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BODØ GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

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# MASTER THESIS

## **The Educational Cooperation between University of Nordland and Changchun University of Science and Technology**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis aims at having a better understanding of the educational cooperation and the mechanism of building educational cooperation. This is an empirical investigation of the cooperation between UiN and CUST which have been lasted for 10 years. This research mainly focus on four parts, namely educational cooperation, the internationalization process (strategy), stakeholders and educational cooperation, and the influence of cultural difference on educational cooperation, etc. In the methodology, case study and a qualitative research approach have been used. Five respondents had been included in semi-structured interviews and their perspectives consist of the basis of the research. Among these aspect, stakeholders are classified into three categories, including internal, external and interface, each of them plays different roles in affecting the cooperation in education. The analysis of cultural difference is based on professor Hofstede's cultural dimension theory which divides culture into six dimensions: Power distance, Masculinity & Femininity, Individualism & Collectivism, Uncertainty Avoidance, long-term Orientation and Indulgence & Restraint. This research focuses on the influence of cultural difference and stakeholders on educational cooperation, and also has a look at the possible benefits of educational cooperation between UiN and CUST. By doing these thing, this research wants to get some implications for both universities and the countries and further to make some contributions to the development of the educational cooperation between the institutions of the two nations.

Key words: **Educational cooperation, Internationalization, stakeholder, cultural difference, cultural dimension theory.**

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

**UiN:** University of Nordland

**CUST:** Changchun University of Science and Technology

**CSCSE:** Chinese Service center for Scholar exchange

**ZOU:** Zhejiang Ocean University

**BNU:** Beijing Normal University

**BSU:** Beijing Sports University

**CI:** Confucius Institute

**IELTS:** International English Language Testing System

**GDP:** Gross Domestic Production

**EU:** European Union

**OECD:** Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

**EAS:** Extended Area Service

**IT:** Information Technology

**HEIs:** High Educational Institutes

**NGO:** Non-governmental organization

**BC:** Before Christ

**PD:** Power Distance

**IDV:** Individualism

**MAS:** Masculinity

**UAI:** Uncertainty Avoidance Index

**BIT:** Beijing Institute of Technology

**SA:** Strategic Alliance

**SIU:** The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education

**ISU:** International Student Union

**US:** United States

**AD:** Arctic Dialogue

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# 1. INTRODUCCION

## 1.1 Background

During the last two decades, universities worldwide have come under increasing pressures to adapt to rapidly changing social, technological, economic and political forces emanating from the immediate as well as from the broader postindustrial external environment. The unprecedented growth rate of GDP, complexity of international business and competitiveness of the global economy with its attendant social-political and technological forces have been creating relentless and cumulative pressures on higher education institutions to respond to the changing environment requiring far-reaching institutional adaptations and involvement (Marvin, 2003). As Cohen and Lotan (1997) put it, “.....there is a significant transformation in the organization of research training, and administration in higher education”. There appears to be a concurrence of assessment that universities are experiencing “a profound shift, environmental forces have become so dynamic as to lead to a basic shift in the structure of education as an industry” ( Gumpert and Sporn 1999); That changes taking place are “revolutionary rather than evolutionary” (Gumpert and Sporn 1999); They think that the demands of global capitalism hinder the university’s ability to fulfill its cultural mission. What is more, in the changed circumstances universities are called upon to “equip students with the necessary knowledge and skills in preparation for the job market” (Sporn 1999), which is increasingly global in character.

Specific call for the adaptation of the university through an internationalization process come from various sources. Cross border education, internationalization with consequent requirements for structural and cultural adaptations, is pervasive and an inescapable reality present on a worldwide basis (Gumpert and Sporn 1999). As the world entered into the twenty-first century, intensifying interactions of the educational cooperation between universities have become a strategic high priority for numerous universities globally.

## **1.2. Purpose and problems statement**

The reason I chose to investigate the educational cooperation between two universities is that university cooperation is a major trend and a popular way to reallocating limited resources, to which it refers financial funding, talented brains, teaching resources and related information. The internationalization of higher education is one of the key vectors of the modern education development. Its advantages are obvious: pooling resources, especially when they are difficult to access, as now; avoiding duplication and unnecessary copying of research topics, better project identification and growing confidence that they are appropriate to the conditions of collective monitoring (Verbitskaya, 2001). Actually, International cooperation in higher education is not a very new phenomenon. Knight and de Wit (1995) pointed out that there were arguments for ‘the use of a common language, and of a uniform program of study and system of examination’ to facilitate mobility of students and scholars and exchange of ideas in the Middle Ages and up to the end of the 17th century. From that time, universities cooperated across national borders for the reasons of economy, politics, as well as intellect (Tan, 2009).

After entering into new century the distance between nations seems to be shortened and is no longer a big problem to worry about. However we did not see too much interactions between universities from Norway and China, even though both countries have educational cooperation with other countries. More than 390 thousands Chinese students fly across Pacific Ocean and Eurasia continent to study in North America and western Europe every year, but few go into Norway. As many people know, Norway is a fantastic place for learning and studying; Norwegian institutes provide high quality education and academic environment for students from all over the world. While China has the most talented students and urgently needs more academic partners in the scope of all the world. It seems to people including me that the country from the east and the one from Nordic area would joint hands to cooperate with each other and take good use of each other’s advantages and strike to the future. But the cooperation in education is very limited. Students from both countries know little about the other country, the people and the culture, etc. The communication channel not matter from the official or from the folk between the two are not so unobstructed;

Furthermore, the abnormal relations among the two nations influenced the interaction of economy, politics, culture, etc.

Under this fact that there were limited interactions in many fields including education, such as cooperation between universities from China and Norway, I want to explore the mechanisms Norwegian university would like to utilize to cooperate with institutions located in the eastern country--China. To clearly illustrate the details during the process, I would like to take the case of cooperation between University of Nordland (hereafter refers to UiN) and Changchun University of Science and Technology (hereafter refers to CUST). By this case I would try to find out the answers to the following questions: How to start cooperation with Chinese universities? How to sustain it? What factors may affect the cooperation? I will also explore the importance of internationalization strategies and the effect of cultural difference. Besides, I wish to dig out the deep reasons behind the current situations, these reasons contribute to the slow development of interactions of the academic field. In this passage, mutual acknowledgment, political dialogue will become one of the concentration because they are close to the formulation of relationship and strategic alliance. What is more, finally, I would like to give my own opinions and implications.

All in all, the aim of this thesis is to have a comprehensive understanding of educational relationship of the case of UiN and CUST and to figure out possible attributing factors to the relationship. Here lists one big question that I would ask to myself, What is the educational cooperation between UiN and CUST?

To answer this question, I think I should first find answers to the following sub questions, these questions are also the ones I would like to added in my interviews with the head management so as to dissolve my confusions about educational cooperation:

- 1. How did the two universities build cooperation relationship?*
- 2. What is the position of CUST in the Internationalization strategy of UiN?*
- 3. What did they do to sustain the relationships and to expand the fruits of cooperation?*
- 4. What are the factors that may influence education cooperation between UiN and*

*CUST? How do these factors affect the relationship?*

*5. What is the role cultural differences play in promoting or hindering the cooperation?*

### **1.3. The subject of study**

UiN was set up in 1985 with its previous name of Bodø University College and locates in Norway's northern city called Bodø. It is now a public university with government funding since the year of 2011. UiN has approximately 6000 students, 580 are international students, and 550 staff. It has an established position as an excellent education and research institution and puts the student in the center and is a place for learning, studying and experience. UIN is continually investing in its facilities to ensure that everyone can gain the most from their years in education, for both students, teachers and researchers. The research and study program are carefully designed to satisfy the needs of professions, industries and communities in Norway and worldwide, and its main areas of study are aquaculture and marine sciences, social sciences, business and professional studies ([www.uin.no](http://www.uin.no)). Not long before, UiN put forward a document called *"To follow the goal of International Action Plan for the University of Nordland 2012-2016"*, aiming to strengthen and develop quality, attractiveness, reputation, and well-being at the institution and further to increase inner competencies surrounding internationalization and anchor internationalization as a natural part of all its academic subject approaches. UiN has well prepared for the further cooperation with the institutions around the world.

CUST is a typical Chinese university locates in the northeast of China. This university have a history of more than 50 years from 1958, founded by the Chinese Academy of Sciences in 1958. Like other ordinary universities in this country, CUST has four large campuses, advance modern facilities and equipment. It contains a very large amount of students and staffs and diversified professional systems. Nowadays, the university has more than 20000 students among which there are 251 doctoral students, 3255 postgraduate students and 14998 undergraduates. CUST aims to become a multidisciplinary university in science, engineering, arts, economy, management and law. The distinctive characteristics in photoelectric and the integration of optics,

mechanics, electronics, computer and material science are its superiority ([www.lieec.cust.edu.cn](http://www.lieec.cust.edu.cn)). It set up its goals in the long term on educating students with clear sense of morality, pursuit of erudition, eagerness for truth and capabilities of innovation.

In recent years, CUST has gradually become a place that hold diversified cultures and thoughts. Students from more than 20 countries were provided with not only qualified teaching forces and facilities, but also space for creation and innovation, opportunities for sharing and experiencing. CUST does actively involved in building close relationships with domestic and international institutions. More than one thousand students from about 20 countries had come to CUST to pursue their degrees in the last three decades. They were satisfied with the well-designed environment for their stay in CUST and convenient accesses to all resources they need for their self-polishing. At the same time, more than 300 professors or lecturers were sent to foreign universities to pursue their degrees, training and to attend international meetings. This university has much experience and eagerness to cooperate with established institutions who also have similar intentions.

I have three reasons accounting for the choice of the two universities. First of all, the two universities are both typical university in each country. Like other universities, UiN is a new state funded university and has its own advantageous professionals, such as business and aquaculture. Secondly, it has a good reputation in the region and joins in the regional activities positively, especially UiN because it has special interests and experience in Arctic affairs. Both institutions can gain something they want to absorb from the other by cooperating with each other. CUST is a university with more than fifty years of experience in educating the young and it is directly under the jurisdiction of Jilin province government. CUST has much similarity with other Chinese universities, by which I mean it has several decades educating history and gets financial supports from both local and central governments. Most importantly, CUST comes across similar problems or situations others have. Thirdly, I am quite familiar with both universities because I spent four years in CUST there, and I am studying for second year in UiN. I know these institutions and have easier access to necessary information and people here which are important for my thesis. Compared to other universities, the two are my best and unparalleled choice for my thesis.

## **1.4 Structure of the thesis**

In the second chapter, I will apply some basic theories, which is helpful for readers and me to understand what I am trying to convey in my thesis including the problems I am going to study. Internationalization is the first phenomenon I will try to explain, it is the basis for the whole thesis; then I will come to many terms including educational cooperation, strategic alliance, sustainability and cultural difference. The definitions will be given and related theories are going to be brought in. Besides, the theories of stakeholder is another important theory I would like to know in this article. In chapter 3, I will give out the methodologies I applied for problems analysis and searching for answers to questions. This chapter are mainly about qualitative research methods, little quantitative ways of research will be included. At the beginning of Chapter 4, I would like to give a case study about the cooperation between UiN and CUST; then, it is time to present the collected data I collected during the interviews. These findings will be display in a table and gives readers a general picture of educational cooperation of this case. Findings involves many topics, including cooperation, strategic alliance and sustainability, etc. In chapter 5, I will do analysis based on what has been presented in Chapter four, but my focus will be put on influence of cultural difference and stakeholder. In addition, I want explore the potential benefits of educational cooperation for both parties and employment issues. The next chapter is the conclusion chapter. I will give a conclusion for the whole chapter and give my opinion on the university cooperation. Later, implications for schools, for students and for government will be given.

## **2. THEORY**

Theory framework is important for the quality of thesis. In this part, several main terms will be put under the concentration, and theories and models related to these terms will be introduced because they are helpful for explaining the situation. Accordingly, the theory framework will also be applied in the latter chapter especially in chapters of findings and discussion.

### **2.1 Educational cooperation**

*Cooperation* refers to a situation where two or more actors work to achieve a common goal, whereby they work across organizational boundaries (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). Cooperation is commonly explained from an economic point of view, and the desired outcome of cooperation is revenue maximizing (Schuster & Perelberg, 2004). Based on the previous definition on cooperation, McKenzie et al (2008) thought that educational cooperation in the broadest sense occurred whenever two or more parties worked together to achieve an educational objective. In international education cooperation, two or more of the parties working together are from different countries. Cooperative relationships can take form in many ways; joint ventures, strategic alliances, networks and other cooperative alliances (Nilsen and Utnes, 2013). The idea of cooperation is as diverse as the multitude was of cooperative relationships; advanced of a shared vision, economies of scale benefits, shared production costs, relationships aimed to pursue a set of agreed upon goals or to meet common goals(Nilsen and Utnes ,2013).

Cooperation in education is beneficial for all the stakeholders, including the participant universities, research centers, students and the nation etc. According to Huxham and Vangen (2005), Cooperation has at least five advantages, namely access to resources, shared risk, and efficiency, learning and moral imperative. Tingting Yang (2013), a researcher from China, studied the educational cooperation in EU, she found that students from EU countries have much more opportunities to touch different cultures by studying in other countries. By comparing other cultures with their own

ones, they will have a much deeper insight into “*Common European Cultural Heritage*”. She thought that building cooperation relationship had obvious effect on improving the outlook of EU countries. In the programs, EU countries promote educational equality, fight against racism and accelerate the development of social welfare. Yang (2013) also pointed out that EU countries could influence the arrangement and the curriculum through international cooperation in education and finally set the acceptable educational standards for both EU countries and other countries. Though, cooperation relationship has so many merits, scholars also mentioned some very obvious disadvantages. Cooperative relationships is a “resource-consuming activity (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). It takes much time, personnel, and money to start and to sustain a normal relationship. The relationship between universities is not simply exchange of students, but many detailed procedures, policy matters, cultural conflicts etc.

