and imposing more rigid procedures on them. Professor Laimin complained that he had personally been given official evaluations on both his teaching and research.

The third official form was usually conducted by an ad hoc committee organized by the administrative departments of education at the provincial or national level. Generally, this official evaluation was not held regularly but could be very political and powerful. Most interviewees had a fresh impression on it, since YNU was assessed in recent years by MOE's NEBPP. The national evaluation and its negative effects on the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform will be examined later in the third section of Chap. 9.

Viewed from a rational perspective, the above three official forms of evaluation are supposed to serve as powerful and effective tools for providing accurate feedback for the implementation and adjustment of the national policy, but none of them have actually functioned fully in that way. On the contrary, most interviewees critically viewed them as having played a negative role and thereby have offset the effectiveness of the implementation of the national policy.

Individual Accounts

All interviewees in this study were asked about their individual evaluation of the implementation outcomes of the national policy. Four of them responded with a positive view. For instance, Dean Minglai put it as follows: "The implementation of the national policy in recent years is promising and our college is growing rapidly." Another implementer was also quite optimistic: "it [the outcome] should

be positive . . . .we have made a lot of progress in this, though our strides are still not big enough." And participants like Professor Ningdong had the same feeling, too:

> My overall judgment tends to be positive. I felt that our university and college had changed a lot to adapt to the market economy. I should say that they are positive acts. A positive judgment should be given to its outcome.

However, most interviewees tended to be negative or at least conservative on the outcomes. Vice President Jiliang concluded that the implementation had resulted in an overall downturn in teaching and research quality. Similarly, Chair Beihua was very negative about the implementation, but he viewed it as the only way to change the status quo. Professor Ouying showed her serious concerns about the outcomes of the implementation:

> In 1983 when I first worked here, our university had a nice ranking nationwide – we had a similar ranking as N Normal University – but now we have lagged behind too far. The whole situation in China is reform and opening, yet it seems that we have never been open, and we are still closed . . . .I think there is something wrong, but I cannot tell what exactly the problem is.

When asked if the implementation of the national policy has a positive or a negative impact on preparing schoolteachers, she answered without any hesitation: "More negative, less positive. Although there are both negative and positive, I believe the negative part is stronger." Obviously she could be tolerant to various outcomes.

An add-on interview question asked interviewees to make a comparison between YNU and other key provincial normal universities in the implementation of the national policy. Six of them noted that YNU had lagged behind others somewhat, whereas 4 out of the 17 interviewed insisted that they were at the same level of the implementation.

Those who believed that YNU had lagged behind cited two major reasons. One was that the local economic level of development was lower than that of its neighboring provinces and thus significantly constrained YNU's capacity in the implementation of the national policy. The other was that YNU's working environment and conservative administration had discouraged the retention of young faculty members.

From the personal accounts of most interviewees, YNU's implementation of the national policy was somewhat unsatisfactory to many stakeholders. Basically, it did not adhere to the original intention of the national teacher education reform, which urged higher TEIs to "stick to the main theme of development, to the main thread of structure adjustment, and to strengthen the advantages and features of normal colleges and universities for teacher education" (The MOE, 2002, February 6). Moreover, the implementation outcomes have been particularly complicated by some unfavorable factors as well as environmental barriers embedded in Confucian culture, which will be explored in the next chapter.

When looking into the stakeholders' involvement in the implementation process at YNU, it is clearly to see significant political tension and conflicts between implementers and participants, though both sides have been expected to work together to achieve the same institutional goals.

To fulfill the implementation requirements of the national policy, YNU has executed broad strategies, such as adopting a wide range of efforts for enhancing teaching, strengthening the university's distinguishing feature of teacher education, and restructuring academic departments for teacher education. The institutional changes brought about by the implementation are remarkable indeed. In addition, YNU has employed what was assumed to be the most efficient system to evaluate the implementation outcomes.

But the institutional strategies and outcomes were viewed differently by various stakeholders, mainly as ineffective and unable to achieve the purposive goals defined by policymakers and implementers. The next chapter will continue to critically probe how stakeholders' attitudes, and unfavorable institutional constraints and barriers have hampered or backfired on YNU's implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform.

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Chapter 9
The Sociopolitical and Cultural Confluence: A Complex Jigsaw

As introduced in Chap. 5, the sociopolitical and cultural confluence in a given institution comes to play key roles in the success or failure of the implementation of a policy (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 474). To fully assemble the implementation jigsaw of China's policy of teacher education reform, this chapter investigates such other complex pieces as YNU's major institutional barriers, including unfavorable factors, most of which are embedded in the Chinese sociopolitical and cultural context, represented by Confucianism. It also studies their confluence with other national policy actions which have profoundly affected the outcomes of YNU's implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform.

Institutional Barriers in the Implementation of the National Policy

The institutional barriers are universal in any given policy context, and they usually play a counterproductive role in the implementation of a public policy. The unfavorable barriers at YNU included the university leaders' weak awareness of the national policy, the declining quality of teaching and research, the constraints and problems embedded in the official-centered bureaucracy, the negative perceptions and attitudes of stakeholders toward the national policy, and so on. All of them together converged to counteract the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform at YNU.

Leaders' Weak Awareness of the National Policy

The implementation of the national policy was a comprehensive institutional reconstruction that had required every step of policy actions to be executed purposively and effectively to enhance the development and professionalism of teacher education programs. Although the national policy of teacher education reform had been in effect at YNU over past decades, the university leaders did not fully comprehend its importance – at least most interviewees observed that to be the case.

According to Chair Beihua, except for augmenting the requirements of teacher education courses for all students on campus, YNU's leaders had not taken visible actions, including the enhancement of teaching internships, to ensure the implementation of the national policy in any substantial way. Director Gangyang witnessed that the critical role of teacher education in improving the quality of future teachers was not fully understood by the university leaders. Meanwhile, the status of teacher education in the university was not raised accordingly. But he admitted that "Rome was not built in a day" and that reform always takes time. In his view, a complete reform from YNU's mission to course and program planning was necessary to make substantial changes.

An example can be seen from teaching internships, which was traditionally a crucial step in teacher preparation at YNU. It used to take 2–3 months for teacher education students to practice their professional knowledge and teaching skills in real classroom settings under the supervision of their professors and on-site teachers.

Yet, in implementing the national policy of teacher education reform, YNU's leaders did not take any tangible actions to ensure the traditional requirements of internship for teacher education students. Instead such standards had been lowered, which negatively affected the learning experiences of graduates in teacher education programs. Consequently, many interviewees observed that the teaching skills and practical competences of students had not been developed as expected.

Some interviewees realized that leaders' weak understanding of teacher education had contributed in part to the ineffective implementation of the national policy. Chair Beihua suggested that the first thing the university leaders needed to do was to update their understanding of teacher education in the new global age:

> This is something related to the professionalism of a president [of a normal university]. Teachers are required to be professionals, thus a president must be a professional first. It will all be empty talk, if a president has learned nothing about educational theories or is incapable of teacher education. The president of a normal university, according to Tao Xingzhi, should be a first-rate educator. Do we have any? At least I am not able to find any here in Yangtze province.

Such observations may be biased but reflected the disappointment of some stakeholders who had high expectations for teacher education reform.

In addition to the university leaders' insufficient comprehension of the national policy of teacher education reform, there were certain environmental influences that had confined or distracted them. For example, university leaders were too often

overwhelmed by activities of fund-raising, campus expansion, and other initiatives as well. These have been the top priorities for university presidents in China nowadays, due to the decentralization of educational administration and finance. Universities have to find a large amount of extra funding for self-development and to compete with other universities to increase enrollments.

The Declining Quality of Teaching and Research

It was commonly agreed among the interviewees that the quality of teaching and research at YNU had dropped considerably rather than enhanced since the implementation of the national policy of higher education expansion in the late 1990s. The significant downturn of the requirements for teaching internships was a strong piece of evidence for such a quality decline. Both implementers and participants had serious concerns about the serious situation.

Another indication of the decline of teaching quality could be found at the CES. The CES has a faculty of 70 full-time members working in four departments that had an enrollment of around 2,000 students. The faculty-student ratio was around 1–29, a dramatic increase from one to four in the early 1990s. In addition, the class sizes of teacher education courses had remarkably increased in recent decades.

For example, in the 1980s, class size usually ranged from 35 to 45 students. But in the late 2000s, the class size of teacher education courses generally ranged from 65 to 120 students. As a normal practice, professors had to teach courses in big classrooms equipped with microphones and speakers. They also had no sufficient time to carefully mark and give feedback to students' assignments.

The high faculty-student ratio and larger class sizes put professors under heavier workload and particularly increased their teaching load. The high faculty-student ratio required that professors teach courses at least more than 10 h a week to meet YNU's minimal requirements, and they had to teach much more than 10 h a week in order to earn the extra income beyond their base salary.

Under such kind of economic and political pressure, it was not uncommon to see a professor running around from this classroom to another to teach two to three courses a day. In addition, professors in the CES had to deliver courses off campus to earn additional bonuses, like all other professors did at YNU. In all, the faculty's teaching load at the CES was much heavier than it used to be.

Under the pressure of a heavy teaching workload, Chair Daijing lamented:

> Now what are we worried about? The new situation demands them [faculty] to teach so many courses. It's extremely difficult for them to ensure good quality teaching. How can they have the energy to ensure teaching quality while they have to prepare for so many courses?

The college and university leaders were no doubt embarrassed by the dilemmatic situation. They did not have many options as there must be somebody who offered to teach courses in the classrooms where were always full of students. There were

too many students waiting for courses, as a consequence of the confluence of various national initiatives, e.g., the radical expansion of student enrollments in recent decades. Worse than that, class sizes doubled or tripled to as many as 120 students in big classroom – usually very crowded. The effectiveness of teaching was severely affected, and the interactions between professors and students in classrooms became very limited.