The educational cooperation has changed a lot in the last several decades, the theories on it experienced huge and upwards revisions. In the 1980, the cooperation is mainly one-way service. Educational cooperation means the flow of educational resources (e.g. equipment, expertise, loans, scholarships) from the developed to the developing countries (Phillips 1976: 3); From the evidence available, however, it is correct to say that educational cooperation in the form of assistance from the more to the less developed countries has been an important feature of development policy for the past 30 years (Anne Byrne, 1994). Mackenzie, et al (2008) has studied the regional cooperation a lot. According to his theory, the main mechanisms for regional cooperation can be classified into five categories, namely People Exchange, Transnational Education, Information Exchange, Regulatory Reform, and Development Partnerships. Shown in the following Table.1.

Table.1. Types of International Education Cooperation

1. People Exchange	The oldest form of educational collaboration. It entails a direct personal exchange. It involves international exchanges of students, teachers, researchers and administrators through scholarships, study visits, curriculum projects and research collaborations. This form of cooperation includes the mechanisms and networks which facilitate
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## Educational Cooperation between UiN and CUST

	people exchange as well as the exchanges themselves.
2. Transnational Education	This can involve educational institutions or centers jointly provided and funded by several countries, or the establishment of campuses in other countries, often in association with a local partner. It also includes the supply of distance education across national borders.
3. Information Exchange	Information exchange is a key source of successful collaboration in education, often involving the establishment of information clearing houses. Examples include the OECD's Education at a Glance, first published in 1992 and now the principal source book for comparative indicators of educational participation and performance in OECD countries, and a stimulus to ongoing international data collection efforts: and, in the EAS area the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centers and the ASEAN University Network. Other examples include IT platforms such as the European Union's Information Network on Education in Europe.
4. Regulatory Reform	The enabling, administrative framework that makes other forms of educational exchange possible. Examples include multilateral arrangements for quality assurance recognizing qualifications and allowing credit transfer (e.g., the Bologna Process, and the Lisbon Convention in Europe) and the establishment of cross-country quality assurance mechanisms (e.g., the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education set up in 1999). Regulatory reform can help smooth the flow of students and qualified personnel between countries. Such agreements and frameworks are essential for creating a single market for education and for qualified manpower in a given region
5. Development Partnerships	In a development partnership two or more countries enter into a systematic relationship, often within the framework of a memorandum of Understanding, to enhance education in a less developed country through the cooperation of a more developed partner. This project is mainly concerned with technical, rather than financial, assistance.
Source: McKenzie, et al (2008), page 28. The table is copied in full.	

*Alliance* refers to interrelation and connection based on certain strategic targets. As for its connotation, alliance should include both competition and cooperation among enterprises. It covers all business activities on the value chain in strategic management (Yuan, 2006). As to the definition of strategic alliance, different researchers have different perception. According to the definition provided by Yuan(2006), strategic alliance refers to a phenomenon that two or more enterprises form an enterprise union or network through contracts or stock right participation based on mutual trust and benefit as well as complementation with independent management system and operation right in order to achieve common strategic targets or competitive advantages.

The management literature on strategic alliances pointed out that they are formed for a variety of reasons (Gulati & Singh, 1998) and noted that the rationales for holding them together might shift over time (Spekman, Forbes, Isabella, & MacAvoy, 1998). Alliance opened doors to markets by pooling financial and human resources, thereby producing new combinations of products, services, and expertise (Bailey & McNally Koney, 2000; Gulati & Singh, 1998; Hagadoorn, 1993; Oliver, 1990). Strategic alliance and cooperation are of particular importance to establish competitive advantages and maintain technical progress. By introducing foreign educational institutions' advanced ideas, attracting excellent foreign teachers to participate in teaching, absorbing foreign educational resources, utilizing advanced teaching methods such as case teaching, class discussion, debate and demonstrative teaching, and sending students abroad, students will get in touch with different cultures and broaden their horizon about the world. At the same time, they learn about the interactive and heuristic teaching methods adopted by foreign educational institutions and equip themselves with knowledges and capabilities (Xie & Hou & Li, 2011).

The creation of strategic partnerships between colleges and universities is a promising means for developing new capacities (Eckel & Hartley, 2008). Colleges and universities have a long history of collaborating (Martin& Samels, 2002; Whealler Johnson & Noftsinger, 2004) through consortia and exchange agreements, shared resources, coordinated curricula, athletic conferences, and joint research. The

importance of inter-university cooperation lies not just in the free movement of staff and students, but in the creation and development of a wide range of *strategic alliances* that, among other options, facilitate the exploitation of scarce capital resources among partner institutions; . . . provide essential ways of introducing new voices into the thinking of the university, of initiating new conversations that cross the traditional faculty or administrative boundaries, of bringing new perspectives to bear . . . and confer competitive advantage on the partners (Layton , 1997). Strategic alliance in Education is the high level of educational cooperation, it involves not only exchange of students and teaching staff and research cooperation, but also comprehensive participation from both parties.

## **2.2 Internationalization and Educational Cooperation**

The first term I want to review is the internationalization, but here in this thesis is the internationalization process of higher education. In the past two decades, the term *internationalization* has become one of the most frequently used words in many kinds of occasions. Here I would like point out that internationalization is different from the term *globalization*. Basically globalization means cross cultural standardization that arises with communication technologies and expended around the globe. To put it simply, globalization is the process that the world gradually goes towards an organic whole. While internationalization means the process that countries open doors for different resources, these resources can be labor, capital and even services including education. Globalization, in its broadest form, describes social processes that transcend national borders. The globalization influences high educational institutions (HEIs) by market competition and altering the universities' faces, therefore the globalization forces HEIs to become international institutions (Tekalan, 2013). Internationalization of HEIs - one of the results of the globalization- aims to satisfy the gigantic world widely demands that cannot be met by a single or local institutions. The internationalization is one of the stage of globalization but we should not see them separately. The main tools for the process are foreign student admissions, recruitment of international faculties, student exchanges, faculty exchanges, study abroad programs, joint researches, joint degree programs and double degree programs (Tekalan, 2013). By Dr. Şerif Ali Tekalan's theory, the trend of globalization is a very

important reason for the internationalization of university.

Internationalization of universities is far from a clearly defined and understood concept. Mestenhauser (1998) maintained that there was an urgent need to study international education on the highest level of sophistication as a multidimensional, multiplex, interdisciplinary, intercultural research, and policy-driven system of global scope at all levels of education. Ellingboe's (1998) research findings on the internationalization of the curriculum reflected the "*multidimensional*", "*multiplex*", "*global scope*" and "*policy-driven system*" aspects of Mestenhauser's definition of internationalization of the university. Accordingly, Ellingboe (1998) defined internationalization (of universities) "*..... as the process of integrating an international perspective into a college or university system*". Marvin (2003) thought that, internationalization, viewed as an organizational adaptation, requires its articulation by the leadership while simultaneously institutionalizing a strategic planning process that is representative and participative in that it recognizes and utilizes the power of the culture within which it occurs. He also pointed out that both the collegial process and executive authority are acknowledged as necessary to position the university to bring about substantive, integrated, university-wide internationalization in response to pervasive and rapidly changing global environmental demands.

The activities of university to take part in across border cooperation with other institutions are the process of going internationalized. On the road to cooperation, university is not only be able to have much more access to resources, but also access to opportunities and positons, opportunities to develop with others and positions for giving perspectives and playing a role in important affair worldwide. The word internationalization in education and the educational cooperation are closely linked.

## **2.3 Stakeholders and Educational Cooperation**

### **2.3.1 Stakeholder**

*Stakeholder* is defined as "any group or individual who is affected by or can affect the

achievement of an organization's objectives" (Freeman, 1984). Stakeholder theory can be seen most in Economics books and journals. The stakeholders in a corporation are the individuals and constituencies that contribute, either voluntarily or involuntarily, to its wealth-creating capacity and activities, and that are therefore its potential beneficiaries and/or risk bearers (Post, Preston & Sachsm, 2002). Usually, stakeholders can be classified into three categories: *Internal stakeholders*, *external stakeholders* and *interface stakeholders*. Based on traditional management, staff employees and middle managers are examples of *internal stakeholders*. The local community, federal government, suppliers, competitors and customers are included in *external stakeholders*. A corporation's board of directors and its auditors typify *interface stakeholders* (Savage, Nix, whitehead & Blair, 1991). Another popular stakeholder classification is to distinguish the *primary stakeholders* from *secondary stakeholders*. *Primary stakeholders* are those who have formal, official, or contractual relationships and have a direct and necessary economic impact upon the organization. *Secondary stakeholders* are defined as those who influence or affect, or are influenced or affected by, the corporation, but they are not engaged in transaction with the corporation and are not essential for its survival (Clarkson, 1995).

Stakeholder theory focuses on the effect of related individuals or group on the research subjects. This kind of effect can be direct or indirect. Take company for example. Several decades ago, economists thought shareholders were the main stakeholders and ignored other parties. In recent decades, in order to increase the value of stakeholder theory, economists and managers increased the scope of stakeholder according to their indirect function. The new stakeholders are not only shareholders, but employees, customers, suppliers, financiers, communities, political groups, governmental bodies, trade associations, trade unions and even competitors. By analyzing stakeholders, researcher may have a deep understanding of the decision-making environments and the dominated factors.

In fields such as law, management, human resource, stakeholder theory succeeded in challenging the usual analysis frameworks by suggesting to put stakeholders' needs at the beginning of any action (Harrison, Wicks, Parmar & Colle, 2010). The transferability of stakeholder theory makes it much more popular and useful, especially when analyzing the decision environment. I would use this theory in

formulation of educational cooperation and to know how stakeholders affect the relationship and how the stakeholders are affected. The importance of stakeholder analysis in educational cooperation is based on the practice of inter-university cooperation and the growing interests in building strategic alliance across borders over two decades has mainly been due to the pressures from various stakeholders, especially government regulators, community activists, non-governmental organizations (NGO) and global competition in education and human resources (Hassini, Surti and Searcy, 2012).

### **2.3.2 Stakeholders and Educational Cooperation**

Stakeholders of education cooperation have a very broad basis which also can be divided into three groups generally. Internal stakeholders for educational cooperation is a very large group which includes students, staffs and organizations that are within the institutions and can have effects on the cooperation. Their influences on the cooperation are diversified but huge. Students' impressions on the universities and their satisfaction towards the program will play a critical role in the development of the relationship between universities. University itself is also the internal stakeholder anyway because it is the most powerful stakeholders for the cooperation. The head management of the school determine the length and breadth of the educational cooperation. On the other hand, universities are also one of the direct beneficiaries from the cooperation. The success of international strategies will help universities or institutions increase their both global and domestic fames and social positions. It will also give universities competitive advantages over others, for example, the universities who are more successful in international strategies are much easier to get funds, or financial supports from bank and from government.

Interface stakeholders are those existing between internal and external stakeholders, and consist of the outside environment of inter-university cooperation. Governments provide the outermost boundary for the educational cooperation, universities must obey rules and comply regulations and policies. When two nations have good relations, the cooperation develop fast and smoothly, but when there are conflicts, the relations will also be affected, even terminated. Diplomatic environment is the general

condition for the cooperation and almost dominates the results of international strategies. Here in this thesis, I will inevitably introduce the diplomatic relationship between Norway and China and further to explore how it works in the process. For the educational cooperation, the financing departments is critical because it is soil for the healthy development of educational cooperation. Without steady and enough capital inflow, the stage for cooperation will collapse and all work have to be stopped. There are also other supporting organizations operating around the educational cooperation, they have more or less semi-official background and work as one of the operators of policies and regulations.

The external stakeholder of educational cooperation, they are what their names suggest, are individuals or groups outside the program and their influences cannot be ignored. This group of stakeholders includes civil society organizations, local community, the public. With more and more exchange of students and professors, the local community are becoming increasingly important for cooperation and provide convenience for international newcomers. Schools expect international students to have close contact with local community, it is much better if they can live with the local family. The local people act as the disseminators of culture and can teach overseas students about the local history, language and traditions. Those civil society organizations create opportunities and stages for foreign students to involve in the local life and work. Local firms give these students internship and working opportunities to make money and enrich their experience. Students have more chances to know about business cultures and customs; the cities will have more connections with there is closed cooperation between universities.

### **2.3.3 Examples of Stakeholders**

This thesis wants to explore maintenance of cooperation in education between universities. The continuity of a cooperation relationship firstly requires a steady stream of funds, a group of professional working team and effective communication channels. The three components are the main ‘facilities’ to sustain the international cooperation relationship in education. As the carriers of these components, the departments and bodies are necessary to be stated.

The first stakeholder the financial supporting department. It belongs to central government and executes the education related decisions of government. Since the educational cooperation is a resource-consuming activities, strong financial support is the first and biggest problem to be solved. The tuition fee and living cost are a large amount of expenditure for students, especially in Norway. There are also a couple of other types of costs used for the normal receptions, traveling and some other procedures. To run the program smoothly, institution must find the source of money somehow. Usually, the governments, both local and central, are the main supporters for this kind of cooperation relationship and provide the majority of the costs. Besides, the enterprises and some organizations are also the active followers.

The second is the international office. As the executive departments, International office is of great importance in enforcing international strategies, implementing agreements and maintaining educational cooperation relations, etc. The work of professional personnel in the international office challenging. Just as discussed above, the cross border education cooperation involve very complex and detailed process, because the people working in the international department has to deal with the local policies and knowledge, cultural differences and history etc., they should have a very broadened views and other abilities. It is said that organizing a very efficient working team is much challenging than matters of money. This work requires the working employees to be very much international and social, meanwhile, the people in the international office should have professional skills including languages skills, multitasking skill, management knowledge, and social ability etc. That is why the working team of sustaining the cooperation is so important.

The head management is another example of stakeholders that has huge influence on educational cooperation. The members of the board possess absolute rights to decides the fate of the cooperation, the rector is the representative who lead the university and makes the decisions. It seems me that the rector having unique and strategic long-term vision is so important for the development of institutions. Besides, the coordinations between different departments within universities is indispensable, which has much to do with the management styles of the heads in each departments.



Local community is a very crucial part of international students' life. The people, infrastructures and the commercial circle make up students' scope of extracurricular activities. Whether having a comfortable living and experiencing environment or atmosphere has much to do with the continuity of the educational cooperation. The local community influence the students by telling histories about the city, introducing distinctive culture and showing the characters of local people. This is the amazing points that attract international students from the other part of the world.

In all, stakeholders is critical for educational cooperation and different type of stakeholders has diversifying effects on the operation of cooperation between institutions. Still, this part also focused on four examples of stakeholders, they belonged to internal, external and interface stakeholders. These stakeholders work in different ways, promoting or blocking the educational cooperation between institutions.

## **2.4 Cultural Difference and Educational Cooperation**

### **2.4.1 Definition of Culture**

Culture originally means the cultivation of the soul or mind based on the Ancient Roman orator Cicero's definition (45 BC). The original term *culture* absorbed many of its later modern meanings in the writings of the subsequent thinkers. According to Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952):

*“Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action.”*

However, culture is actually everything around people, no matter whether we can see it or not. It is principle that guides you to behave, to think and to believe. Culture can

not only be invisible, but sometimes visible. The traditions, the languages, the histories are invisible but people inherit them in their inner world; while the people around you, the natural environment you are living in and the stuffs you used in your daily life affect you characteristics and personalities. In all, culture is closely linked to our lives.

## **2.4.2 Theory of cultural difference**

There are many other definitions of cultures nowadays, but seldom can we find a tool to compare the difference of culture scientifically. However, in this thesis I would like to use the most famous definition of culture given by professor Geert Hofstede, and to search for difference in this way. According to his definition, culture is “*the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another*”. Culture, after development for so many years, its strategic position has become much more outstanding, and thus Hofstede’s definition has been widely used in the researches of social sciences. Hofstede divided culture into six dimensions, four of which are the most relevant theory for this research, they are namely power distance (PD), Individualism & Collectivism (IDV), Masculinity & Femininity (MAS) and Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI). These dimensions are applied to curve a framework of the influence of culture on educational cooperation.

- *Power distance*: “The extent to which less powerful members within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (Peng, 2009). Power distance is the degree to which the members of organizations and institutions (like the family) in lower position accept that power is distributed unequally and have limited access to the higher management or top of the hierarchy. Cultures endorsed low power distance expect and enjoy the power distribution, people inside are much happier and efficiency.
- *Individualism vs Collectivism*: “It refers to the perspective that the identity of an individual is fundamentally his or her own, whereas collectivism refers to the idea that the identity of an individual is primarily based on the identity of his or her collective group”(Peng, 2009). In individualistic culture, the pressures are put on

personal individual rights and achievements. People are expected to stand up for their immediate family and themselves. In contrast, while in collectivist culture, people act as the members of lifelong and great group. People live in a large family, which are regarded as the protection exchanging unquestioning loyalty.

- *Masculinity vs Femininity*: “The distribution of emotional roles between the genders”. The value of cultures with strong masculinity are competitiveness, assertiveness, materialism, ambition and power, whereas in feminine cultures, people place more value on relations and life quality. In masculine culture, the differences of roles between genders are more dramatic and less fluid than in feminine cultures where men and women have the same values emphasizing modesty and caring.
- *Uncertainty Avoidance*: “a society’s tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity”. It reflects the extent to which members of a society attempt to cope with anxiety by minimizing uncertainty. People in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance tend to be more emotional. They try to minimize the occurrence of unknown and unusual circumstances and to proceed with careful changes step by step planning and by implementing rules, laws and regulations. In contrast, low uncertainty avoidance cultures accept and feel comfortable in unstructured situations or changeable environments and try to have as few rules as possible. People in these cultures tend to be more pragmatic, they are more tolerant of change.

### **2.4.3 Culture difference and Educational Cooperation**

Culture exists in every conner of the world, difference of culture appears when people from different background get together, ways of talking and thinking, values, religions are all different. Cultural shock is the most common situation international students met when they start a new life in strange studying environment. As to how these cultural difference influence educational cooperation, we had better turn our eyes back to Hofstede’s *Culture dimension theory* (The four dimensions mentioned above).

PD, to some extent, determines the basis of culture within organizations. Every

organization has a hierarchy, In culture or organization with high power distance, the organizational hierarchy is obvious. There is a connection between managers and their subordinates. Differing from high power distance organizations, low power distance organizations usually have a flat organizational structure (Wu, 2006). Flat hierarchy structure within organization means less management layers, more comfortable working atmosphere and unobstructed communication channel. Strict and deep hierarchy is on another end, more control, less communication between different layers and so on. It is also true for schools. When shifting from flat hierarchical culture to strict one, people will feel depressed and uncomfortable, but they will be good when people jump from strict hierarchical culture to flat one. For students, professors and researchers, this kind of situations happens a lot to them if they join the international exchange program.

People have quite different styles of living and solving problems. Individualists believe in independence and personal capacities. The individualists admire heroes and have much affection towards heroism. While collectivism is another situation where the power of group are highly stressed and valued. Collectivists, however, strongly insist that the energy released by group is much more than simple sum of power given out by individuals. People with high individualistic values tend to care about self-actualization and career progress in the organization, whereas people with low individualistic values tend to value organizational benefits more than their own interests (Wu, 2006). This difference of dealing with problems of head management, international office and students will cause many disagreements and controversies. Thus it is necessary to explore the mechanism of difference in IDV in affecting educational cooperation.

Masculinity and Femininity are two types of social ideologies, the terms are used to identify the roles of different genders in an organization. The equality between men and women is one of the most focused topics worldwide. Hofstede (1984) thought that, in high MAS (or low femininity) culture, a few women can get better-paying jobs and enjoyable treatment, in low MAS (or high femininity) culture, women are able to receive equitable social status and recognition. People feel very hard to adapt to masculinity or femininity culture when they originally do not belong to that one, especially for the case in this thesis because Norway is a very typical Femininity

society while China has typical Masculinity culture. Participants involving in international cooperation in education is sensitive to this dimension and I think I need to have a look at this.

Uncertainty avoidance refers to the tolerance of the uncertainty of future and resistance towards innovations. Risks of future bring potential losses as well as potential high payments. To gain extra profits, people have to tolerant possible losses. In different culture, people's altitude towards uncertainty are varying, some may like the challenges and the excitement from exploring the unknown, but some others are afraid of being uncertain because the unsure situations make them anxious and nervous. The educational cooperation across borders is filled with unknown and unpredictable incidents, the difference of uncertainty avoidance index in two parties will increase the possibility of controversy and disagreement. Here in this thesis I will have a look at it.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

Methodology is the combination of techniques used to inquire into a specific situation. Method can be thought as individual techniques for data collection, analysis, etc. Hellevik (Hellevik, 1988) stated that methodology gave readers ideas of how to conduct scientific research and what tools to use in collecting empirical data as well as the validity and reliability of results. This chapter aims to explain the methodological issue that will be applied to govern the process of data collection and analysis. Meanwhile, the reasons for choosing and using those methods will be explained. Therefore, some issues including data collection, validity and reliability keeping will also be discussed. Basically, this study used both qualitative and quantitative approaches, but focused more on qualitative method; the data in this study are collected from previous established researches, but most are from interviews with the management who are in charging of international cooperation and professor of UiN, shown as following:

- *Pål Pedersen*: Rector of UiN, he has special interests in educational cooperation and is the main force promoting cooperation with CUST.
- *Grete Ingemann Knudsen*: Director of International Cooperation, adviser. She actively involved in international affair of UiN.
- *Ellen Abalgård*: Head of office, Bodø Graduate school of Business
- *Monica Brobakk*: The head of international office, her daily work is to deal with many partner universities and international students.
- *Tor Korneliussen*: Professor in Faculty of Business and has much interests in different cultures and international cooperation in education.

### **3.2 The design**

In this research I had chosen a qualitative exploratory research design. At the beginning of my research, I would like to spare some spaces for case study on the cooperation between UiN and CUST from the beginning till today. By this, I hope readers may have a clear picture about the cooperation so as not to feel confused in the following chapters. So the case study is the first method I applied to conduct my research. Then, I took semi-structured interviews with many respondents from UIN and few participants from CUST. At the end of this chapter, I would give my justification for choosing the method.

Research design can be classified into three categories, including exploratory, descriptive and causal. “A research design provides the basic directions or recipe for carrying out the project” (Hair et al, 2003). As we can see from the name, an exploratory research design is used to give the readers a deeper insight into the problems. The descriptive research design mainly focuses on characteristics of certain group of subjects. The last research design is called causal research design and used to describe cause and effect.

A case study can also be classified into three categories: descriptive, exploratory or explanatory analysis. It could be focus on a person, group or event. An explanatory case study is used to explore causation in order to find underlying principles. Case studies may be prospective in which criteria are established and cases fitting the criteria are included as they become available, or retrospective in which criteria are established for selecting cases from historical records for inclusion in the study (Wikipedia-Case study). The case here is an exploratory and descriptive story which would be presented in chronological order marked with important events. The case of educational cooperation between UiN and CUST in many aspects. The aim is to give readers a basic understanding of the educational cooperation and pave the way for the following analysis.

This thesis will mainly use the exploratory research design by focusing on different

interview techniques and some plots will be given in a descriptive way. A semi-structured interview is open, allowing new ideas to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says (Wikipedia--semi structured interview). The interviewer follows certain guidelines and trajectories within the interviews which may stray from the guide when it seems appropriate. Most of the questions are created during the interview, both the interviewer and the person being interviewed have the flexibility to go into details when needed.

There are two main approaches needed to be mentioned, which are mostly used to conduct research. They are namely quantitative research and qualitative research. Qualitative method is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problems, based on building a complex, holistic picture, forms with words, reporting detailed views of informants and conducted in a natural setting(Creswell, 1994). Quantitative approach requires standardized measurements so that the varying perspectives and experiences of people can be fitted into a limited number of predetermined response categories to which numbers are assigned (Patton, 2002).

The two main research approaches contain a lot of differences. Quantitative approach entails a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, in which the accent is placed on the testing of theories. It has incorporated the practices and norms of the natural scientific model and of positivism in particular and embodies a view of social reality as external, objective reality. By contrast, qualitative approach emphasizes an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, in which the emphasis is placed on the generation of theories. In qualitative research, researchers' role is to interact with those being studied in their natural settings in order to seek an understanding of how people make sense of their lives, experiences, and their structure of the world. They need to rely on voices and interpretations of the participants (Creswell, 1994), which means it is almost impossible to remain at an objective distance from participants. On the contrary, the qualitative researchers try to minimize the distance between participants. For this reason, the qualitative investigator admits his/her values and bias, as well as the value of information gathered from the field (Fengshu, 2002).



### 3.3 Data collection

Researchers have many ways to collect data in an exploratory research. Among these ways, writing letters, interviewing and reviewing the previous researches are mostly used in the data collecting process. The data collected are often qualitative. I think it is the very suitable method to apply when to explore the problem formulation, to learn the respondents' understanding and to use the concepts, furthermore, to know the cultural aspects during the decision-making process.

#### 3.3.1 Interview guides

Table.2 : Interview Guides

Interview Guides	Content
Step one	Present the purpose of this thesis
Step two	Tell him/ her about the roles respondent plays and ask for permission for recording the conversation.
Step three	1. What is your experience with cooperating with CUST?
	2. Why do you choose CUST as your partner of institutional cooperation in China?
	3. What is the CUST position in the internationalization process of UIN?
	4. What factors may influence the educational cooperation relationship?
	5. What would the two institutions do to sustain the institutional cooperation relations?
	6. How does cultural difference work in the process of educational cooperation?
Ways of asking questions	a: Could you please tell me about.....
	b: Do you mind if I ask.....
	c: How do you think of.....
	d: What do you mean by saying “.....”?
	f: Do you think it's possible to.....or not?
Step four	1. End the interview and make a short comments on the interview.
	2. Express gratitude to respondents.
	3. Ask for permission to use their perspectives.

Interview Guide is applied to keep the interview going smoothly and to make sure that

I can obtain necessary information. The Guide includes four steps and many small sub procedures. Step one aims to state the purpose of the research, why do I have this interview? It helps respondents focus on certain knowledge, experience and perspectives so that they will not be confused by my questions. Also, I will ask for permission to record the conversation, which may be good for material arrangement in the later work. Step two, I want my respondents know his/her roles in my research, since they have different jobs in the educational cooperation program, they, therefore, have asymmetric information, so I should have my emphasis and they also have theirs. That is why I often heard phrase like “I do not really know this question, but I think.....”. The third step is the most important part, because I will ask many questions and search for important information or perspectives from this step. There are difference in the way of asking questions when interviewing different people, but the main ideas are almost the same as in the table, that is the value why I should list this Guide. I also list some way of asking question because the changing ways may prevent respondent feeling boring and tired, so that their ideas will be fresh. After finishing the first three steps. I will end the talk by giving a short comment of the interviews and show my gratitude to them. In all, interview guide gives me directions during the interview and helps me succeed in gaining fruitful results.