The quality of research outputs of the faculty also went downhill at the same time, with academic corruptions observable, which was epidemic in many HEIs in China. One type of academic corruption was that academic staff, who wore the cap of professor, did nothing more than teach for extra bonuses. Another type of such corruption is academic falsifications. Professor Mawei and Chair Daijing gave some examples in the CES. It was known that at least two to three associate professors had hired substitute writers, *qiangshou* in vernacular Chinese expression, to write journal articles for them in order to be promoted.

This kind of academic falsification is not only limited to the CES at YNU. In fact, there were many more cases of academic falsification in China's HEIs, as repeatedly reported by mass media in recent decades. These cases also happened in top national universities.

There were many factors contributing to the decline in the quality of teaching and research at YNU. In the larger neo-liberal context of a transitional economy where money reigns, problems in the officialdom and formalism of the implementation, the tension and unequal relationships between implementers and participants, the performance assessment system, and the income allocation system have all contributed to teachers' lack of job motivation and poor performance in teaching and research.

For instance, YNU adopted a strategy that linked income allocation with teachers' workload for teaching. That meant professors would earn bigger bonuses if they could offer more courses, as long as their teaching quality was maintained at a bottom level. If a professor did not teach courses at all in a semester, he or she would not get any bonus from it. In this brutal reality, as Vice President Jiliang and Dean Minglai observed, professors generally wanted to deliver as many courses as they could earn extra bonuses, which were usually equivalent to their regular salaries.

In addition, some professors tended to teach additional courses or take consultant jobs off campus to make more earnings. Dean Enwei added that teachers' heavy workload had limited their opportunities, time, or energy to expand their academic capacities and improve their teaching methods and skills and therefore to improve their teaching quality.

All these behaviors diverted professors' focus of work and diluted their energy and time and, as a consequence, sacrificed the quality of their teaching and research. Director Futang criticized that the income allocation system had been abused by the university administrators as a practical and legitimate instrument to control and exploit the faculty on campus. Unfortunately, students became the ultimate victims of such consequences, which spoiled the fruits of the implementation process,

thus could not really achieve the intended goals of the national policy of teacher education reform, i.e., "to build up a highly qualified teacher workforce" (The MOE, 2002, February 6).

The Officialdom, Red Tape, and Formalism

As one of the Confucian trio, i.e., aristocracy, monarchy, and bureaucracy (Levenson, 1964, p. 35), the officialdom or official-centered bureaucracy (*guan benwei*) refers to the hierarchical, bureaucratic system which traditionally bestows various privileges on governmental authorities and officials; these privileges take the form of socioeconomic status and political power in Chinese society.[1]

One key feature of the official-centered bureaucracy is that officials are deemed authorities in governance, upholding social justice and playing key roles in society. They have predominant political and economic power in societal relationships. As a result, Chinese people usually give heavy weight to the value of being an official, and many Chinese people, including intellectuals, dream of climbing up to higher government positions. It has become a cultural mentality of Chinese people, especially political leaders and other officials.

The official-centered bureaucracy bore some advantages for policy implementation. For example, it may help build consensus based on common good between implementers and participants for adopting policy goals and taking effective actions, seen by Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) as an advantage to maximizing the amount of policy change (p. 460).[2] In Chinese society, such common good include social justice, equity, and collectivism upheld by Confucian values, which are centered on a *Zhong-Yong* principle,[3] as many stakeholders shared with me in this case study.

Based on the common good, individual implementers or participants were more tolerant to the negative side of policy elements, attitudes, effects, or outcomes. The official-centered bureaucracy, however, did not always facilitate the policy implementation process. In fact, it sometimes became one of the biggest problems and challenges for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education at YNU, as indicated by most participants. It was meddlesome, inefficient, and bred too many special interests and too much favoritism.

Another major manifestation of the official-centered bureaucracy was red tape and formalism in the implementation process. In rigid conformity to administrative regulations, red tape generally implied unnecessary official paperwork,

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[1]For further information about the official-centered bureaucracy in Confucian culture, please refer to: Levenson (1964) and Qi (2002).

[2]Please refer to Fig. 5.3 in Chap. 5, p. 110.

[3]Literally, *Zhong* means central, proper, right, or just and *Yong* carries the meaning of ordinary, mediocre, pragmatic, or universal (See: Ku, 1906, p. 7). Please also refer to "Final Remarks: A Chinese Zhong-Yong Model of Policy Implementation" in the last chapter.

requirements, or procedures, while formalism placed emphasis on formality over substance in policy actions. Usually they went hand in hand and commonly focused on flamboyant political shows instead of meaningful practical outcomes.

Chair Anping, Vice President Jiliang, and Professor Mawei revealed that red tape and formalism were a big problem in the implementation process of the national policy. Professor Ningdong gave his own experience as an example: He spent 2 months getting his textbook printed through the official process required by the university Office of Teaching Affairs. He complained that he could have done the job by himself in 1 day, but he was not allowed to do so.

Many interviewees were apathetic to red tape and formalism repeatedly occurred in the policy actions on campus. Professor Peishi detailed his perceptions below:

> The university is guided by bureaucracy. To what extent is it guided by bureaucracy? Our days are taken over by policy documents, for nowadays all the administrative offices in the university incline to issue policy documents one after another. Once a policy document is released, you have to do something within a very limited timeframe: Today the policy document is issued and tomorrow you are required to finish that job.

Obviously, red tape and formalism permeated through the implementation process of the national policy at YNU. Professor Peishi continued his critical comments as below:

> Leaders have been holding meetings all the time to show that they have started the implementation of the national policy, or in their viewpoint they have done what they are required to do. In fact, they have done little beyond holding more meetings. What do they hold so many meetings for? It means that "I [as a university leader] am done with my duty. You [supervisor] cannot find any faults with me. If there were a problem, it would not be my fault. I have conveyed my implementation strategies, but my subordinates failed to do what they should do.

The official-centered bureaucracy was seen by most interviewees as originating from the traditional Chinese culture which demands responsibility more from the subordinates rather than the superiors. In the implementation process at YNU, this tradition was reinforced, instead of being avoided. Many interviewees showed their concerns about that the official-centered bureaucracy had created more economic and political tensions between implementers and participants, and this officialdom had served as a practical way battling for their individual benefits. Moreover, it lowered participants' motivation and job performance, further hindering the implementation process of the national policy from achieving its goals.

The Economic and Political Tensions

The official-centered bureaucracy allowed the leaders and administrators to enjoy overwhelming authoritative power in the implementation of the national policy, resulting in fierce economic and political tensions between implementers

and participants. Policies executed within the context of the official-centered bureaucracy reinforced the mechanism of economic and political inequality in the implementation process.

For example, the official-centered bureaucracy enhanced the status quo of income inequality at YNU. Generally, the personnel at YNU fell into three groups: administrators, faculty, and staff. According to interviewees, much larger amount of subsidies at YNU was allocated to administrators as implementers, instead of faculty members,[4] because the performance of the former group was often overvalued. Director Futang used the example of a cake to vividly describe the disproportionately allocated subsidies between the administrators and faculty. In his observation, more than 70 % or even 80 % of the cake went to university leaders (main implementers) and other administrators, while faculty members got only 20–30 %, at most.

Most faculty members experienced mistreatments through YNU's income allocation system. To protest, some of them loudly criticized the unequal mechanism on the university bulletin board system (BBS): Is the university an educational institution or an old *Yamen*?[5] The fact was that there were a total of more than 2,500 employees in the university, but only around 1,400 faculty members, including those who are called *Shuangjiantiao*, meaning they held a post as an administrator and a professor concurrently. Since most people working at YNU were administrators or administrative staff, they were eating up largely what the faculty members earned for the university.

Furthermore, there were many more hidden benefits for implementers than for participants, and those hidden benefits were always guaranteed in terms of perks and bonuses. Leaders and key administrators enjoyed more opportunities of obtaining external research grants, which allowed them to commission up to 10 % as their regular salaries.

Other hidden benefits included large sum of fund available to them for personal use, legitimate or illegitimate reimbursement of daily expenditures such as monthly phone bills, per diems, and transportation subsidies. Additionally they were also provided with fixed post subsidies, called *Gangwei Jintie*,[6] which can make up more than 35 % of their total income, whereas faculty members across the YNU campus

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[4]The income of professors in China usually includes fixed, monthly paid salaries solely from government budgets and performance-based subsidies mainly generated from various training programs by individual universities. The latter often accounts for up to 50 % of staff's individual income (please also refer to Footnote 2 in Chap. 8, p. 163).

[5]*Yamen* was an administration building in ancient China and typically refers to the office or residence of a county magistrate. The term is still commonly used nowadays as a symbolic connotation referring to the officials' or administrators' dominant political and economic power in Chinese sociopolitical life.

[6]In addition to regular salaries from government budget, *Gangwei Jintie* is commonly an additional regular income in most public HEIs in China. *Gangwei Jintie* is generally extra subsidies earned through various self-funded programs by an institution and is allocated to its contributors according to their corresponding positions. Most HEIs in China have provided *Gangwei Jintie* to both administrators and professors, except for those like YNU, which only provides *Gangwei Jintie*

did not have any such subsidies. Faculty members had to live on the regular official salaries which were only able to cover their daily expenditures for living in Yangtze city. Usually they had to offer additional courses to earn extra bonuses in order to support their families.