### **3.3.2 Question setting**

It took a long time to figure out the theme of this research and set the questions which could stick to the problems I want to study in this thesis. As said in the first chapter, I want to know thoroughly about the educational cooperation between UiN and CUST, thus I have divide this big topic into small pieces. There are in total four dimensions, namely internationalization, educational cooperation, stakeholders and cultural difference. I had a lot of problems yet to know before I start the interview, I do not know the international strategies of the universities, what is exactly the cooperation about? who are the stakeholders of the program? and how stakeholders work in affecting the cooperation in education? And what is the role of cultural difference in the collaboration? Based on these confusions, I started to think about the questions which would be asked in the interviews.

The first question is prepared to ask for respondents' experience with CUST, the aim to make them feel comfortable to go into the talk. Since all the respondents had ever been CUST and talked with staffs in CUST, this question is able to recall their memory about their experience of contacting directly with CUST, it also builds a bridge between respondents and me. Question two may give me some insight into the information about how the relation start and how they choose international partners. I do really want to know why they choose CUST. This question enables me to find some regularities which may be copied in next case. I want to find some connections between internationalization strategy and educational cooperation by looking at this case. Thus I hope to know the CUST strategic position in the internationalization process of UiN, that is the purpose of the third question.

The fourth question is designed to explore the influencing factors that might affect the educational cooperation. I personally think this question is very important because it has large storage of information and discuss a lot of factors. The answers will be quite diversifying and unique. Different respondents have their own perspectives towards the same event. Then it comes to the fifth question, it is about the exact actions or measures universities may take to sustain the relationship. I hope the head of International office can give me more practical material or information on this aspect, thus I will put my emphasis on international office when coming to this question. The last question is about the role of cultural difference. Actually, the cultural difference should be addressed in the question four, however, I see its importance is much more than other factors. So I want to bring this element aside and ask them in great details.

### **3.3.3 Process of Interview**

The questions asked during the interviews are not with fixed format. To take good use of the chance interviewing the head management in charge of international cooperation affairs of university, I well prepared for the semi-structured interview and asked questions when I think it is necessary to ask, thus fixed format questions are not suitable here. The respondents may diverse their answers according to their individual understanding and I think of the follow-up question according to the former answers and the need of information for my research. Each of the question has an open end

and the respondents feel free to express their own ideas. Before we started the interview, I asked for permission to record our conversation, because the recorded voices is able to remind me of important information and significant to do analysis. The interviews were conducted by myself so as to make sure that I can obtain necessary information. The interviews were conducted at their offices and each last less than half an hour.

In order to better understand the institutional cooperation between two universities, I chose to have talk with my friends who are also Quota students from CUST. This form of data collection is quite casual and happy. We do not have to go through process like ask-answer style, what we actually did was discussing something after dinner, commenting the interesting story relating to the cooperation. So it took a long time but the effect is good. Their points of views are quite unique but useful and real. Besides, I also wrote a letter to the international office of CUST and asked them some basic questions and evaluation on the cooperation relationship, unfortunately, I still did not get the reply.

### **3.4 Validity and Reliability**

Validity is very important in conducting effective research because it determines the value of this research. In a qualitative research, the subjectivity of respondents usually lowers validity to some degree because of the limitation of scope of people's knowledge. However, the validity of research can be addressed with the increase of depth of data collected, the subjects interviewed and their connection with the research themes and the objectivity of the researcher (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007, p.133). In this research, I succeed in interviewing the management members of UiN and they are very much know this cooperation.

A good research should have a very good quality of reliability. Reliability refers to the extent to which the data collected reflect the "truth". The researcher will influence the reliability strongly because the objectivity is very hard to control during all the process of research. Researchers develop their own ideas in the process of doing research, with time pass, they would unavoidably put their own ideas or opinions into the research, which will destroy the reliability of the thesis. So, having known this, I

attempt not to put too much my personal ideas into the interview and make sure the data are all from the respondents. For example, I seldom express my approval or disapproval towards respondents' answer, and I will also try not to interrupt them or use too much facial expression.

### **3.5 Data analysis**

There are many different approaches of qualitative data analysis used by researchers. Russell (2011) listed at least five techniques shared by most approaches to the qualitative data analysis:

- 1. Documentation of the data and the process of data collection*
- 2. Organization/categorization of the data into concepts*
- 3. Connection of the data to show how one concept may influence another*
- 4. Corroboration/legitimization, by evaluating alternative explanations, disconfirming evidence, and searching for negative cases*
- 5. Representing the account (reporting the findings) the method used here is data display; systematization and categorization.*

In the process, I would like to use the following three techniques to finish data analysis, they are namely documentation, categorization and displaying data. The data for the qualitative study are notes and records of the interviews, from which the original comments, observations, and feelings are reorganized and constructed. The first work of data analysis in my study is documentation. I organized the notes taken during the talks with my respondents and wrote down the important information from the types immediately after the interviews. This work is very critical in the process of analysis because reconstructing the notes and writings will save a large amount of time and energy to present findings. My second technique of analysis is to categorize the findings into different groups according to the theoretical concepts. Only in this way can I compare the recorded materials with theory framework. In my analysis, I also applied the methods of data display. I would try my best to make the data easy to read and to understand. Matrix is a very useful and easy way to display data, in this thesis I would take good use of it and give reader a full insight into what I had from the respondents.

### **3.6 Justification of choice of method**

The methodology used in this thesis is based on the need of the development of research. As the title of the thesis shows, this article is mainly focus on the exact case of UiN and CUST, the information collected from different directions are all about the two universities and this program. On one hand, it is natural to obtain extensive data from few units because of time limitation, thus I can well manage and control over the process. On the other hand, in order not to have too few responses in the study and ultimately not to have enough data at the end of the research, I used the semi-structured interview with open end and focus group. Since the analysis of the data was highly time-consuming, focus group is a very efficient way to obtain all the possible knowledge of the educational cooperation. Exploratory design was applied to explore the underlying factors. Use of semi-structured interviews and focus group were popular to collect data due to the diversity of perceptions and interpretation of respondents. The study has an exploratory nature, not a hypothetic-deductive characteristics. So that is the essential reason why I choose qualitative methodology.

In my study, I also brought in secondary sources from websites, journals and books etc. Since different researchers may have different views from different angles when analyzing the same data, unreliable observations happens, which could lead to unreliable conclusions. Thus the absorbed conclusions never mean purely true in other occasions, the quotation of these conclusions in my thesis is just because I personally agreed to these ideas or perspectives. As far as I know, the primary data sources is very time-consuming but valuable with much power to gain a deeper understanding of the research. In my research, I was trying to find out as much as first-hand materials and data, to add my own interpretation and ideas.

## **4. FINDINGS**

*This chapter presents the findings which is draw from my qualitative research. These findings have been well systematized, categorized and summarized. I will try to form a basis for my further development of our understanding by giving these findings. The problems from the practices will be discussed in the next chapter.*

### **4.1 Introduction of the case**

It sounds almost unbelievable that such an important educational cooperation program in this case started by chance, but Pål Pedersen told me that the saying was true. The story started with a Chinese boy and Chinese girl who came to Norway in 1990s, they had been around the country for a while. Then, they came to Bodø and chose UiN (at that time, its name was Bodø university College) as their destination of their study. They studied most programs in the Business School in UiN and went back to China when they finished their degrees and worked in a city located in northern part of China. When the world entered into 21st centry, the first official visit to China was in 2002 and a delegation from UiN went to Beijing, China, and to search for partners of educational cooperation. Former Rector Frode Mellevik, who was acquainted with the boy and the girl, asked them if they could be any help since UiN planned to develop institutional cooperation. The boy he knew some people in Beijing Institution of Technology (BIT) in Beijing and also he has some acquaintance from Changchun University of Science and Technology in the city of Changchun, because he had been a student there before. Coincidentally, there was meetings (in Beijing) with representatives from CUST, so they have talks with each other in Beijing.

After the first trip to China, UiN had a visit from BIT and CUST here in Bodø. In 2003, Pål Pedersen became the rector of UiN, he went to CUST in 2004 and started to discuss how to do with one of these cooperation. In 2005, UiN started sending bachelor students from UiN to China , some went BIT and some students went to CUST. Meanwhile, UiN started to have master students from CUST and their stay have two years. In 2008, UiN and CUST signed agreement and the relationship

became quite normalized. They had mutual visits in that year. The first stage of the cooperation was limited within the Faculty of Business school. From the year of 2011, the two universities started discussing enlarge the cooperation and the Faculty of Social Science won the chance to cooperate. At the Autumn of 2012, CUST started sending master student from Faculty of Social Science to UiN. In the same year, an associate professor from CUST came to UiN and exchange for one year. This marked a new step for institutional cooperation between UiN and CUST, because two universities only sent students to each other before the year of 2012, we did not see any cooperation among professors or lectures. As shown in Table.3:

Table.3: Important visits from two universities

Year	Events
2002	First delegation from UiN ( then it was called Bodø University College till 2011) met with Representatives from CUST
2003	CUST visited Bodø/UiN
2004	A delegation from UiN visited CUST
2005	CUST visited Bodø/UiN
2007	UiN visited CUST
2008	They visited each other in “both ways”
2009	UiN visited CUST
2010	CUST visited Bodø
2014	Bodø UiN visited CUST

## 4.2 Presentation of findings

How to start the institutional cooperation relationship? This question is the starting point of this research. There are many other aspects come from the interviews as well. I will start with the most easily categorized data-the story of the cooperation. Thus, here I list the findings/topics matrix from the interview, there are 6 main questions being asked to the three respondents who are in charge of the cooperation or know the cooperation most with possible preliminary explanations and notable quota from the interviews if applicable. The listed explanations will be further addressed in the next chapter. To better understand this matrix, I will enclose the important part of each interview in the appendix, it is quite useful. After the summary, the findings in form



themes will be presented.

Table. 4 Findings and possible explanation

Questions	Findings	Possible Explanations	Quotations
1. <i>What is your experience with cooperating with CUST?</i>	<p>--The respondents fit the study with their experience of dealing with CUST.</p> <p>-- The perspectives mainly drive from the UIN sides.</p> <p>--All respondents have been to CUST and involved in the cooperation building process.</p>	<p>--The involvement in the cooperation relations gives critical perspectives.</p> <p>--It is much easier to have access to the key information about the cooperation.</p> <p>--They have special interests in cooperating with China and CUST.</p>	N/A
2. <i>Why do you choose CUST as your partner of institutional cooperation in China?</i>	<p>--Important alumni help to set a bridge between UIN and CUST.</p> <p>--The rankings and the location makes the two universities become partner</p> <p>--both universities think highly of the cooperation relationship</p>	<p>--Alumni in the local has the most knowledge about the universities and the social relations.</p> <p>--Similarity in different aspects attract different institutions join hand to cooperate.</p> <p>--The willingness to become internationalized is the motivation.</p>	<p>“The boy ..... because he has been a student there before. So therefore these two institutions became the first ones”,</p> <p>“CUST is northern part of China, They are quite similar to the situation, that means something”</p> <p>“they are willing to do their best to integrate them into all the international students and also in teaching”</p>
3. <i>What is the CUST</i>	--Strategic partner in	--Norwegian	“China has a research

<p><i>position in the internationalization process of UIN?</i></p>	<p>China and a channel to have talk with China.</p> <p>--Active participant and permanent observer in the Arctic affairs.</p> <p>--Alternatives for the internationalization strategy</p> <p>--Receiver of high North thinking.</p>	<p>universities need China and Chinese universities.</p> <p>--China is very interested in Arctic affairs while UIN is one of the centers for research of the Arctic in high north.</p> <p>--UIN wants to broaden its cooperation, it puts too much emphasis on Russia.</p> <p>--The problems happened in the world and the Arctic area motivate Norway to talk with other big economies</p>	<p>station in Svalbard and become the permanent observers of Arctic Council. China is a very interesting partner in doing research in the High North”</p> <p>“But we see, it might be a weakness if we are using all of our resources in Russia or in the Russian cooperation”</p> <p>“the high north thinking questions, climate change, resources in the high north, the biological and ecological questions, what is happening in high north, these questions which i would like to bring into the table discuss this with our partners”</p>
<p><i>4. What factors may influence the educational cooperation relationship?</i></p>	<p>--The political relationship between Norway and China may help or block the exchange or cooperation</p> <p>--The language may frustrate the students</p>	<p>--Chinese government hate the interference in internal affairs from other countries and often fight back with strong political and economic punishment.</p>	<p>“I think the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010, it was not good for the relationship between Norway and China that time”</p> <p>“Coming to China, it’s exotic, it’s different”</p>

	<p>and stop the communication between people.</p> <p>--Cultural difference affect the people and the institutions in many ways.</p>	<p>--Language barrier is always a big problem.</p> <p>--Culture is just like double-edged sword, very hard to adapt to it and make people extremely excited when they integrate into it.</p>	<p>“I think it’s positive, because we learn a lot.”</p>
<p>5. <i>What would the two institutions do to sustain the institutional cooperation relations?</i></p>	<p>--The rectors wrote emails to exchange ideas or opinions.</p> <p>--Mutual visits from both institutions.</p> <p>--International week or days invite Norwegian to advertise CUST.</p> <p>--Professional webpage and advisers give students better insight into CUST.</p>	<p>--The communication channel should be diversified.</p> <p>--The students are the main forces for the cooperation, universities has responsibility to make students informed of the necessary information of cooperation universities.</p>	<p>“We have international week or international days during the spring term .... we invite Norwegian students to come.....to take a look at possibilities”</p> <p>“UIN do not have a traditional four or five hundred years, the competition should not be just on international ranks, it should be on what is possible for two partners or three partners to create on quality in research and quality in education”.</p>
<p>6. <i>How does cultural difference work in the process of educational</i></p>	<p>--bringing in changes in the ways of thinking and behaviors</p>	<p>--Four dimensions of cultural difference can explain it.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<i>cooperation?</i>	--cultural shocks and integration --promoting talking and tolerance	--closed and frequent contact bridge the gap of hearts and distance.	
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### 4.3 The themes of findings

In the Table.4, there lists findings, possible explanation and quotations from respondents. Based on the summary above abstracting from each interview, I want to find out some important ideas, thoughts or concepts for the discussion chapter, it is also called themes of the research. These central ideas or concepts were the most important aspects of my interviews after analyzing the data. Once upon a time, I have to emphasize the differences of perspectives of respondents towards the same question or phenomenon. Some of the findings may support the real situations and parts of the explanations seem to be trustable for the findings in some aspects. In the following subparts, I will explore seven aspects, namely internationalization, cultural differences, educational cooperation, strategic alliance, sustainability, stakeholders.