In 2004, the faculty's salary grew by 10 % which was faster than that of administrators. Officially, this meant that the university had given teaching a higher priority. In reality the administrators had made much more than the faculty through various hidden benefits. When talking about the rapid salary increase, several professors interviewed shared the same experience: "Professors' actual income is generally much lower than that of administrators'." Professor Mawei testified that, in 2002, the total income of a college dean or a CPC secretary was two to three times more than that of an ordinary professor. Professor Ouying joked with a metaphor to describe the real sociopolitical status of participants at YNU under the culture of officialdom. What follows is that part of the interview:

Q: I have heard that the distribution of extra income, especially bonuses, is unfair to professors. If that is true, does that affect their motivation of work?
A: I used to make a humorous metaphor – this was a joke five years ago and is still being quoted – that is, the social status of teaching staff at YNU is like that of farmers in China's old times, sitting at the bottom.
Q: Is that exaggerated?
A: Absolutely not at all. In China, why are farmers not able to become rich? This is not because they are lazy. Farmers are generally overworked every day and produce a lot of social wealth, but they are only able to get back very limited rewards for themselves. Everybody who lives on what farmers have created exploits them in the form of taxes or fees, including educational tax and tuition. And even worse, farmers do not have any voice in the process of government policymaking. Thus, farmers become the lowest class in Chinese society. We professors at YNU unfortunately have the similar status. Well, we do get some remuneration for our course teaching, but this is only a very small bit of student fees. The administrators get the most . . . .The reform in recent years has greatly widened the gap between them and us.

Professors were greatly discouraged by the income gap but also took it as a political opportunity for actions to fight against the unequal reality shaped by the officialdom, such as voicing their disappointments on YNU's BBS. Director Futang noted further:

Every administrator has around 20,000 RMB as their annual *Gangwei Jintie* besides their regular official salary, whereas professors do not have any such. Under this circumstance, professors started launching public opinions to fight against the status quo. As said, since we don't have any *Gangwei Jintie*, we don't have any responsibilities either. These actions can be actually viewed as backfire.

The faculty members' strategy of going on the offensive in cyber space helped change their economic status to a certain extent. For example, fearing that professors

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to its leaders and administrators, instead of its faculty members. YNU's professors have to earn their bonus by teaching additional courses or receiving research grants.

might not support their claims of achievement at the time of the MOE's NEBPP,[7] YNU leaders began to compromise with an income adjustment plan, i.e., setting up post subsidies for faculty members, too.

The victory participants finally won required a lot of courage, since they might have been placed at a severe disadvantage, as their confrontation with the leaders could have threatened their job security. But they comprised quickly too, fully taking the income adjustment plan. It can be explained as a Confucian way to respond to the dilemma at YNU, as participants pragmatically considered the plan as a solution of equilibrium, or the best outcomes, to everybody on campus, instead of just their group. To them, the collective benefits of YNU's implementation were way more important than any of their individual benefits. In fact, the battle of participants affected the implementation process positively, since the result made YNU a more equal institution.

In addition to the serious economic tensions between leaders and administrators as implementers on one side and faculty members as participants on the other, there have had also serious political tensions between the two interest groups. For example, according to the legislation on higher education administration, YNU's leaders are required to be elected, de jure, by faculty representatives from various departments or units on campus through an officially organized process. In reality, this process was often manipulated through backdoor operations, with voters' individual rights being disregarded.

Many participants were very angry about the hypocrisy of the black box process and adopted a strategy of disobedience to confront it. Chair Inling told about the strategy she had adopted to invalidate the legitimacy of the official voting process in the following way:

> The official process for voting for a leader in our university seems to be very democratic. For example, it will allow us to vote and to participate. But who knows how these leaders are voted in. Are they really voted in by the public? I know I have the right to vote but the final selection of YNU's leaders really has nothing to do with individual votes. Everybody knows it, and we all know our votes are useless. Therefore, we just take it easy – we just randomly pick up any name on the ballot. I know my careless vote may have a negative impact on those who were selected "secretly" in the black box.

Different from Chair Inling's strategy of political disobedience, some participants adopted collective bargaining as an approach to fight against the unsatisfactory reality. For instance, in 2005, YNU leaders and administrators launched a new round of reform on health insurance, aiming at reducing the university costs of insurance expenditures by cutting down the health benefits of most faculty members. Some senior professors, including those who were newly retired, collectively sent protest letters that expressed their deep concerns to the PBE and the CPC's Provincial

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[7]Since 1994, the nationwide NEBPP has been compulsory and its results are publicized on the MOE's official website every time an evaluation is completed. Each university has to make every effort possible in order to earn and maintain a decent standing. Please refer to the third section in this chapter.

Congress. Afterward, the PBE and the CPC's Provincial Congress put high pressure on YNU's leaders. In the end, the health insurance reform at YNU was postponed, indefinitely.

Many interviewees believed that the biggest problem in the implementation of the national reform was the frustrating academic environment at YNU, which was embedded in the official-centered bureaucracy. Such an environment made professors unable to focus on what they should do as professionals – they were always eager to have a better political status on campus by getting involved in the administrative system instead of teaching and research. In addition, the official-centered bureaucracy had a negative impact on teachers' autonomy and academic freedom, in that implementers had stronger political and economic power to control or manipulate professors' decision on how to teach and research and professors would feel threatened if they did not follow the imperatives that had been passed down by implementers. As argued by Hofstede (2001), in collectivist societies, "the way power is exercised depends on whether the actors involved belong to the same or to a different in-group" (p. 241). In the case of YNU, many participants had to strive for belonging to a more politically powerful group as implementers.

It is obvious that participants at YNU took collective measures to "transform the fundamental nature of the conditions under which they work" (Giroux, 1988, p. xxxiv). The fierce economic and political tensions between implementers and participants show that these conflicts were actually universal throughout the implementation process. These tensions were not only problems of the policy implementation but served as opportunities for marginalized or disadvantaged groups on campus to struggle for their own economic and political benefits and rights. With these tensions, the outcomes of implementation seemed to be even more balanced for YNU's institutional development.

Stakeholders' Attitudes Toward the National Policy

Attitudes are among a few cultural factors that determine people's mentality. As mentioned in Chap. 5, stakeholders' attitudes had great impact on their willingness to carry out a public policy (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980, pp. 550–551; Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 472). This section briefly presents stakeholders' attitudes toward new teachers' identities as defined by the national policy of teacher education reform.

The Negative Attitudes Toward New Teachers' Identities

All interviewees in this study had a clear understanding of the new teachers' identities as prescribed in the policy documents of teacher education reform. However, their attitudes to how to implement the new identities varied from one to another. Indeed, all of them agreed that the new roles teachers would play represent

a rational transition that Chinese teacher education has to make, yet all of them had grave concerns about the feasibility of these new roles in real settings of education.

Many interviewees believed that in reality teachers would be constrained by several conditions. One such constraint was the traditionally defined role of teachers in Chinese culture, which had been widely believed by both teachers and students over a thousand years. For example, the new roles of teachers require that teachers should not serve as authorities, but organizers, facilitators, and guides. In reality, students from preschools, elementary and secondary schools, and colleges and universities had all got used to the traditional teacher identity as a transmitter of knowledge, whose main responsibility was to serve as authorities on student learning.

As Chair Beihua put it, "If you [teachers] want to make changes in the classroom, you are destined to fail, for students will not be able to adapt themselves to the new situation." Even in the classrooms at a comprehensive university, this would not work. Chair Beihua informed: "I have tried many times but eventually failed: I tried to stimulate students to discuss, but nobody raises their hand to respond to your questions in the classroom." He complained that this had happened not only in the classes of the Department of Educational Sciences but in classes in other departments as well, suggesting that there was a cultural impediment to the transformation of teachers' new roles. The major reason behind this problem was reviewed by Chair Beihua:

> Why [did nobody raise his hand to respond]? This is because traditionally our schools have been discouraging to students to develop their inquiring abilities. That is, in a traditional classroom teachers are responsible for lecturing and students are responsible for listening and taking notes, committing the notes to memory and regurgitating them in test papers....
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> I can give you an interesting example. Our college regularly has classes for school principals. When teaching courses for them, I always feel frustrated when organizing discussions in the classroom – our principals are very reluctant to speak out and tend to listen to me only. As a result, I have to organize a discussion by calling their names to speak one by one. If our principals are accustomed to this, and our students are accustomed to this, how can you expect our teachers to change their roles? I am really frustrated.
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> It's really, really hard to change the reality. In China, it's so hard to be a good teacher [tone was repeated and emphasized].... The idea [of teachers' new identities and roles] is very good and new, but the reform is really hard to bring about it.

Chair Beihua lamented repeatedly the difficulty of transforming the roles of teachers as outlined by the national policy. When talked about the topic of teaching reform during the interview with him, he was obviously enthusiastic about the teachers' new roles, but at the same time, he was extremely frustrated with what could be realized in reality.

Chair Beihua's experience was shared by most other interviewees. Dean Hengtang critically noted that the national policy of teacher education reform had placed much more pressure on schoolteachers:

> For teachers in elementary and high schools, the new teachers' identities have put more social responsibilities and pressures on them. Before [this shift], their jobs were stable, comparatively speaking. This was an important factor that attracted people to join in

teaching. But once the teacher profession is opened up for all qualified,[8] teachers face a social pressure immediately, [for] any schools can recruit freely better teachers. [Thus] teachers' roles must be shifted. One is to improve their teaching abilities in different subjects. This must be obtained by receiving training in teaching....

Another is to update the conceptualization of teacher education. The foundation of teaching must be updated and adjusted. Under the current situation, I feel that more pressures have been put on teachers.

Many professors admitted that more and more teachers were having higher degrees or qualifications nowadays, but they also questioned: Does that necessarily mean teachers' professional knowledge and teaching capability have been improved accordingly? They commonly observed that professors had stronger educational qualifications than before, but ironically, their actual teaching capabilities were deteriorated.

A similar phenomenon existed in elementary and secondary schools as well. Based on his rich experiences of teaching and administration, Professor Peishi challenged the officially promoted new teachers' identities and was skeptical of their practical applications. Both Professor Peishi's and Professor Ouying's views were echoed by other interviewees who harbored serious concerns about the feasibility of new teachers' roles.

Participants' negative attitudes toward the new teachers' identities advocated by the national policy of teacher education reform demonstrate that it is crucial for both implementers and participants to fully endorse the mission of a public policy, in order that the policy can be implemented successfully.

The Negative Attitudes Toward the National Policy

It is observed that most interviewees seemed more than enthusiastic about the national policy of teacher education but were hesitant about its practical applications. Major concerns stemmed from the institutional pressure on the teaching profession to raise the quality of newly recruited students.

Many participants believed that importance had been attached to education in recent years, while that for teacher education had been degenerated. Why? Some interviewees doubted that the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform had not really been treated as a priority, by giving an example of the historical changes of student recruitments in TEIs over the past 30 years. In the 1980s, TEIs generally recruited students from the first category of qualified high school graduates.[9] All the students recruited were the best from the pool. In the

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[8]In China teachers used to be recruited from graduates of TEIs such as normal universities, but now teaching jobs are opened to graduates from all types of HEIs, as long as they are able to earn their teaching certificates.

[9]Under the central planning system in the 1980s, China's schools and universities were hierarchically categorized into different groups to recruit new students from the pool of qualified high

late 1990s, things have changed. Recently, YNU was unable to recruit high school graduates with higher academic achievements.

This has something to do with other national policies that have failed to place high priority on teacher education reform. Before the 1990s, students in TEIs enjoyed governmental subsidies for school fees and living expenditures, including room and board. Since 1993, when HEIs began to charge tuitions and fees, the subsidies became meaningless amidst surging inflation coupled with the expensive fees demanded by universities. Professor Peishi noted:

> YNU is a typical case, for I have done an investigation among our undergraduate students. Not even twenty percent of those we recruited really want to study in TEIs. The best or better students were reluctant to study in TEIs. There were roughly another 20 % of students in TEIs who felt that the teaching profession was not bad, thus they voluntarily chose to study in TEIs. My first impression is that in recent years our government has attached more importance to education, but not to teacher education.

Professor Peishi's observation challenged the policy requirements set by the MOE's *Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education during the Tenth Five-year National Plan* (The MOE, 2002, February 6). This guiding document urged that policy priorities be placed on upgrading the system of teacher education. The outcomes of the implementation at YNU, however, indicated there is still a long way to go.

According to Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), the lower the intensity of implementers' attitudes toward a policy, the greater the negative impact on their ability and willingness to be involved in the policy implementation (p. 472). Since most interviewees demonstrated their negative attitudes toward the new roles of teachers and toward the national reform of teacher education, it is not difficult to imagine how they may have actually involved themselves in the implementation process.

Confluence with Other National Policies for Institutional Changes

In addition to the abovementioned institutional factors, there is also confluence for institutional changes with some other national policies which have confined the successful implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform

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school graduates, based on students' different academic achievements as measured by the NCEE. The first recruitment category usually meant that key schools and universities had the priority to recruit new students with the highest academic NCEE achievement. The second recruitment category meant that ordinary or non-key schools and universities recruited their new students after the most qualified high school graduates were taken by the first group. To guarantee the quality of teacher education, normal schools and universities have generally been given the privilege of the first recruitment category to recruit new students. About the key school system in China, please refer to Footnote 8 in Chap. 2 (pp. 31–32).

at YNU. Among them are the NEBPP, the Higher Education Expansion, and the NCEE. These institutional barriers conspired with the attitudinal factors already described to hinder the success of the implementation.

The National Evaluation of Baccalaureate Programs Project

In 1994, the MOE launched the NEBPP that aims to continuously monitor and improve HEIs' teaching and educational quality. The NEBPP adheres to the principle of promoting reform and reconstruction of universities through assessment. Major measures used by the NEBPP include institutional mission, faculty, teaching facility and its utilization, program construction and teaching reform, teaching administration, teaching and learning style, and teaching effectiveness. Each of these seven indicators is "scientifically" designed and categorized into several sub-indicators.[10]

Since the NEBPP has been adopted nationwide and the every-five-year results of its evaluation are regularly publicized as "Excellent," "Good," "Qualified," or "Disqualified" by MOE's Higher Education Evaluation Center, every HEI in China views earning a good reputation through the NEBPP as a political accomplishment critical to their institutional success.

Undoubtedly, YNU has viewed the NEBPP in the same way and sought further to enhance its reputation through the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. The university had held more than dozens of special meetings since 2004, and its progress in preparing for the NEBPP was frequently covered on the front page of the *Yangtze Normal University Weekly* during that time. Professor Ningdong explained why YNU paid such serious attention to the NEBPP:

> This evaluation is the biggest political movement for every university, because its result will be publicized online after the evaluation job is done. This will have a predominant impact on the public image of an institution and its recruitment of new students. Therefore, our university has also made tremendous efforts to prepare for the assessment. By all means, this assessment is the most important task for us now. In fact, it's the most authoritative and systematic evaluation in China so far . . . .It has too many implications for every university, especially for normal universities.

In fact, YNU's hectic preparations for the NEBPP had a very negative impact on the implementation of the national policy, as the preparation for the assessment had stringent quantitative requirements by the MOE. Many interviewees viewed it as a huge waste of professors' valuable time because faculty members had to finish too much paperwork which was very demanding. During the interview for this study, Chair Beihua kept complaining that his whole summer in 2005 had been killed by his paperwork for the NEBPP.

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[10]For more information about the NEBPP, please refer to the Higher Education Evaluation Center of the Ministry of Education: http://www.heec.edu.cn/en/index.jsp

In addition, most interviewees remained indifferent to the NEBPP and predicted it would soon fail to achieve its goals because it is a de facto bureaucratic initiative and process, fostering falsifications, exaggerations, and formalism. Dean Enwei stated:

> The NEBPP requires all full professors to give at least one course to undergraduate students. How [will the MOE] check that out? We are required to submit our course timetables. We are very familiar with the game . . . .the course timetables are made up for the assessment. In the timetables, professor XXX is scheduled to give an undergraduate course, but the name of a teaching assistant will be put into the brackets after the professor's name. Or professor XXX only gives a one-hour session, and all the rest will be taught by the assistant. But from the course tables, all professors are giving courses to undergraduates [laugh loudly].

Director Gangyang echoed Dean Enwei's cynicism:

> In my view, the assessment is terrible. That is, there is too much formalism, falsifications and nonsense . . . .Falsifications have already happened in almost every university that had received the national assessment; the difference is just about to what extent. There are several types of falsifications: Some data put in the report are totally made-up – these are typical falsifications; some are not really made-up – I don't know how to put this – something has been done before but there was no record kept for it, so now a new record is being made up as evidence of the old work having been done for the assessment. This can also be called a falsification, am I right?

Viewed from a rational perspective, the NEBPP supposedly serves as a powerful and effective instrument for the MOE and individual institutions to evaluate their overall conditions and performance of education. At YNU, it was an opportunity to enhance the implementation of the national policy. But most implementers at YNU, however, observed that it had considerably negative outcomes.

The Higher Education Expansion

With the implementation of the national policy of higher education expansion, YNU reached a student population of 28,000 in 2005 and 37,000 in 2015 on three campuses.[11] This radical expansion had undoubtedly put high pressure on the implementation of the national policy of teacher education. For instance, in the mid- and late 2000s, new entrants enrolled at YNU were even unable to find vacant beds in student dormitories on campus. In some years, YNU had to postpone the registration for all newcomers up to 3 months.

Most interviewees perceived the implementation of the higher education expansion as having led to the decline in teaching quality at YNU. Director Futang shared his own observation of the quality decline in teaching and research after the expansion:

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[11]For more statistics about the student expansion at YNU, please refer to Fig. 6.1 in Chap. 6 (p. 135).

> I basically agree with that [the quality of teaching and research has declined recently].
> From the date when I began to work for YNU, that is, from the 1980s up to the late 1990s,
> I felt that my personal teaching quality had been gradually improving. Generally speaking,
> everybody seemed to be on the same pace on this campus then . . . .
>
> In recent years of expansion, I agree with the opinion – [teachers are] weighed down
> with teaching and the heavy workload is really hard to cope with. For me, I have to teach
> various courses such as those for undergraduate students, graduate students and principal
> students, and other courses. It's extremely unbearable. And, the total number of faculty
> members is kept at its original size . . . . The workload has tripled from what it used to be.
> Under this situation, apparently, the expansion definitely has a negative impact on teaching
> quality.

Teaching internships were commonly viewed as one of the key steps in educating highly qualified teachers. YNU used to provide a 2–3 month teaching internships to fourth year students up until the mid-1990s. The internships generally consisted of 8–12 students led by two to three faculty members as advisors on a school site. After the late 1990s when YNU rapidly expanded its size, as Chair Beihua and Dean Enwei put, there were no on-site advisors supervising students any more, and teaching internships had been reduced to a very limited period of 2–3 weeks.

The implementation of the national policy of higher education expansion also significantly increased the teaching workload of professors and the management workload of administrators. Dean Enwei shared his difficulty in being in charge of the teaching affairs for the CES. Taking an example of student internships again:

> We have a lot of problems that constrained the reform [the implementation of the national
> policy of teacher education reform]. Before the enrollment expansion, one program used
> to have around forty or fifty undergraduate students. Sending two to three teachers [to an
> internship site] – each leading around fifteen students – would be fine. Now we have more
> than three or four hundred students in a program.
>
> For example, this year we have one hundred and twenty students majoring in the
> psychology program. It will need at least ten faculty members for all the students if we
> send each group with twelve students to one single school [for internships]. Once the ten
> teachers go away with these students, there will be nobody in our college who can teach
> courses in the field of psychology. I don't have any options – I cannot send out all of them.
> Isn't this a big problem? Where is teacher education being led to?

The national policy of higher education expansion was originally launched by the central government to stimulate the growth of the national economy in 1999.[12] However this rational policymaking did not serve the national reform of teacher education at all, in which the goal is to build a highly qualified teacher workforce. In the case of YNU, as demonstrated above, the radical higher education expansion backfired on the implementation of the national teacher education reform.