#### 4.3.1 Educational cooperation

What is educational cooperation about? This questions cannot be answered with one simple words. It involves a comprehensive system run by a special group of people. From the economic perspectives, cooperation has five basic advantages, namely access to resources, sharing risks, improving efficiency, learning and moral imperative, (Huxham and Vangen, 2005). In the field of education, the advantages of cooperation are mainly focus on access to resources and learning. The resources refers to those that cannot be acquired, or can be obtained but with a very high prices. What can be rare resources at CUST in the eyes of UiN? From the view of Ellen, the Chinese business culture, the experience of China etc. She thought that if the business students in UiN want deal with companies in their future work, they had better to know how Chinese merchants think and how they behave are important. For example, there is an untold rule existing in the business field in China: the contracts are often signed on

the table after getting drunk. Also the life experience is another resources for Norwegian students, “It’s very interesting to see that for the Norwegians, Asia is very interesting, exciting place and China is even more exciting than Asia as a whole,...but coming to China, it’s exotic, it’s different” as Pedersen said.

There are five mostly used forms of international educational cooperation nowadays, just as shown in Table.1. The most common types are student exchange and research cooperation. In practice, UiN and CUST now just involve international exchanges of person through scholarships or grants, but no researchers and administrators were included. From the year of 2007, there are in total 15 students from CUST come to Bodø and have their study. Two of them are from Faculty of Social Science and the rest are from the Faculty of Business School. Students from CUST mainly studied entrepreneurship and management control which UiN are good at. These students have a very good basis on business and economy. Most of them are majored in International Trade and Business, some are from Accounting, while there are also some who are keen on Information Management and Information System. There is little development in the research cooperation. Abelgård gave her perspectives:

*“Research cooperation .....is harder to achieve. I see that there are some obstacles that we struggled....Where is the research cooperation requires the genuine interests of the researchers. How do you measure the research? .....So in some ways you can see, we don’t do much research well. So it’s no wonder we are not be able to successfully establish research cooperation with CUST”*

According to the rector of UiN, Pål Pedersen, they will discuss curriculum projects and research collaborations in this trip to China in the end of April. The cooperation also involve the exchange of teach forces which is still has a space to improve. When having the interview with Pedersen, he said he would very like to give lecture and communicate with Chinese students if he have the chance, he even said he may go to China to teach Economics in after leaving his position. The two institutions also have top administration visits without a fixed frequency, the last visit from UiN was in 2010. The finding of my interviews with respondents shows that the people exchange is almost the only form of educational cooperation. This implies that there are still

enough space to explore and huge potential for improvement in cooperation.

On the other hand, education cooperation can, to some degree, change the arrangement and the curriculum and finally set the acceptable educational standards for both parties. Because of distance, difference of culture and regulation in education system, there are much difference in the arrangement of curriculum and teaching methods. The international students are coming from certain cultures and society who are not familiar with some courses and teaching habits. Thus institutions, in order to better server students, will make some shifts and start new courses. Within the decade cooperating with UiN and other foreign universities, CUST opened some small courses like corporate finance, Chinese business cultures etc. These courses are operated in English and popular among international students. Likewise, to make Norwegian students better adapt to the life and study in China, UiN had signed contract with a Chinese Language teacher Hongxing Xia. Students attended this class for one or two years and then came to China, after that class, according to the feedback received by the international office, these Norwegian students felt much more comfortable to adapting to the environments there. And more international students, even they were not going to China, they also learn the language and the culture, it is the so called “*spillover*”(of educational cooperation).

However, the institutional cooperation is a resource-consuming activity. The mobility of people across borders cost a large amount of money and effort. The cost, the costs of exchange students (only focus on non-self-financed students) and mutual visits of top administration and the other costs consist of the visible expenditure. While the invisible expense are more extensive. The partner institutions should spend much effort to care international students both physically and psychologically, also the social welfare is another portion of invisible fee. In Norway, the living cost is significantly high, more than ten time higher than in China, students in Norway has to spend about 100,000 kroner every year including the housing rent. Thus students from CUST seldom financed themselves and get support from the Norwegian government in the form Quota scheme.

It is true that cooperation in education worldwide has been in the form of assistance from the more to the less developed countries, this is an undeniable but important

feature for the past 30 years. The institutional cooperation between UiN and CUST is also experiencing this process. To be honest, the fact that China is still a developing country and Chinese universities lags behind developed countries in many aspects, including technology, social welfare and education etc. While Norway is at the other end. As the world knows that Norway is one of the richest countries in the world and has highly developed education system, the quality of education is accepted by companies globally. With this macro background, people are easily to find the source of imbalance of institutional cooperation.

When come to the case discussed in this thesis, the inequalities include in the following aspects. Firstly, the payments are not same. This point of view is mainly focusing on the visible costs. As discussed above, the living costs in Norway is very high and Norwegian government cover all of the cost of these Quota students, while for those Norwegian students in China, the expenditure is very low and UiN give less. On most occasions, the students financed themselves and experienced the different lifestyle in China. Secondly, the gains are not equal. Which I mean what students gained from the classroom are not equal. It is very hard to evaluate the value the gain from the class. So I tried to find a way to judge the values. Even though we do not know how much knowledge students get from classroom, but we can see how much knowledge student would use in their career and future life. If one use most of what he learn in classroom in his or her work, then we say the class is valuable, otherwise we say it's valueless. With this method we come to the case. CUST sent many students to UiN to accept advanced theories and thoughts, when these students graduate, they will walk into business and other fields, no matter in Norway or in China. According to the statistics showed, all the Chinese students from CUST are working in companies when they finished their studies. They would use what they had learned from UiN classroom to solve the problems they faced in the daily work. While UiN sends students to Changchun to learn Chinese literature or language. Even though there are class about economy or business, but because of the barrier of culture and language, they cannot focused and keep their interests. Ellen told me a story I think can use to explain the situation. She said there are some students she knows stayed in Beijing, they are exchange students to CUST, but they just spend very little time in classroom and took the final exam when the semester comes to the end. So the situation is so obvious that students from CUST enjoy much more benefits from

cooperation.

There are many reasons might be used to explain this phenomenon. One is that there are very limited courses taught in English, which requires Norwegian students, at least, have a fundamental understanding of Chinese language, this obstacle is very hard to settle. The situation became worse since the only Chinese language teacher terminated her contract with UiN in the autumn of 2013. No one knows whether Norwegian students will apply for CUST this August or the cooperation is as solid as it was. The second reason is that CUST do not have enough sources for exporting education. Since we know that, CUST is a university with distinctive characteristics in photoelectric and the integration of optics, mechanics, electronics, computer and material science are its superiority. The Norwegians from UiN are not able to go into these professions and such advantageous majors bring no profit for UiN. From this perspective, UiN plays a role to give, not to get. The inequality in the cooperation relation is also show as to the length of study time, it is not only the truth of inequality, but also the cause of inequality. Chinese students stay for two years to pursue the master degree but Norwegian students just live in CUST for one semester.

With the research goes deeper, there are some problems appearing in my mind. Is the relationship between UiN and CUST closed enough to be strategic alliance? Or is it possible or necessary to set up strategic alliance relationship between the two universities? What are the differences between strategic alliance (SA) and common cooperation relation? This is the first question appearing in my mind when coming to the term “*strategic alliance*”. It is a hard question without accurate and the only answer, and also it is very difficult to definite the word “*strategic*”. Sometimes people may misunderstand strategic alliance as the stronger situation of cooperation, this interpretation has its reason. In a way, cooperation relationship is able to shares some of characteristics of strategic alliance. However, SA emphasizes the word “*strategic*”, it is comprehensive involvement of all parties and share of prosperity and risks. There is another way to describe it: they act like one. From today’s management literature on strategic alliances, people can find out a variety of reasons stating why companies or organizations need to form SA. Economists noted that the rationales for holding them together may shift over time (Spekman, Forbes, Isabella, & MacAvoy, 1998). SA was an innovative method to overcome challenges and share risks. It did work and



grew popular not only in economic field, but also in all areas.

Strategic alliance are particularly important to establish competitive advantages and maintain technical progress. This principal is also feasible for SA in education. As is known that, SA open doors to a wide but fiercely competitive setting by pooling all kinds of resources, including human resources, capital resources and social resources. The free mobility of people among universities brings much vitality. New concepts, innovative ideas and exotic experience and cultures are all contributing to the prosperity and fame of the university. The intensified international interaction in academics will, on one hand, cost a large amount money; on the other hand, provides each of the partners with facilities and equipment which they selves have no access to if they work alone. The cooperation in researches will attract money investment. The capital either come from the government, or from support of organizations and firms. For many universities, choosing to be internationalized means exposing themselves under the competition with other universities domestic and worldwide. They should struggle to survive in the competition. Just like firms competing in the business field, institutions had better search for companions. Over time, SA is the necessary process they much go through. For those firms who formed SA, their products are all kinds of commodities or service, but what is the product for universities? Students (or future employees) and researches on all aspects are two of their main “*products*”. Thus, SA in education is the process of producing new combinations of products, services and expertise. By introducing foreign educational institutions’ advanced ideas, attracting excellent foreign teachers to participate in teaching, absorbing foreign educational resources, utilizing advanced teaching methods such as case teaching, class discussion, debate and demonstrative teaching, and sending students abroad, students will get in touch with different cultures and broaden their horizon about the world. At the same time, they learn about the interactive and heuristic teaching methods adopted by foreign educational institutions and equip themselves with knowledge and capabilities (Xie, Hou & Li, 2011).

During the interviews, there was one question always spinning in my head: Is the relationship between the two institutions SA? The answers are negative. But the way different respondents gave their answer are diversified. They considered this problem from many angles. Grete Knudsen, the senior adviser of UiN, expressed her

perspectives indirectly, “*It is strategic partnership*”. She used the word “*Strategic partnership*”, by which she means that the relationship is very important for UiN because this university could not accept a situation that it has no partner in China. However, the problem how many partners from the big country and how many students coming from CUST seems to be not so important. She deeply understands what “Alliance” means to a university, So that is why she thinks CUST could be a strategic partner from China, but yet to be strategic alliance. Professor Tor Korneliussen, my master supervisor, he also agreed to that point of view.

*“I think for the school, it's important to work with Chinese university, in a sense you could see that strategic. But on the other hand, it's on a low level, or since it's on a low level, you know that is important for that. So maybe I would say that it's not strategic, but mostly for making a better learning environment here and for all students to learn about China. If one should think that strategic is more important, maybe one should have more exchange.”*

At the same time, Pål Pedersen, from the position of rector of UiN, thought that it is important to build strategic alliance relations with its Chinese partner. But he also acknowledged that there were still a long way to go. He has keen interest in China and is optimistic about the future of the institutional cooperation relationship with CUST:

*“I think we have three agreements on the institution level. We have agreement with business school of UiN and CUST, there are also agreement on the Faculty of Social Science. It's possible to develop more in research area. And Norway has this, on the national level, policy for the BRICS countries by this I mean Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The new government, they are telling us that we are going to have new strategy, new discussion on how to improve our research and new national cooperation with these countries, and China is very important.”*

The rector said there was a long way to go, by which he means it takes time and the process are facing challenges and obstacles in practice. As long as two or three students coming here every year, that means both parties are maintaining the situation. They both expecting more students exchange and more development. “.....but

*international exchange takes long time. Because one should build up trust etc. At least, it's possible that people on the top need time*”, Korneliussen said.

UiN has experience in this aspect with Russia. The cooperation with Russian universities is multidimensional, including exchanging student, research cooperation and appointing professor to the other institutions. Norwegian professors went to St Petersburg to give small courses there first, and then the courses become larger over time. While Russian students came to Bodø and it finally became a part of program. So there has been a lot of teachers from UiN that has been taught there. From this point of view, SA with CUST is possible because we have this good cooperation with Russian universities. However, the difference between university from China and Russia cannot be ignored. The distance and the diversity of culture. Norway and Russia share borders and have many programs and cooperation relating to national profits especially in the Barren Sea. They have the basis and motivation to set up SA. On the other hand, the two countries have common borders and locate in Europe, they share similar values in a sense and accept certain principles.