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[12]It was used as a measure by the central government to expand parents' investment in higher education during a time of economic deflation in the late 1990s. For more details, please refer to Li and Lin (2008). *China's move to mass higher education: A policy analysis of policy making from a rational framework*. In D. P. Baker, & A. W. Wiseman (Eds.), *International perspectives on education and society: The worldwide transformation of higher education* (269–295). Bingley: Emerald Publishing; and Hayhoe et al. (2011). *Portraits of 21st century Chinese universities: In the move to mass higher education*. Dordrecht & HK: Springer/CERC.

The National College Entrance Examination

For the past five decades, the NCEE has been an annual, nationwide event through which high school graduates compete for their admissions to colleges or universities. Prior to the early 1990s, more than 20 million students had to compete with each other for only 0.62 million seats on university campuses. The NCEE has been so instrumental that makes every senior high school in China like a training camp for it. According to many principals and parents, the purpose of school education is therefore narrowed to the preparation for the national examination.

After the radical higher education expansion in the late 1990s, the opportunities for colleges have increased remarkably. However, the NCEE is still very competitive nowadays, as most high school graduates want to study in top-tier universities which only admit those who can earn super scores.[13]

Although the national policy of teacher education reform has advocated new roles for teachers, such as teachers as reflective researchers or reflective practitioners, in practice there is one and only one role for teachers to play – gatekeepers and examination trainers. This is because there is still only one real criterion for evaluating the teaching quality a schoolteacher provides – the promotion rate of students to colleges, especially key national universities. Under such a sociopolitical and cultural context, teachers are unable to transform their roles, nor are they able to find the time to do so, not to mention that parents and principals as well would not allow them to do so under such cultural constraints.

During the interview, Professor Ouying mentioned that her daughter just became a freshman in a key national university by passing the competitive NCEE. She provided a mother's observation on the roles teachers played in the high school classroom:

> In many county high schools, students usually study until eleven thirty at night, and teachers are still reluctant to let them go to bed. Many students even prepare for the NCEE until two to three o'clock in the morning. A very close friend of my daughter failed in the examination this year, and has been studying at a county high school to retake the exam. She told me she was not allowed to go to sleep until two to three o'clock in the morning every day. But, there were still too many students who were competing for their studies at that training school this year. Why? Many students and their parents just look at the high promotion rate of its graduates. They know studying in this school is extremely hard and unbearable, and the financial cost is also high. Many students say they are studying in a dungeon or are living in hell. They are not dynamic students anymore; they are actually examination machines. And these schools become training camps for the NCEE.
>
> Local educational administrators continue to see the promotion rate of graduates as the cardinal guidance for schooling and as the sole criterion to evaluate the educational jobs principals and teachers are doing. What the ordinary people and students expect is just one thing: a high promotion rate of graduates to colleges, no matter how hard the training is.

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[13]Since 2014, the Chinese government has decided to fundamentally reform the NCEE, but its claimed positive outcomes still need time to be examined.

This phenomenon is called *the county high school model* [*xianzhong moshi*].[14] There is not *one* county high school likes this, there are too many county high schools like this – "we [county high schools] do not have enough resources, the only thing we have is that we can train our students harder and harder."

Professor Ouying continued:

From the learning experiences my daughter had, however, I can see that city high schools have more or less met some requirements of the national reform . . . .Under such strong social pressure, schools have only one requirement for the teacher's job: Training students to pass the NCEE. What else can you expect from them? If I were the principal, although I might have learned a lot of updated theories of education and I know this [exam-training] is not good at all, I don't have any other options.

From Professor Ouying's experience, the NCEE and the promotion rate of graduates to colleges or universities severely confined the applications of new teachers' roles. Rather, the national examination became the only goal of school education and the only criterion for assessing a teacher's job performance. It would not help much at the local school level, either, even if there was a successful implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in a normal university. In other words, even if prospective teachers in TEIs were equipped with new identities and roles, they would not be able to eventually practice teaching in the classroom as they are educated.

In sum, stakeholders' attitudes toward the implementation of the national policy show that although the national reform of teacher education appeared to be a great policy for building up a highly qualified teacher workforce, there was still a long way to go. The unfavorable determinants to the implementation process included the university leaders' weak awareness of the national policy, the decline in teaching quality, and the constraints of the officialdom. In addition, the NEBPP, the radical higher education expansion, and the NCEE all acted as contextual confluence affecting the success of the implementation. All of these determinants, sociopolitically and culturally, have created political and economic tensions throughout the implementation process, leading to the inconsistency between purposive policy goals and implementation outcomes of the national reform.

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[14]The "model of county high schools," termed by Prof. Ouying, referred to schools that have limited financial and teaching resources than key schools. With limited funds and teaching support, county high schools generally have to heavily rely on harder efforts of teachers and students to catch up similar or higher promotion rates of graduates with key high schools. Mostly often, these harder efforts include many more learning and teaching hours, more rigid disciplines, and more intense test-skill training, by sacrificing students' social studies, group activities, and community involvements. About the key school system in China, please refer to Footnote 8 in Chap. 2 (pp. 31–32).

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Chapter 10
Conclusion: A Chinese *Zhong-Yong* Model of Policy Implementation?

At this point, I have managed to tessellate and assemble the rational, dynamic, and complex implementation jigsaw at YNU, providing a comprehensive analysis of how a higher TEI has implemented China's policy of teacher education reform over the period since the 1990s. In this final chapter, the research questions of the study will be revisited, and I will bring back the multiperspectival approach, which is consisted of the rational and critical perspectives and the operational analytic model to reflect upon the implementation process. Drawing on the Chinese experiences, this chapter also discusses implications for policy studies more generally and proposes recommendations for policy implementation and future research orientations. At the end of the chapter, the Chinese *Zhong-Yong* Model is fully constructed for policy studies.

The Research Questions Revisited

This case study was designed to explore how a higher TEI had responded to China's policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s. Major components of the implementation process have been examined to address the following six research questions:

1. What initiatives have been put forward in China's policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s and what is their institutional, sociopolitical, and cultural context?
2. How is the national policy of teacher education reform perceived and interpreted, respectively, by implementers and participants at the micro-institutional level?
3. How have TEIs reshaped their institutional visions and strategies to respond to the national reform?
4. How have local policy players been involved in the implementation process of the national policy?

5. What institutional changes have taken place due to the implementation of the national policy? How are these implementation outcomes evaluated? And what are the major problems and challenges perceived?
6. What are possible implications learned from the Chinese model of policy implementation?

When reflected upon with the multiperspectival approach, findings from the study can be interpreted in various – sometimes conflicting – ways for the implementation of China's teacher education reform.

Policy Implementation as Rational Collective Behaviors

A cardinal assumption of the Rational Framework is that human behavior is purposively rational and that an implementation process is thought of "as purposive, goal-directed activity" by a rational unified actor (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 17). When the Rational Framework is applied, the policy actions of China's teacher education reform can be viewed as rational collective behaviors, including the initiation and formation as well as implementation process and evaluation. As mentioned previously, the Chinese sociopolitical system remains highly centralized with a unified polity under the CPC leadership. The CPC leaders have repeatedly urged that "the centralization and unity of the Party and State are where the fundamental interests of the people of all ethnic groups lie. The whole Party and the entire nation must maintain a high degree of unity with regard to the guiding ideology, directives, principles and policies and major questions of principle" (Jiang, 2002, November 8).

Additionally, the strong catch-up mentality in China, as introduced in the very beginning of this book, has ensured a collective, institutional environment to support China's rational efforts to reform its TEIs in order to nurture world-class teachers. These imperatives have been pervasively publicized throughout the everyday life of ordinary people and have shaped what John Campbell termed the "national mood" (Kingdon, 2003), so that there is a broad commitment to achieving the goals of the national reform as fully as possible.

Since the 1990s the Chinese government has released more than a dozen national policy documents, consistently enforcing the same policy goal of "building up a highly qualified teacher workforce" (The MOE, 2002, February 6) and urging a rational transformation of teachers' roles. The new teachers' identities defined by these documents are centered on *teachers as professional learners* and *teachers as reflective researchers*. The policy goal and new teachers' identities were based on two major theories: the modernization theory and human capital theory.

On one hand, Chinese policymakers have made every effort, guided by modernization theory and a catch-up mentality, to revitalize China in all areas. On the other hand, the Chinese government has adopted human capital theory to address educational issues such as the preparation of a world-class teacher workforce,

which is viewed by policymakers as "the foundation of socialist modernization and construction . . . .the hope for rejuvenating our nation, and the hope for rejuvenating education is teachers" (The CPCCC & The State Council, 1993, February 13).

Based on these instrumental rationales, alongside a strong Confucian ethic and a catch-up mentality, policymakers and implementers have collectively pushed the reform to transform the traditional roles of teachers, in order to improve and strengthen the teacher workforce.

The national policy began with the scientific identification of substantial problems. For example, in 1999 the MOE evaluated that the supply of teachers from higher TEIs was not sufficient, that normal schools were overextended, that the systematic structure and geographical distribution of TEIs were not optimal, and that there was a huge demand for continuing education for schoolteachers (The MOE, 1999, March 16). Based on the identification of these problems, the implementation guidelines and strategies setting new standards and requirements for teacher education were laid out by policymakers.

The national teacher education reform was warmly embraced by all of the 17 interviewees in this study. The process of transforming the traditional roles of Chinese teachers to the new ones described by the policy documents made great sense to them, and they applauded the strenuous efforts in various areas made by implementers. They understood why the reform was initiated from a rational viewpoint, noting that the reform demanded the traditionally independent and closed teacher education system to be transformed into an open system in order to adapt to the worldwide trend of teacher professionalism.

For the effective implementation of the national reform, YNU used its official communication system, *Chuanda*, for grassroots communication of the policy. This communication system was a powerful form of rational and efficient control to enforce the national policy of teacher education reform at the college and university level. By *Chuanda*, most CPC leaders as well as other administrators at YNU familiarized themselves as well as participants with the national policy of teacher education reform.