China is different. The mobility of people between two nations is difficult. Generally UiN struggled to make Norwegian students go abroad, never mention going to China, China is a mysterious place for many countries with all kinds of stories, good or bad, and controversies. It's hard to go into that culture system with hesitations. Norwegian students are afraid that things might be too difficult and too different. People will feel lonely and helpless when they stand on a strange land far away from home. The situation is also for grown-ups, so for those professors, they may prefer to Russia rather than China. Anyway, the creation and development of a wide range of *strategic alliances* facilitate the exploitation of scarce capital resources among partner institutions. In the form of inter-university cooperation, SA is not only about the free movement of staff and students, but also the reallocation and coordination of all kinds of resources.

### **4.3.2 Internationalization and educational cooperation**

What is the motivation for internationalization? We are entering into an era that the competition exists in many aspects of society, not only in the economic world, but also in the fields of education, biology and aerospace, etc. because of the limitation of resources. Human beings have seen too many conflicts between individuals, groups, regions and nations. We also find good solutions to dissolve those confrontations by joining hands. People or organizations interdepend on each other more than a decade ago, much more than half a century ago. There is a very basic rule: to fight, we both get hurt; to cooperate, win-win is the fruit. Internationalization is formed with the motivations of least losses and most benefits and to better use the limited resources globally under different cultures and political environments. The principle is also suitable for international education cooperation when universities or institutions are pursuing to be internationalized. It helps them with more access to excellent asserts like well-known professors, talented students, financial supports and importantly, the involvement in significant events or activities. Every year, UiN will have a conference called Arctic dialogue (AD) which is a platform for Arctic states presenting their perspectives. Stakeholders of the Arctic region coming together to discuss Arctic issues and express their claims through the AD, UiN has a very solid basis for holding the conferences because it has cooperation with all parties and most importantly, UiN is now a quite internationalized institutions.

However, internationalization process for universities means not only the maximization of accessed resources, international fames or winning competition regionally or globally, it is also a way to spread the thoughts and advocates under a suitable and accepted circumstance. Pedersen has his special perspective on this aspects:

*“All universities could bring something into the cooperation and the high north thinking questions like climate change, resources in the high north, the biological and ecological questions, what is happening in high north, these questions which I would like to bring into the table discuss this with our partners”.*

It can also harmonize the relationship between groups or nations. Going across the border through across academic cooperation is a method for the relationship of two nations to soft landing, Pedersen thinks that:

*“I know that Norwegian government and Norwegian thinking that many of the former member of the government and the members now, they want us to develop the Chinese relations. I am very glad that when it comes to students, Norwegian students has applied for visa and they have got their visa; Chinese students have applies visa and they also got their visa. So on the student exchange level, it has worked.”*

When come to the exact case of UiN and CUST, it is not too difficult to find some encouraging points. Just as Marvin (2003) maintained that *“both the discussion process and executive authority are acknowledged as necessary to position the university to bring about substantive, integrated, university-wide internationalization in response to pervasive and rapidly changing global environmental demands”*. The head of both institutions did their almost to make the university a good, comfortable and suitable place for studying and experiencing so as to attract students from different countries and set themselves goals to going internationalized. The internationalization strategies and views for the future is critical for the development of colleges, like what Ellen Abelgård said, *“.....so I think having a rector that has the view is important”*. Pedersen has such a long-range vision that he believed that

*“we are quite different, we are being in a world, we are in a part of Europe, China has been a part of Asia, The globe is a kind of coming together, but we need more time. So we have to be aware that looking ahead, looking into the future, perhaps ten years, it's a very short period. I think in the coming ten years, there will be a lot more development in cooperation between Norway and China.”*

It's fine to say that the precious asserts for university are students and the teaching forces; Let us put it in another way, it's the people that matters. The more

internationalized universities are, the more diversified the culture within the institution is. As Abeln said:

*“Chance which often involves people, but it's in a way because it could be like if we employed a professor, having his background from university in certain country, because he or she then would have a very good relations, or hopefully, then would probably give us opportunities to have a new partnership or to develop a new partnership.”*

The efforts universities spends on the process of internationalization is obvious. UiN gives priority to international students, providing them with accommodation (while the domestic students have to wait in queue for the rooms), easy access to facilities. As a return, the competitiveness of this university has grown and this new university has become many foreign students' first choice. At the same time, CUST offers those oversea students with private dormitory, special designed courses and better living and studying settings. The purpose is simple and obvious: to be a good place for learning and experiencing and further to make itself more internationalized.

Internationalization strategy of university is very broad plan and requires involvement of all kinds of resources of different departments. Educational cooperation with other institutions implements the long term plan and it is a part of the strategy. Maybe there are many other ways to go internationalized, like holding international conferences, joining international researches and so on, but cooperation with other universities is the most important and practical method to become internationalized institutions.

### **4.3.3 Stakeholders and educational cooperation**

As is known to people that important decisions are significantly influenced by stakeholders in the decision making process. Rectors or deans of colleges or universities are often faced with choice of new strategies or policies. Whether to open a new courses? Which universities are suitable partner to cooperate with? Or how to bring in new funding resources? When dealing with big events or decisions, the top management would often apply the stakeholder theory to help them. In thesis, we

would have a look at the related stakeholders for the educational cooperation between UiN and CUST.

Government, researchers, students and various stakeholders are regarded as the major engines that motivate institutions to abandon differences in culture, value and cognition and conquer many difficulties, and finally to achieve the goals. University is an important way of learning, in which different knowledge and thoughts are collided to produce new power and value to the local community and society as a whole. Coordination and cooperation is needed between institutions, and this kind of coordination and cooperation may be considered from the view point of institutions' relationships and interactions with its stakeholders. With increasingly fierce competition happens between universities in different areas, the success, or more straightly, the sustainability of the university is highly being determined by the arrangement and management of various conflicting but different interests and objectives of stakeholders.

There are in total three stakeholders groups existing in the cooperation between UiN and CUST, which are presented as follows:

- *Internal stakeholders:* people or organizations inside the school management and different departments, such as the board of school, rectors, deans, employees especially those in the international office, international students union, etc.
- *External stakeholders:* civil society organizations, local community, the public consist of the external environment of international students. Civil society organizations, the public are very influential (Gul & Cimen, 2012). Students will definitely have contact with these stakeholders and be affected by them more or less.
- *Interface stakeholders:* The government is one of the most important stakeholders in the group of interface stakeholders. In practice, Ministry of Foreign Affair and the embassy in each country, Ministration of Finance and Education etc. In this case, the embassies of Norway and China, SIU, Confucius Institute and Chinese service center for scholarly exchange (CSCSE) are all interface stakeholders for the educational cooperation.

These stakeholders, including internal stakeholders, external stakeholders and

interface stakeholders, perform their functions in different ways. The most influential group is the internal stakeholder because the impact of external stakeholders is directly put on the decision-making process of the university management. The head of the management within a university has the right to choose the exact partners to cooperate. And as it is mentioned that both authorities from two universities should cope with the externalities which are caused by the activities within the cooperation. In this research, the main concentration is being put on the internal stakeholders because internal stakeholders have very strong direct or indirect influences on the programs. Meeting the expectations of internal stakeholders during the process of the institutional cooperation has been considered as a critical path to maintain the continuity of the relation and to build up the strong mutual trust. All these work make contribution to the healthy and sustainable development of the future relationship.

Before the cooperation started, both parties hopes to exchange students and professors, and to start joint researches. What was more, they expected the cooperation to become big and in a large scale. But even after ten years, the real situation are far from satisfaction, or we say, it can not cover the original expectation. Abelgård introduced the situation:

*“In terms of student exchange, I think we have achieved what we expected. Maybe we’d hope to be able to send more students to CUST..... I would like to see a few kind of research projects. I think we are a little disappointed that we have not been able to find the research partners or projects what we could operate”*

Meanwhile, Professor Korneliussen, as a teaching staff, expected more Chinese students to study in Bodø and come to different departments of this school. He also admitted that since the cooperation is in such a low level, it’s maybe more difficult to move to a higher one, international exchange takes long time and one should build up trust.

Stakeholder theory is also a theory about how to find out influential factors and how to deal with impacts coming from these factors. In this research, it is about how to keep the institutional cooperation going without being affected by stakeholders? The



continuity of a relationship involves many ingredients, it is not just about having meetings with top management and signing the agreements. Take the case in this thesis, the sustainability of university cooperation depends much on the following factors: steady stream of money, skilled personnel in international office, clear communication channel and supporting bodies. Keeping the program running smoothly is never a duty for certain people or specific department, it requires concentrated participation of related departments and stakeholders. Here are some examples of stakeholders in this case of cooperation:

- *SIU*

Cross border cooperation between universities costs money. There are many detailed but avoidable problems needing to be dealt with carefully. Who should pay costs for students and for other expenditures? How much should they pay? Whether the stream of funds are stable or not? These questions will affect the length of the cooperation (How far is the cooperation able to go?). And also, they are the problems the rectors or deans faced when they were planning to start cooperating with others. In Norway, the education is free for citizens. Students do not need to pay for the tuition fee but the costs for living and housing. In order to promote international cooperation in education and research, Norwegian government set up an organization called The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU). It is a Norwegian public sector agency which is a service and knowledge organization with the responsibility of facilitating and promoting educational cooperation, standardization, mobility of people, and more importantly, overcoming cultural barriers so as to communicate and exchange within education on an international scale. SIU divides the cooperation into two parts, namely European cooperation and Global cooperation. Different cooperation or programs are able to apply for different financial supports. SIU has the responsibility to secure the operation of different educational cooperation programs.

The cooperation between UiN and CUST is supported by the Quota scheme. It refers to scholarships that the Norwegian government provides for students from Eastern Europe, Central Asia and other developing countries. Students from CUST mostly can get Quota scholarship and the amount is able to cover all the expenses they need to live in Bodø. Of course there is a premise, these students do not spend money

arbitrarily. Generally, the number of money given to Quota students is more than 9000 kroner per month. The available part of that amount is around 5600 kroner, because students have to pay for the accommodation rent as much as 3600 kroner monthly. It is obvious the funding resources has become one of the biggest limitations for development of the cooperation. There are very limited places for candidates of UiN, there are so many institutions sharing these positions. Only two or three students from CUST are lucky enough to win the chances coming to Bodø. Both Pedersen and Abelgård acknowledged that how to finance students is an unavoidable challenge both institutions have to deal with. “We are competing among the other universities to have more Quotas, but I think the number will not increase”, Pedersen said.

- *International Office*

The second example should be international office which is the special department dealing with international student and international partners. The job working in international office is challenging because the work inside the office is complex and complicated. UiN has more than 580 international students from more than 20 countries. There are almost 170 foreign students in CUST coming from 20 countries. When it comes to work with different partners, you learn to know their ways. But all together, it's the matter of having respect for other people and strong academic link because the partnership must always be anchored in the academics. They have to find some common grounds on which you can communicate. International office should have enough understanding of what faculties would like to start from activities and implement it accordingly. Monica Brobakk , the head of international office in UiN, said, “.....So the dean decides the direction and we try to follow.” What is more, there are many particular international students coming to ask questions , they have their cultural perspectives when they ask questions. Sometimes. It's difficult to know in what context the questions has a reason why , what is. So they try to interpret what they understand the problem, every student individual as well. This is always the personal level they can try to understand. If you have a problem and they will try to find the solution. And these stuffs make people headache when hearing about so many stuffs like that, never mention to solve them in a good order and with high quality. No one denies that things labeled with “*international*” are quite complicated. Students from different countries and different continents, they have their own backgrounds, cultures and religions. From the first day the university offer a position for an

overseas student, employees in the international office begin to have connection with foreign affair departments of student's nation. It is not an easy job to smooth the problems among overseas students.

- *The head management*

The head management plays a very important role in affecting the educational cooperation. Among the members of the head management, the rector and deans of different faculties are the main forces. Pål Pedersen is very interested in China and active in cooperating with Chinese institutions. He has been to China for many times and brought back many achievements and agreements. In his past ten years, especially after he took his position as the rector, Pål Pederson has been committed to the development of strategic partnership with CUST and UiN has seen the achievement of the past ten years. Needless to say, the deans from faculty of Business and Social Science and other leaders of the school are also making contribution to the program and hoping to see the improvement of the educational cooperation. Their work including frequent contacts by writing Emails, mutual visits every one or two years or attending international conferences together.

- *Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange & Confucius Institute*

There are two very important external stakeholders from China side. One is Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE), the other is Confucius Institute (CI). The two are organizations behind the cooperation supporting the normal operation of the cooperation. They are invisible for many people, but they are indispensable for the relation. CSCSE is directly under the Ministry of Education and designed for international educational affairs, including international exchanges and cooperation in education etc. It is dealing with people of studying abroad, students who come back when finishing study overseas and foreigners who want to study in China. For the cooperation in this thesis, CSCSE has a very important function for students from CUST, which is that when students graduate from UiN and return home, their Diploma should get an official certification thus their degrees can be trusted when using it. Another external stakeholder is Confucius Institute (CI, also called Hanban). It is also under the Chinese Administration of Education. This organization has been committed to providing teaching resources and services of Chinese language and culture in the world, to meeting the needs of overseas Chinese learners. CI sends

many excellent Chinese teachers to Norway and teach in many institutions so that those who want to study in China are able to speak Chinese before they leave for China. In Bodø, there was a Chinese teacher who taught Chinese for many years in UiN. She did make a great contribution to the educational cooperation between UiN and CUST because many Norwegian students could speak Chinese very well before they left, these students were able to adapt to the languages and culture more easily if they had one or two years Chinese class in UiN. When students take the Chinese class, they learn about the culture, the language and the history, they become more interested in China and CUST. So CI is a very practical organization that keep educational cooperation operating.

#### **4.3.4 Cultural difference and educational cooperation**

At the beginning, I am very hesitating whether to touch the cultural aspects in my thesis or not since the cultural part requires a thorough understanding of each country. However, the importance of culture for the cooperation relations between two universities is obvious and sure. So, from this perspective, I have to make some efforts on this parts and to explore the role played by culture in all the processes the cooperation involved. In this thesis, I would like to apply Professor Geert Hofstede's *cultural dimensions theory* to analyze the cultural difference because it is the mostly used tool for culture-value analysis. This theory is famous for describing the effects of a society's culture on the values of its members and for analyzing how these values relate to behavior. Hofstede developed his original theory by classified culture into four dimensions in his early work, namely *power distance*, *masculinity-femininity*, *individualism-collectivism*, *uncertainty avoidance*. Later, he added two more dimensions, they are *long-term orientation* and *indulgence-self-restraint* respectively. But in my thesis, I would ignore the latter two and put my focus on the first four dimensions of culture because long-term orientation and indulgence-self-restraint are very hard to measure so that their influence on educational cooperation lacks credibility in this thesis. So, in the following paragraph I would take a closed look at each of the four aspects of culture in the two countries and compare them step by step.

In order to find out a common tool for measuring the degree of difference in cultural

dimensions between countries, Hofstede suppose a score system which can efficiently show the extent of the cultural dimensions in different countries and regions. The total score for each dimension is 120 and professor Hofstede would give a score based on the information he got from his research. Under his research, higher score in power distance means more imbalance of power distribution within organization, the more score individualism has, the less people admire heroism; Also, masculinity with higher grade stands for more inequality between genders. Meanwhile, higher uncertainty avoidance score means much more scare of uncertainty. Table 3 list the basic scores of the four dimensions of Norway and China.

Table. 5 Scores of different cultural dimensions of Norway and China

	Norway	China
Power distance	31	80
Individualism	69	20
Masculinity	8	66
Uncertainty avoidance	50	40
Source: Clearly Cultural: Making Sense of Cross culture Communication <a href="http://www.clearlycultural.com/geert-hofstede-cultural-dimensions/">http://www.clearlycultural.com/geert-hofstede-cultural-dimensions/</a>		

● *Power distance*

As Hofstede (1984) defined, it is regarded as a characteristics of a culture defines the extent to which the less powerful person in society accepts inequality in power and considers it as normal. As shown in the Table 3, the score of power distance in Norway is 31 and the score in China reaches to 80, which means the difference if power distance between two nations are dramatically high. In Norway, the hierarchy within organizations is flat, people from the bottoms or the lower management are easier to have access to the top management. Also, the power distribution within the school is equal and the atmosphere is harmonious. For example, students in UiN have many opportunities to talk directly to the rector and the deans, and there are not so many strict rules on people’s behavior and speaking. Norway is known for its low power distance and closed personal relationship, there are not so many hard rules but much flexibility.

However, The situation of China is another situation. No matter it is in bureaus or in the firm or in some NGO, the hierarchy is very high and power distance is huge.

Within organizations, the lower management or the bottom are forbidden leapfrog reporting. The bottom employees has very limited access to the top head and the communication channels have many restrictions. Many departments have overlapped responsibilities on the same affair and absence of duties in other places. The relations between different layers is not as cordial as in Norway. The power distance of Chinese is very high (scored to 80). The responsibility are classified into different catalogue in great details and being distributed into many small offices consisting of a high hierarchy. Students are advised to counsel with their direct superiors and to report level by level. There will be problems for students who come from Norway and study in China, the situation is strange for them because the strict hierarchy principles give them lots of pressures and depression. The access to the higher management is limited and on many occasions, they have difficulty in finding out the correct departments who are responsible for their affairs. This difference in power distance affects Norwegian professors' and students' choices to go to CUST and impression on CUST. And problems also exist in Chinese students who study in UiN, because they got used to the old structure and become ignorant in a way, especially when adapting to the new culture. They have obvious cultural shock when coming to UiN and waste lots of opportunities to get support from the school.

● *Masculinity and Femininity.*

In masculinity culture, men's position has been fully emphasized and expressed. Hofstede (1984) thought that masculine cultures value competitiveness, assertiveness, materialism, ambition and power, but feminine cultures place more value on relationships and quality. Seen from the history of human development, men dominate society structure and family for thousands of years. While, femininity, on the other hand, has a very short time of development and emphasizes the social status of women by stating that men and women should have equal right not only at home, but also in the workplaces.

From the Table 3 we can see that masculinity index in Nordic countries is extremely low, which scored only 8 (compared to the total score 120) and that in China reached to 66, more than 8 times more than that in Norway. Norwegian society cares more about relations among people and the quality of life and work. There are not so much competition in society, people live a slow pace life without too much ambitions, so in

this sense, it is a typical feminine society. China is always a masculine countries and has well-developed social masculine system from books to the practical life. Since Confucius culture is the dominated ideology, it advocates that men determine everything big and women should stay home and take care of kids and husband. In ancient China, women had little right to speak for themselves and were hopeless to change their fate and life. In the last three decades, competition, ambition and materialism were the main themes. People were living fast life and it was quantity not quality that had been cared about. Nowadays, China is in a changing process and the situation of masculinity-femininity is reversing, female's position is bettering due to better performance of women in the school and in the workplace. Women, especially the the young ladies, are having "*good time*" because China has never promoted equality between genders before, girls are accepting the same education as boys and given more attentions in study. People start to care about life quality, they spend more time on traveling, sports and health keeping. For example, the recent documentary called "A bite of China II" has caught millions of Chinese audiences' attention because it introduces much about the most famous and healthy Chinese food, at the same time, it teaches people how to improve life quality by making better food. But anyway, there is still a very long way to go, especially in rural or remote places.

The difference in Masculinity/Femininity may bring problems for exchange students under education cooperation. When Norwegian students come to China, they may feel overwhelmed about Chinese fast life paces and style, even in school they are shocked by the local students who spend days and nights in library, which give them too much pressure and they can hardly adapt to. The materialism in China is also another part that these Norwegian student cannot understand, why do so many students choose to study Business or finance? For Chinese students coming to UiN, they are bored by the slow pace of life and disappointed by low efficiency in dealing problems, they saw that there is little space for career ambition because people in Norway have very limited space for promotion and improvement in workplace, you may see your career state of fifty years later. Here competition is not as popular as in China, instead, people here would much more like to cooperate with others, to compromise and to achieve to a common goal.

- *Individualism and Collectivism.*

In individualistic culture, the value of single people is highlighted and the heroism is highly respected. People can easily find this from films, fictions and traditional art works. In contrast, the collectivist society is against individual heroism and believes “*Unity is strength*”. As a member of certain groups, the individual’s goal should be consistent with the great goal of group, no betraying is allowed. As we can see from Table 3, Norway has a high individualism index which reaches 69 and China has a low score which is only 20. That means Norwegian are more independent and admire individualism and Chinese are less independent than Norwegian. As a part of Europe, Norway inherits the spirit of individualism of Europeans. Norwegians are quite independent and self-reliance. They have quite good ability to think and to perform. However, that does not mean they do not care about teamwork. Actually they are very experienced in team working. The reason why China has such a low score of individualism is that Chinese believe that the wisdom of the collective is great and more powerful than the individuals. Under the Confucian philosophy, the collectivism is strongly advocated and the individualism is suppressed. In Chinese history, our ancestors created numerous miracles like the Great Wall and Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal, these projects required power of wisdom and strength of the collective as a whole. These achievements showed that power finally. Thus I can say that the individualism is not prevailed in China.

The individualism and Collectivism influence educational cooperation in this case by affecting the ways of people doing researches and dealing with problems, especially for the former one. Researchers from UiN and CUST have different working styles, UiN professors or students are more independent and would like to do with questions on their own and with their critical thinkings. However, scholars from CUST are used to work in a team and take good use of the wisdom of all the people in the group. It is obstacle for them to cooperate in researches because they may face lots of problems on researcher ideology and methods.

- *Uncertainty Avoidance.*

Uncertainty Avoidance reflects the degree to which different people in society are trying to get rid of anxiety by minimizing uncertainty. Many people have the tendency to avoid uncertainty because of emotional sides of human. The occurrence of



unknown and the ups and downs bring the risk and losses. People with high uncertainty avoidance are more afraid of unknown risks, they try to decrease possibility of occurrence of unknown and hazard circumstances through step-by-step planning and strict rules, laws and regulations. While those with low uncertainty avoidance are more comfortable in unknown settings and do not want to be limited by rules or regulations. They like the exiting feelings by challenging the new and the strange stuffs. However, it is hard for me to distinguish which country has more tendency of avoiding uncertainty. From Hofstede's research result, Norway and China has similar level of uncertainty avoidance (Norway is 50 and China scores 40). Uncertainty avoidance is very hard to detect and it depends too much on the individuals' personality. Because when you ask others whether they are afraid of uncertainty, they may give you a wrong answer since they pretend to be a brave people. There you must find out a trustable way of asking questions. Since there are numerous of people from both China and Norway fascinating challenges and unknowns while there also a large amount of people in each country hating the risks and uncertainty, so the level of uncertainty avoidance is almost the same in a way.

Uncertainty avoidance plays a critical role in influencing the educational cooperation as one of the elements of culture. UiN and CUST are far away from each other and there is too much unknown on the road to cooperation. It also involves huge involvement of effort, money and time, the cooperation is an important part of international strategy for both institutions. Retreat from any party will destroy the relationship. So similar uncertainty avoidance is quite crucial for the cooperation.

## **5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

*This chapter aims to discuss some problems by comparing the results of findings with the relevant theories so as to have a deep insight into the problems. what is more, this part also aims to provide several possible explanations for problems and further to be helpful for the development of the cooperation itself.*

### **5.1 Internationalization**

Internationalization is one of the key strategies for long-term development of UiN and CUST, and according to the rankings published by authoritative body in each country, UiN ranks 35<sup>th</sup> out of the 42 institutions in Norway and CUST took the position of 159 among hundreds of universities. To be honest, the result of there ranking is not good, at least it will strongly affect students' choice who people read the rankings, especially in China. For both universities in this thesis, cooperation between UiN and CUST is a new trial to find alternative way of developing, its meaning lays in breaking down the old and fixed relationships perpetuated by external aid. Such a trial of opening a strategic relationship with CUST is full of courage, wisdom and innovation. As partner, the two partners have a shared perspective towards achieving a common goal. That goal between UiN in Norway and CUST in China under the agreement is to promote and increase mutually beneficial exchange opportunities among professors, researchers, and students based on mutual respect and on the understanding of both culture. Both institutions claims to develop study programs aiming at sharing mutual investigative interests. The partnership between UiN and CUST is be based on the principle of equality between the partners and characterized by transparency at all levels. Strategic partnership implies that both of the participants are committed to join hands in implementing the program. In this program there are enough evidences showing that educational cooperation operated well over time, given that the two institutions are closely involved in the development of the projects.

In the process of going internationalized, universities need to develop mutual trust with its partners. This is not an easy task to accomplish, and it requires persistent attention, sincere understanding and intensive cooperation activities. It is also a time-consuming process which may take several decades to go. Information exchange is of vital importance for the development of trust between universities and educational cooperation. In the case of UiN and CUST, information exchanging and sharing still need to be refined and improved. The rector and staffs in international office from UiN do not keep in touch their partners in China very often and little information on study and researches were exchanged to their partner. It seems that their perceived responsibility on this cooperation is to recruit and send students but nothing else involved. It naturally slows the pace to build trust and understand. In fact, both UiN and CUST do trust each other on the work of selecting students and helping advertise their partner institution. The program should make sure that all parties have a stake in ensuring the success of the cooperation, but the prior problem is how. It is not easy to appoint someone to inspect the other's work every day, but what they can do is to have more interactions, communication and to build trust. There is also space for improvement in the areas of research cooperation and professor exchange. These type of cooperation had been stated in "AGREEMENT OF COOPERATION Between BODØ UNIVERSITY COLLEGE Norway and CHANGCHUN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY China" (hereafter refers to "Agreement") which was signed in 2007. Within the Agreement, *Article 1* was set to increase mutually beneficial exchange opportunities among researchers and professors and at the same time, to develop study programs aimed at sharing mutual investigating interests. It is not impossible for both schools to conduct the cooperation in researches and professor exchange. The new trials will strengthen the relationship, better understand of each other and further enforce the trust among them. You cannot expect to see leaps and bounds within a short period, but it has a very promising future. The only thing needed to do is to grasp the good chance and do the work well.

The top management of UiN focuses on the international strategy all the way. The cooperation in this thesis has got new improvement through a recent visit by a delegation from UiN to CUST in April, 2014. Two parties renewed their agreement because the old one were expired at the end of 2013 and the Bodø University College had changed its name (University of Nordland is the current name). The new

agreement will concentrate more on cooperation of research and professors, which is the weak point of the current educational cooperation. The new achievements play a critical role in tightening the relationship between the two universities and drew an all new bright future of the relationship.