YNU adopted a number of strategies, such as enhancing the quality of teaching and learning through ways that can be measured and quantified, upgrading teaching programs and facilities in order to expand educational capacity, strengthening the university's core feature as an institution of teacher education, and reorganizing academic departments and colleges. As reported by most interviewees, implementers and participants at YNU worked with each other in many areas and had various forms of involvement in the implementation process. For example, most implementers responded that they were routinely required to carry out whatever the university leaders asked them to do, and they did follow this requirement.

Changes taking place at YNU as a corollary of the implementation of the national reform were promising: The university has started many new degree programs; it has moved from an academic-year system to a new credit system; it has tried to improve teaching quality with a newly enforced teaching evaluation system. More specifically, there have been significant changes in priority placed on the teaching aspect of teacher education. For instance, YNU has invested a huge sum of money

on expanding IT applications in teaching, and course plans have been revised to suit the new standards and requirements. In addition, rigorous evaluations, such as the annual official evaluation and the NEBPP by the MOE, have been adopted to evaluate the policy outcomes. From its initiation to implementation, and to evaluation, the national policy of teacher education reform has clearly followed a linear, sequential, logical path, as theorized by Jenkins (1978, p. 17) and Sabatier and Mazmanian (1978, p. 26).

In the case of China's national reform of teacher education, rational and collective policy actions are clearly observable. Specifically, it is means-ends driven and follows goal-directed principles. There have many cause and effect links between the theories of action and the stated outcomes. The implementation has been designed in stages in a linearly advancing policy flow employing the most effective communication forms available. Efforts have been made to optimize the goals and to adopt alternative strategies for the resolution of substantial problems. There has also been an adherence to scientific evaluations.

These findings and interpretations, however, are obviously insufficient and sometimes inadequate, to answer why the intended outcomes were not strictly consistent with the intended policy goals and expectations as originally planned. In addition, the Rational Framework grounds itself in the obsolescent rationality of "zombie categories" (Beck, 2003, p. 202), resulting in simplistic, deterministic, and law-like policy actions. It oftentimes fails to take into critical account the dynamism and complexity of social inequality and political conflicts, e.g., conflicts of interest among various stakeholders (Baldridge, Curtis, Ecker, & Riley, 1977). An alternative framework, e.g., the Critical Framework, can help overcome these weaknesses and shed light on the dynamic and complex processes that resulted in the policy outcomes being sometimes inconsistent with the assumptions of the Rational Framework.

Policy Implementation as Critical Institutional Transformations

As introduced in Chap. 5, the Critical Framework views the policy process, including implementation, as a means of redistributing scarce social resources and transforming conventional institutions so that the status quo of social inequality can be changed (Bensimon & Marshall, 1997, p. 10). In other words, a policy action is a dynamic process of institutional transformation driven by various interests and power relationships.

Political tensions were inherent in the implementation process and greatly shaped the institutional changes at YNU. This was particularly evident when the relationships between the national teacher education reform and other national policies are examined at the macro-level. In the overlapping process of implementing both the national teacher education reform and higher education expansion, power struggles occurred. In particular the higher education expansion affected the distribution of resources, the organization of programs, and changes in curriculum. The dramatic

increase in student enrollment tended to divert implementers as well as participants away from a focus on the new requirements of the national teacher education reform.

In fact, the radical higher education expansion intensified economic and political inequalities between implementers and participants at the micro-institutional level and sacrificed the quality of school education for future teachers. Many interviewees reported that student enrollments rocketed up so fast that the recruitment of qualified faculty members could not keep up with its demand. Professor Huguo observed the negative impact brought by higher education expansion on the well-being of students and teachers at YNU:

> The teaching quality is declining, which means that students are the most exploited. The decline causes a big loss to the students. Teachers are [the exploited] too. If viewed from their input and reward, teachers have worked harder than ever before, [but] their reward is relatively small . . . . I cannot bet that the workload of professors in Chinese HEIs is the heaviest in the world. If considering their psychological stress, I can say that they face the most difficult situation in the world. Schoolteachers are the same. Nowadays, a lot of them have psychological problems due to the unprecedented job pressure and stress – it has never happened like this before.

It is obvious that the confluence of YNU's implementation of both the teacher education reform and higher education expansion, in addition to a few other national policies, placed critical pressure on faculty contingent by implementers. Moreover, the new faculty evaluation system effectively served as a mechanism to hold professors responsible for the implementation of the teacher education reform at the classroom level. However, such a system was not instituted for YNU's leaders, which indicated a significant inequality in power between implementers and participants. The complaints from the faculty, and the actions they took, make it clear that tensions existed throughout the implementation process and that participants sought a balance of power on their own.

The implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform was hampered by the hierarchical character of officialdom, which came from the "Confucian trio" (Levenson, 1964, pp. 35–50). This political and cultural tradition ensured a gap in income and a gap in power between implementers and participants.

The unequal relationship between the two groups was one of the reasons that many faculty members sought administrative jobs on campus or extra income off campus. In the case of YNU, however, some faculty members took tangible actions to fight against the sociopolitical and cultural inequalities they had faced. They realized that their hard work was being exploited relentlessly, and they were oppressed by the officialdom that stifled any substantial outcomes for the implementation of the national reform. They were no longer satisfied with their unequal economic and political status and their passive roles. They executed bold strategies such launching public opinion polls, acts of political disobedience, and collective bargaining to fight against the inequalities they experienced in their relationships with administrators.

As a result a change occurred in power and economic status between faculty contingent as participants and the administrators as implementers. Faculty members' constant struggles over inequities in their relationships with dominant policy players

vividly show how the notion of teachers as transformative intellectuals (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985) has been realized in the implementation process of the national policy in China.

From the Critical Framework, the implementation of the national teacher education reform is no longer seen as merely a set of rational collective behaviors. Instead, visible and hidden economic and political tensions and conflicts are seen as universal, pervasive, and embedded throughout the process, for policy actors are all "political creatures (a fact that too many policy analysts forget) in political communities" (Marshall, 1997, p. 5).

From policy initiation, to the implementation process, to policy outcomes and evaluation, stakeholders, especially the exploited and oppressed participants, fought against the status quo for a change in their socioeconomic status. In this sense, the implementation is a dynamic and complex process as institutional transformations converged with environmental factors, i.e., the policy environment and the political system (Jenkins, 1978, p. 21). The Critical Framework provides an alternative lens to look into the dynamism and complexity of the implementation jigsaw puzzle, through which a higher TEI responds to the national policy of teacher education reform.

The China Policy Case and New Dimensions for Implementation Studies

The implementation jigsaw puzzle from China offers a great opportunity for policy researchers to alternatively examine policy issues in education from both the Rational Framework and the Critical Framework. It also provides a great opportunity to see how culture plays a critical role in the success or failure of a policy implementation. This section reflects on how this case study may shed light on policy analysis and policy implementation studies.

The Power of the Multiperspectival Approach

The multiperspectival approach, as the emancipatory bricolage of a diverse range of disciplinary inquiries (Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011, pp. 167–170), empowers policy researchers as bricoleurs in a multiperspectival position to identify, focus on, and examine key aspects, components, and unique features of policy actions. One framework may bring in more meaningful insights for certain aspects of policy analysis than another, as affirmed by Charon (2010).

For example, from the Rational Framework, policy actions are usually viewed as an objective, rigorous empirical process directed by scientifically defined goals and driven by a means-ends relationship. In the China policy case, the substantial problems of the teacher workforce and teacher education, the linearly developed policy path, the mostly efficient way of pursuing clearly defined goals, and the

strong theories of action such as modernization theory and human capital theory all show that the Rational Framework has dramatic potential for policy studies. The Rational Framework, however, is often criticized as "more an ideal than an actual description of how people act" (Baldridge, 1977), and sociopolitical and cultural constraints always undermine its analytic power. Other perspectives may have stronger power in some aspects to look at and examine these constraints.

A dynamic implementation process is more observable when the Critical Framework is employed. In this process, various players actively seek their diverse political or personal interests and values in relation to institutional transformation. The power of the Critical Framework enables policy researchers to pay more attention to the dynamic, conflicting process instead of being completely focused on the linear, logical policy flow.

Viewed from the Critical Framework, various tensions and conflicts that are embedded in the implementation process are seen as pervasive, as Dardach (1977) argued that "the bargaining and maneuvering, the pulling and hauling, of the policy-adoption process carries over into the policy-implementation process" (p. 38). In addition, the Critical Framework views the implementation process as an instrument to change the unequal status quo and achieve a form of institutional transformation that is beneficial to all. In China, the implementation of the national reform of teacher education is to a great extent a process in which stakeholders fought to transform both their institutional and individual status.

The multiperspectival approach adopted in this study enables policy researchers to deepen their understandings of policy actions in a complementary and more balanced way, for they can unearth "aspects and intricacies of policy that would be easily missed with a single lens look" (Malen & Knapp, 1997). In this sense, the Rational Framework and the Critical Framework together can offer a much richer and more comprehensive understanding of policy actions, since each of them has both strengths and limitations for policy studies. Such complementary, emancipatory, and more balanced power of the multiperspectival approach can be illustrated by a classical Chinese poem written by Su Shi in the eleventh century on how mountains may appear as ridges or peaks, depending on the viewer's stances at different distances and altitudes, or by a Zen allegory of the rock garden of the Ryoan-ji temple in northwest Kyoto, Japan.

Viewed from the Rational Framework, the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in China is understood as a linearly developed process to resolve the substantial problems of the teacher education system by collective policy players. The policy actions are advanced to meet the need of the rapidly changing society. The Critical Framework suggests that the stakeholders of the national reform are *unnecessarily* acting collectively in a unified way. Rather, there are diverse and conflicting groups who are battling for their individual legitimacy, benefits, and status. The implementation process becomes a contested battlefield through which various benefits and resources are redistributed among interest groups. Battling policy actors, conflicting cultural and market forces, and some counteractive factors such as the confluence of the implementation of other national policies all contribute to policy outcomes.

Other policy actions in the policy context of China, such as the NCRBE, the higher education expansion, the NCEE, the NEBPP, etc., can greatly benefit from the multiperspectival approach, improving our overall understanding of their policymaking process and their implementation in China. For example, the multiperspectival approach can help examine how the national policy of higher education expansion was initiated, developed, and implemented, what roles civil society played in the process, and how higher education as both a public and a private good was advocated and debated throughout the policy action process (Li & Lin, 2008). These investigations might provide unique findings and interpretations about how Chinese policy players acted in carrying out educational reform.

The multiperspectival approach does have limitations for policy analysis, however. Charon (2010) implies that any one particular perspective will always limit what one can see, "since other perspectives – many of which may also be right – cannot be considered at the same time" (p. 4). In this study, it is obvious that the overwhelming influence of cultural factors as the centralized political control over all aspects of the implementation jigsaw at YNU could hardly be fully captured by the multiperspectival approach, which bricolage is limited to rational and critical perspectives. On the other hand, the metaphor of implementation jigsaw itself would be conceived totally differently at the very beginning, if other alternative perspectives are to be applied.

More specifically, the limitation of the Critical Framework is especially significant, as under a top-down, hierarchical political, and cultural order, the roles that faculty members can play in the implementation jigsaw and their possibility of playing major roles in making institutional or cultural transformations were very limited. Leaders themselves were also restricted as to what they could do. Although theoretically they could be transformative intellectual leaders, they had been rendered passive implementers of the national policy, as a result of the sociopolitical and cultural context of China.

It is true that there are obvious constraints to the examination of the China policy case through the lens of the Critical Framework alone. Additionally, in practice the multiperspectival approach demands stronger theoretical groundings of policy studies and thus often challenges the analytic capacity of researchers, especially when they are constrained by what they can do in terms of time, space, budget, etc.

The Power of the Operational Analytic Model

The operational analytic model adopted by this study is a powerful analytic tool, helping focus on the details of the implementation process in China. It centers its focus on the six key variables of the implementation process:

1. Policy flow and communications
2. Institutional mission, goals, and strategies
3. Implementers and participants as stakeholders

4. Outcomes and evaluations
5. Sociopolitical and cultural confluence
6. Confluence with various educational policies

The operational analytic model facilitates the study of the rationality, dynamism, and complexity of the implementation process and makes possible to employ the multiperspectival approach to investigate the top-down delivery of the national policy for teacher education reform and expose the conflicts embedded in the process. The operational analytic model also helps map the differentiated, and sometimes conflicting, roles implementers and participants played, the confluence of key national educational reforms, and both the institutional barriers and larger sociopolitical and cultural impacts on the implementation process at YNU.

Using the operational analytic model, this study pays serious attention to the confluence of the national policy of teacher education reform with other national initiatives, such as the higher education expansion and the NEBPP. It highlights the decline in teaching and research quality as a corollary of the rapidly expanding student population on university campuses across the nation. It also points out the ambiguity in the implementation of the national teacher education reform, as shown in YNU's newly defined mission.

In addition, the operational analytic model steers this study toward the examination of the sociopolitical, cultural, and institutional complications embedded in China's implementation process. The next section will explain more on how the cultural influence affected the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy.

The operational analytic model also has its limits. For example, it is less useful to examine implementation stages, as Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) advocated in their skeletal flow diagram of the variables involved in the implementation process (p. 542). Moreover, it does not focus on the adjustment or revision of the national policy for teacher education reform, nor does it pay sufficient attention to how resources, especially financial resources, are allocated in the implementation. These shortcomings limit the power of interpretation offered by this study.

The Power of Cultural Factors

As introduced in Chap. 1, the significance of this study partly relies on its focus on how Chinese culture contributed to the success or failure of the implementation of China national policy of teacher education. This has a special meaning in light of with the hegemony of European and North American scholarship in policy analysis.

Jenkins (1978) argued that "public policy is best understood by considering the operation of a political system in its environment" (p. 21). He did not mention at all the role of cultural factors in policy studies; however, neither have other Western policy researchers such as Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), Sabatier and

Mazmanian (1980), or recently Birkland (2011). But they have inspired this study to pay particular attention to the cultural influence on the implementation process. As I have illustrated in the Operational Analytic Map for this study (please refer to Fig. 5.5, Chap. 5), sociopolitical and cultural influences are seen as key factors that impact the outcomes of public policies in China.

China has a long history of central governance going back more than 2000 years, and this study includes a special focus inquiring about the extent to which traditional Chinese culture influenced the implementation process of reform at YNU. All interviewees responded that the way the national policy was implemented at YNU, undoubtedly, was strongly shaped by the official-centered bureaucratic tradition embedded in Chinese culture. Chair Beihua put it this way:

> Well, the impact of the official-centered bureaucracy is tremendous. In China, why are there so many people willing to be officials? One reason is the official-centered culture, really is involved with special interest. This is what everybody knows. An official is a policymaker, as long as a policy benefits them [administrators], they will do whatever in their power to keep them. If it does not benefit them, they may not even touch it.

Another negative impact stemming from traditional Chinese culture is massive red tape and formalism which seemed to be responsible for the apparent lack of innovation for YNU's institutional change.

Of course, interviewees also noted the positive impacts associated with traditional Chinese culture in the implementation process, which are manifest in many policy actions, such as normative Confucian values in balancing political and economic conflicts and collectively agreeable institutional goals.

According to the perceptions and experiences of most interviewees, traditional Chinese culture plays a determining role in the implementation process of China's national reform of teacher education. Later in the ending section of this book, a Confucian *Zhong-Yong* Model will be proposed and constructed out of these perceptions and experiences. No matter what other impact cultural factors may have, this study has found that culture has a profound and crucial "programming" power (Hofstede, 2001) on policy actions, including the implementation process. Therefore, policy researchers must have a high awareness of cultural impacts, especially in a sociopolitical context where there is a long tradition of cultural legacy.

Recommendations for Policy Implementation

The YNU case of policy implementation presented by this study offers practical implications for policy studies on the success or failure of implementation. These policy implications concern a high degree of awareness of policy significance, consistent implementation of policy goals, effective evaluation of outcomes, and the need to deal with institutional contexts from the perspective of the sociopolitical and cultural environment.

Implementers Must Be Highly Aware of Policy Significance

According to Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), the disposition of implementers is key for public policy to be effectively delivered since all other components must be filtered through their perceptions (p. 463). Many participants in this study complained that YNU's leaders did not fully recognize the importance of the national reform of teacher education and thus were not qualified as authentic implementers. The implementation of the national policy therefore proceeded at a snail's pace.

An example is that YNU planned for the new CTE for more than a decade but continued to await a final decision. Chair Beihua advised that the first thing the university leaders needed to do was to enhance their understanding of the national policy of teacher education reform. He insisted that "all will be empty talk, if a president has learned nothing about educational theories or is incapable of teacher education." Many interviewees agreed that the critical role of teacher education had not been given its deserved priority in the implementation at YNU.

As reported by many interviewees, the lack of policy recognition by key implementers greatly contributed to the unsatisfactory outcomes of the implementation of the national policy at YNU. Therefore, the first recommendation for policy implementation is that implementers must fully apprehend the significance of a public policy and appropriate its implementation for institutional development.

Institutional Mission Must Be Consistent with Policy Goals

Although implementation processes may vary from one context to another, their success or failure is commonly studied by examining the consistency between implementation outcomes and policy goals (Elmore, 1978, p. 195; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980, p. 542; Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 459). In addition, in the view of Van Meter and Van Horn, the higher the goal consensus is, the larger the amount of change (policy outcomes) will be, and vice versa (p. 460).

When this study reveals how YNU's institutional goals were developed, it is surprising to find out that YNU's institutional goals were at least deviated from, or actually inconsistent with, the ultimate goals of China's national reform of teacher education. Conversely, YNU's mission has become more ambiguous in terms of the intended enhancement of its identity as a TEI.

The ambiguity of YNU's institutional mission has had a negative impact on the implementation of the national reform. For example, most interviewees held negative perceptions of the transition of their institutional identity. They were critical of the fact that, although teacher education had traditionally been YNU's featured strength, it was neglected anyway, unfortunately. Many interviewees observed that in recent years, the educational skills of graduates had not even been competitive with those from less prestigious normal universities. They also witnessed the drop in institutional social status and YNU's public image.

To a certain extent, the ambiguity of YNU's institutional mission hindered the implementation of the national reform. Hence, the second recommendation for the implementation of a public policy is that the institutional mission must be firmly consistent with the intended outcomes of a public policy.

Evaluation Must Be Ensured for Authentic Implementation

Evaluation is widely accepted as a crucial step to ensure authentic implementation. Browne and Wildavsky (1983) believe that "evaluation is a necessary component of program development and implementation" and that evaluation "can contribute to a continuing refinement in comprehension of why programs and policies do or do not work" (p. 201; p. 182). Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) saw policy outcomes technically as a dependent variable, which provides feedback for major policy revision (p. 542). Evaluation has been adopted as an important indicator to evaluate the quality of policy implementation.

Three major official forms of evaluation of the implementation of the national policy are found at YNU: the university official evaluation system, the university regular or periodic evaluations on special job performance, and the ad hoc evaluations conducted by the provincial administration of education. The first form of evaluation was criticized by some interviewees as a "waste" because of its formalism. The second one was blamed by some interviewees for putting additional job pressure on participants. There was much criticism of the third one too, since it involved a lot of formalism and falsification. All of the three forms can be termed "pseudo-evaluations" (Dunn, 1981, p. 343), as testified by many interviewees with pessimistic comments.

Apart from the three forms of evaluation, none of the seventeen interviewees confirmed that there was a third party or professional organization involved, which could provide "true evaluation" featured with full and open disclosure (Stufflebeam & Webster, 1980, p. 7).

Although evaluation and implementation are oftentimes carried out by the same policy actors, evaluation by an independent third party or a professional assessment service can greatly benefit the understanding of the outcomes, as well as the revisions and adjustments of policy actions in the future. Thus, the third recommendation for policy implementation is that evaluation is a crucial step and needs to be augmented by independent, third party participants to ensure effective evaluation for authentic implementation and policy revisions.

Institutional Barriers Must Be Overcome

Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) claimed that the characteristics of the implementing agencies and their sociopolitical conditions have a profound effect on the imple-

mentation process (p. 477). To achieve the goals of implementation, unfavorable institutional factors must be given serious consideration.

In this study, many interviewees reported that the rapid backsliding of teaching quality at YNU in recent decades stemmed from the implementation of the higher education expansion. While the goal of the national policy of teacher education reform is defined as "building up a highly qualified teacher workforce" (The MOE, 2002, February 6), the simultaneous implementation of the higher education expansion as well as other national educational policies created a backlash of confluence against the national policy of teacher education reform.

Meanwhile, the counteractive socioeconomic and cultural factors also affected the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. For example, the still centralized polity and administrative system, the transition toward a market economy, and decentralization in education and traditional Chinese culture together had unfavorable effects on the implementation of the national policy in China, as witnessed by those interviewed. Therefore, policy actions must be contrived and concerted to overcome unfavorable institutional barriers affecting the success of policy implementation.

Research Recommendations for the Future

Up to this point, I have endeavored to put together the key components of the implementation process, attempting to employ the multiperspectival approach to address the core research concern and six sub-questions. In addition, I have also illustrated several policy implications for policy studies and given practical recommendations for policy implementation. But what could be the missing pieces of the implementation jigsaw, or what could be alternative jigsaws that future research can conceive and assemble? More importantly, what are the implications for future research?

Conducting Multiple-Case Studies

As illustrated in Chap. 6, this study adopted a single-case design and purposefully selected an information-rich case to look for an in-depth exploration and explanation of the implementation process of China's teacher education policy. Although the single-case design greatly benefits this study in terms of the limited time available on the site and the rich description about the case, it does have some unavoidable weaknesses. A single-case design is vulnerable indeed by nature; it might be a limited case, possibly not fully representative. In other words, it provides a weak basis for generalization to other institutional settings.

To minimize the possibilities of misrepresentation, a multiple-case design is recommended for studies in the future. As Herriott and Firestone (1983) have argued,

the multiple-case designs can enhance the ability to generalize findings while preserving in-depth description (p. 14). Maintaining that multiple-case designs have some obvious advantages, Yin (2014) points out rightly the distinct advantage of the larger body of evidence – often considered more compelling – and that the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust (pp. 56–63).

China's higher TEIs are not limited to provincial normal universities but include a large range of institutions such as key national normal universities, key provincial normal universities, and local normal professional colleges. Although key provincial normal universities are the largest base for teacher education in China, and the findings of the typical case purposefully identified and selected by this study can be generalized to other institutional settings to a large extent, a multiple-case design consisting of all three types of TEIs would definitely enhance the transferability of the findings and implications unearthed by this study to other institutional settings.

Studying the Confluence of Related Policy Actions

The operational analytic model of this study helps to disclose how the confluence of related educational policies seriously affected the outcomes of the implementation of China's national reform of teacher education. These policy actions, particularly the higher education expansion, the NEBPP, and the NCEE, affected in many ways the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy. On one hand, they created many opportunities for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. On the other hand, they combined, complementarily, to create institutional or contextual barriers to the effectiveness of such an implementation.

While this study has paid some attention to the higher education expansion, the NEBPP, and the NCEE, how other national policies intersected with each other and how their confluence affected the implementation outcomes of the national policy of teacher education reform remained unclear. As Birkland (2011) concludes, the relationships of one policy to another are crucial in achieving policy goals (p. 274). Therefore, the confluence of related policy actions and factors occurring at the same time becomes an imperative for policy studies in the future.

Studying Cultural Influence

Policy choices are believed to be embedded in a sociocultural context and determined by cultural values that frame actors' attitudes and preferences in a particular social or organizational situation (Christensen, 2003, p. 79). In this sense, cultural influence is a key variable in determining the success or failure of a policy action in general and the implementation process in particular. This is confirmed and evident in this study when the implementation process of China's policy of teacher education reform is examined.

One of the objectives of this book is to reveal how Chinese culture may play a "programming" role (Hofstede, 2001) in the implementation process of China's policy of teacher education reform. Recently Guo (2015) speculates that China's policy of teacher education reform has been fundamentally and historically shaped by a hybridity of ideological, social, and cultural forces, such as Confucian tradition, Maoism, and Deweyan progressivism. As demonstrated earlier, cultural factors such as Confucianism did have substantial and enduring impacts.

However, the complicated mechanism Chinese culture programs the Confucian values and patterned behaviors of implementers and participants, individually and collectively in a given or comparative cultural contexts, still remains understudied largely, nor is it completely clear how cultural values, including a system of cultural mentality, particularly programmed the implementation jigsaw at YNU. These inquiries are desirable in the future and are critical to further understanding the China policy case, as well as to exploring and developing new theories for policy studies from Cultural Perspectives. The alternative Cultural Perspectives may empower policy researchers to contrive and tessellate completely different jigsaw puzzles.

Final Remarks: A Chinese *Zhong-Yong* Model of Policy Implementation

Employing a multiperspectival approach, this book attempts to assemble the implementation jigsaw puzzle of China's policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s by focusing on its rationality, dynamism, and complexity. Such rationality, dynamism, and complexity were pervasive throughout and featured in the Chinese model of policy implementation, as illustrated in the YNU case studied.

There are at least three core features that are evident in the Chinese approach to policy implementation. First, there is strong cultural influence, e.g., Confucian values in education and learning as a major instrument for achieving the highest good for both individuals and society, which permeates the implementation process of China's policy of teacher education reform as carried out by policymakers, implementers, and participants as well. Such influence, or patterned cultural mentality, serves as a kind of national consensus which shapes the attitudes and preferences of all stakeholders for the best outcomes of the policy implementation.

Second, the Chinese model of policy implementation is rationalized through state ideologies, such as the so-called scientific approach, modernization theory, human capital theories, and the catch-up mentality. These discourses framed together constitute a kind of contextual consensus for the implementation of China's policy of teacher education reform, undergirded by the Confucian cultural values of education and learning, that makes the implementation process move effectively forward in a rational and logical path with collective policy actions.

Lastly, harmony is negotiated and achieved through tensions that exist pervasively in the complex process of the policy implementation. The dynamism of

tensions is deeply embedded in the conflicting interests of various implementers and participants ("political creatures"), in the culturally patterned mentality of officialdom, and in the confluence with other national educational policies. These tensions fashion the implementation process into a contested, dynamic battlefield, out of which both positive and negative effects are created.

Of course it is common in any given contexts that ideological discourses, normative values, and socioeconomic tensions are always found in policy actions, but the traditional Confucian values, officialdom, and the catch-up mentality make the Chinese model of policy implementation notably unique.

The unique rationality, dynamism, and complexity of the policy implementation in China can be illustrated by *Zhong-Yong*, the Universal Order (Ku, 1906) or the Confucian Doctrine of the Golden Mean (Lin, 1939). Literally, *Zhong* means central, proper, right, or just; and *Yong* carries the meaning of ordinary, mediocre, pragmatic, or universal (Ku, 1906, p. 7). In a broader sense, *Zhong* refers to moderation, propriety, and decency centered in benevolence and righteousness without extremism, while *Yong* focuses on rationality, normality, and practicality based on core doctrines.

To secure the mean (*Zhong*) and the normality (*Yong*) is not merely to pursue a middle course, but involves a spirit in which human reasoning and feeling flourish to a perfect equilibrium and harmony (The Doctrine of the Mean, 1.1). Practically, *Zhong-Yong* can serve as "a guide for human emotions and actions" (Chai & Chai, W. (Trans. &, 1965, p. 305). Core to the two principles are Confucian values based on pragmatism which is balanced in collective rationality and ethical commitments for individual and social actions, through which harmony is reached and attuned in spite of conflicts. So important to Chinese culture is *Zhong-Yong*, prescribed as the highest Confucian value (*The Analects*, n.d., 6.27), that China has been literally called *Zhongguo* (the Middle Kingdom) (Lin, 1939, p. 105). In addition, Levenson (1964) points out that *Zhong-Yong* has its Confucian apotheosis over centuries in China's long history (p. 35). Therefore, policy implementation in China can be rightly constructed and characterized by the Chinese *Zhong-Yong* Model.[1]

It is this Chinese *Zhong-Yong* Model, together with other sociopolitical and institutional factors, that have made China's success possible in the effort to nurture world-class teachers through the reform of its national teacher education system over decades. China's enduring endeavors in revitalizing its teacher education system have proven effective in bringing about significant institutional transformations and indeed can be seen as a huge accomplishment in light of the superb scores of Shanghai students across all domains in the 2009 and 2012 PISA results (OECD, 2013).

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[1]Please also see: Li (2016a, under review). China's reform of teacher education institutions: A critical case study of policy implementation; Li (2016b) and Li, J. (2015b). When Confucianism meets Ubuntu: Rediscovering justice, morality and practicality for education and development. *International Journal of Comparative Education and Development*, *17* (1), 38–45.

As Darling-Hammond and Lieberman (2012) have reaffirmed, the need to build a stronger teaching profession requires different countries to "learn from each other about what matters and what works in different contexts" and a deeper understanding of the possible strategies "for making major improvements in teachers' learning opportunities and a clear theory of change for how to bring these strategies about" (p. 169). Paine (2013) further argues that an interaction of global and local discourses is needed for the preparation for good teachers. The evidence garnered from the Chinese *Zhong-Yong* Model in the Chinese sociopolitical and cultural setting provides a frame for critically looking at experience of how national initiatives may be translated into institutional transformations through policy implementation. The insights presented in this book shed new light on policy studies of teacher education reform in particular and policy actions more generally, which may be transferrable to other sociopolitical contexts seeking to nurture world-class teachers and achieve educational excellence in a global age.

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