## **5.2 Stakeholders**

In this part, I will introduce four exact stakeholders which make up of the main solutions to the barriers of the cooperation. It is obvious that the connection between barriers and stakeholders are quite closed. Here we thus have a closed look at the following stakeholders as what mentioned in Chapter four, namely SIU, the head management, international office and CSCSE and CI. At the same time, we also need of focus on four barriers: financial supports, maintenance difficulty and policy issues, language barriers so as to understand the inner connections in depth.

### **5.2.1 Impact stakeholders have on Educational Cooperation**

The influence of stakeholders on the cooperation in education is multidimensional and multilayer. The first group in this case are internal stakeholders which generally includes board of school, rectors, deans, employees especially those in the international office, international students union, etc. The head of universities have great influence on proposing internationalization strategies, members of the board are quite influential and their opinions and ideas are critical for the development of inter-university cooperation. Thanks to the efforts of Pål Pederson (the rector of UiN) and Huadong Yu (rector of CUST), who both has strategic vision on the strategic importance of cooperating with each other, the cooperation between the two institutions operated smoothly and successfully for nine years and grew stronger year after year. The rectors went through almost all the periods of the educational cooperation and involved in every interactions between two institutions.

Frequent visits from both institutions in the last decade promoted the development of mutual relations. The rector Pål Pedersen is still busy with working on this program.

The head management could be compared to be an engine and the international office and international student union (ISU) are more like the operational and maintenance systems. These departments or organizations are responsible for the daily operation of cooperation. Students coming to the school wish to have good services and convenient information access, the international offices of universities, thus, should provide this kind of convenience and make sure that international students' stay could be easier, especially for those newcomers. How to register? How to open bank account? Where to experience exciting and amazing activities? Staffs in the International office have obligations to provide necessary information and help. ISU is a student body in charging of organizing activities for international students and also for local students. It helps international office deal with affairs relating to international students. International office and ISU is very professional in help international students and makes them satisfied. Good experience in Bodø and nice impressions on UiN attract students from many countries.

### **5.2.2 SIU as the financial support**

SIU, as the main source of finance for international educational cooperation in Norway, has much responsibility in promoting internationalization process of education of Norway. Also, this organization is of great influence in leading the direction of educational cooperation across borders in the way of controlling the supply of money and putting forward new regulations. The case in this thesis, as mentioned in previous chapters, is Quota scheme under the direct control of SIU and will definitely be affected by the organizations.

The rector of UiN predicted that, in the next ten years, there will be no obvious change of number of students under Quota scheme. UiN could not find a very good and effective solution to solve the financing problems of those students who want to study in UiN. The money of SIU mainly derives from Norwegian government, this university has always been trying to compete with other universities for the share of the money. There was little changes being seen in the last deced and the number of Quota students was almost fixed. Any attempt to enlarge the scope of cooperation will face the same problem--money shortage, the budget for the cooperation is one of the

central concerns of the head management. So how to get funding from SIU is becoming the most crucial path to enlarge the cooperation.

SIU (2014) published *“The High North Program 2013–2018”* at the beginning of this year, which is a plan for the New funds for High North cooperation. The High North Program aimed to reinforcing the educational cooperation between higher education institutions in Norway and institutions in Canada, the United States, the Republic of Korea, Japan, and Russia. The total amount for the six-year period program is about 7.5 million US dollars. This part of money will be used to expand, strengthen and disseminate knowledge about or relevant to the High North. Unluckily, the new support program did put much emphasis on many other countries but little on cooperation between Norway and China in short term. The dilemma between need for Norwegian education from China and serious financial situation for cooperation between institutions of Norway and China is still big problem in a relatively long time period of the future.

### **5.2.3 Language supporting organization**

Language barrier could be problem when starting cooperation internationally. In this case, the educational cooperation between UiN and CUST is deeply affected by the language barrier. Norway locates in the Scandinavia Peninsula and has its own language system, which is made up by Bokmal, Nynorsk and Sami. However, since it is a five-million-people country, Norway does not require people from outside, including students, to study its language; for those who want to work and stay in Norway, it is better for them to acquire the Norwegian language. In fact, most Norwegian citizens can speak English fluently and there are many Master courses being taught in English. This is a merit that Norway is able to attract students from many other countries to study in Norway and Norwegian students could study outside their homeland, since English is most popular and used language in the world. However, English is not widely spoken in China and Chinese college students have difficulties in speaking English. Thus, language has become a barrier among students from UiN and CUST and Norwegian students feel much harder to integrate into the

circle of the local students in CUST.

Norwegian students come across language problems when they arrive at China and very limited number of Norwegian students choose to study or stay in China. According to a survey conducted by SIU, approximately 20 percent of Norwegian students choose to go abroad during their study time. The Anglo-American countries, especially the Great Britain and United States, are the most popular study destinations for Norwegian students. Very few Norwegian students decided to go to China even though they do not have to pass any languages exams, they would have a very hard process when they arrive at the partner university, because they cannot communicate very efficiently with local students, professors and the residents. Maybe that is the reason why they would take a Chinese language class for half or one year before going to CUST or other universities in China.

Confucius Institute (CI) and International English language Test System (IELTS) play an important role in helping students overcoming the language barrier. In order to keep up with local students in the class and adapt to the life in Norway, Chinese students have to spend much more effort in English learning. And for Norwegian students who want to study in China, they had better study Chinese language before going to China. CI is set up to help to solve these kind of problems and spread Chinese culture. Every year CI sends Chinese teachers to many countries to teach Chinese language and introduce Chinese culture, it also help foreign students come to China and to study in Chinese universities. It is just like a bridge that connects the people from outside world and China and enables foreigners to understand language, culture and other things of China. CI is one of the main sources for foreigners to learn Chinese, without which foreign students would have had a much harder experience in learning Chinese language. While IELTS helps Chinese students go abroad and study there, because it is a worldwide English testing system that provides authoritative certificate of English ability of students. Through this system, organizations from the world could believe in the capability of students in English. UiN, like many other institutions in Norway, accepts IELTS results of non-English speaking country students and candidates of Quota scheme should get no less than 6.5 in IELTS (Total score is 9). This is not an easy grade for Chinese students to get, which takes several month with consistent effort. This organization provides different channels and ways

to student to improve their English skills. After passing the exam, student surely have the ability to communicate in English with others, also they are able to join the class taught with all English. IELTS Committee guarantees the quality when student pass the exam, thus it gives much convenience to the organizations who may need the IELTS certification.

The language barrier is one of reasons why the cooperation of research and professor cannot successfully operate under the program between UiN and CUST. Professors or researchers from CUST have been forced to learn English for many years, but they do not have opportunities or occasions to speak or write English. No matter these professors come to Bodø or those from UiN go to CUST, the joint researches cannot proceed smoothly, because they lack a very efficient channel for communication between each other and language difference becomes the great gap. At the same time, it is not easy for these professors to learn Chinese or English. The situation of language barrier became worse since the only Chinese language teacher in UiN finished her contract with the school and returned home. Norwegian students who plan to go to CUST in the autumn cannot speak Chinese and his or her study life there will not be so easy. There might be less Norwegian students being willing to go to China or CUST. If possible, I personally hope the school should cooperate with CI and invite some other Chinese language teachers to teach in UiN so as to keep the cooperation running.

### **5.2.4 International office as the maintenance body**

International office is an important maintenance force of the relationship between the the two universities. To serve well for international students, UiN has at least two special sub-offices under the international office, the two are working with different affairs, one is in charging of sending students to other countries including China, the other is working on the affairs like receiving students from countries outside Norway on the Quota Scheme. Different persons in the department have different responsibilities. For example, Monica, the head of international office in UiN, takes her responsibility to make sure that the administration works well between the institutions, having communication with the counterpart--CUST; Also, the other



members of the office, on behalf of international board, work to move the international work forward at the university. At the same time, the international board provides the advice to the overall university board. In terms of China, it is one of the Asian countries and a strategic area for Norway and also for the University of Nordland in addition to Japan, South Korea and India. The job of international office as well is to work with the faculties and try to provide help when these faculties establish new contacts or maintain contacts, which is the administration part and makes sure everything works. It still focuses on relation with the partners, by which it means they have to keep contacting and meeting and discussing how the cooperation are doing? where would it go on education level? at least on the research level. So having strategic partners in order to have common research project, which means exchange of staffs or lecturers and of students, is important for both parties get the partnership going.

There are several ways being applied in contacting each other among UiN and CUST by international offices. Mostly international office exchanged information with their partners through Email. Besides, UiN also has some colleagues from China who can speak Chinese and write Chinese, so the international office depends much on these colleagues and regard them as translator so as to communicate directly with CUST on a cultural level. Because there are a lot of new answers languages may convey, which might be difficult for Norwegian to understand, these colleagues are sort of links between both of institutions because they can translate into Chinese and also bring Norwegian perspective to the Chinese partner. It is the same way they work with Russia for 25 years, that is why there are lots of Russian academics at administrative staffs, they speak Russian, they can do the work a little bit quicker, communication wiser and be added component to the internationalization work, like the local--translators. So in this case, international office is trying to find out what is the Chinese business culture, in terms of their relationship and culture. Plus that the rectors visites each other for so many times and build solid basis of trust, the communication through international office is becoming more mature and usual and it is time to move forward and further.

### **5.2.5 The head management lead the direction**

The head management is the final decision maker in the international strategy of school. It has great power to decide what kind of strategy the university should take? Which universities to cooperate with? The head management in university is the university board and the rector is the executor of the policies of the university. In the case of UiN and CUST, Pål Pedersen is of great importance in accelerating the educational cooperation with CUST. Many people who are familiar with him knows that he likes China and want to have more connection with Chinese institutions. Under his influence during his stay in position, the interaction with Chinese institution was obviously increased. Besides CUST, UiN had cooperation with other Chinese universities like Beijing Sports University (BSU) and Zhejiang Ocean University (ZOU). At the beginning of 2014, rector Pål Pedersen started considering another Chinese university as the new partner, which is called Beijing Normal University (BNU). In April, the delegation of UiN succeed in having meeting with leaders of BNU and they had very pleased talk in Beijing. Nowadays, students from UiN have more choices when they choose to study in China and the university will have more Chinese students from different backgrounds. That may be the best proof of the importance of the head management in leading the educational cooperation internationally.

### **5.3 Cultural difference**

Cultural difference involves different dimensions and has deep influence in the educational cooperation. In this part, I will focus on four aspects of cultural difference and see how the cultural difference affect the operation of cooperation between UiN and CUST, namely power distance, masculinity, individualism and uncertainty avoidance. By comparing the differences, readers can have insights into the conflicts and understand the mechanism cultural factor used to influence the cooperation in education in this case.

### **5.3.1 Power distance**

PD could be a troublesome problem when the people with low PD go into a new circumstance with high PD. It does not only exist in bureaus and firms, but also in schools. In lower PD culture, people are more relaxed in a comfortable environment and harmonious atmosphere, which is good for employees to improve efficiency. However, in the high PD culture, the high power hierarchy gives people much pressures and lots of complains. Workers are depressed by limited channels of communication and spaces for their emotions, they have relatively low efficiency. since you can image that the voices of the bottom has to go through a long distance and can hardly reach to the high management, this process takes time and is with low efficiency. The opinions and ideas of the lower level cannot be reflected to the top and thus the workers would not be satisfied with the current situations. When it comes to universities and educational cooperation cross borders, the problems become more serious.

In Norwegian society, the hierarchy structure is quite flat and power distance is very low. The reason behind this is that people in Norway have strong sense of equality and in the organizations, they have enough freedom to express their ideas and feelings. In the work places Norwegians are not satisfied with the imbalance of power distribution and hate to be ignored. Even the smallest individuals should be heard by others, the top of the management also would like to listen to the bottom and make changes when necessary. They also believe that flat organizational structure is good for management and with high efficiency. As a member of this society, UiN definitely has low hierarchy, the management, professors and students enjoy a very casual relations and get used to it. People within the school like the equal distribution of power, no one is superior to others and everyone has equal right to others directly.

However, China is on another end of teeterboard, the PD is very high. This has much to do with China's traditions and history. Since China had been feudal society for more than 2400 years, during that period, our ancestors had built sound feudal hierarchy which was vertical and high. Even the new China has changed a lot of that kind system, it still exists in every corner of society. Bureaucratism and sense of

hierarchy are still rooted deeply in people's mind. The distribution of power within organizations are problematic, the bottom have very little power and huge responsibility but the top have great power and little duty. Usually, the top may place themselves in a high position that the bottom cannot reach easily. The reporting system within organizations are with low efficiency, the collected information by the top are with poor quality. The high hierarchical system slow down the development of organizations and cause a waste of resource. The fact of high PD is very hard to change within a short period, at least in decades it will not change too much. Thus the effort to change the high PD is useless and the effort should be put on finding ways to adapt to the situation.

### **5.3.2 Masculinity and Femininity**

The masculinity is one of the important characters of China, it is men who dominate society. There are several reasons can be applied to explain this fact, including nature of human and historical elements. Actually, masculinity is still the main trend of the world, men generally dominate the world. The first reason is that man are physically stronger and psychologically rational, their body allow them to work much more than women and think more objectively than ladies. As it is known that, in ancient time, heavy manual labor was only suitable for men, including farm work, doing business and military service, etc. The less developed one nation is, the more masculinity it have, this rule is still true for today. When women lost the initiative right of production, then they lost the economic independence, further they lost more than that. This principal, to some extent, could explain why Norway has such low level of masculinity while China has a very high level. As you know, China is still a big developing country, most of the work require a large portion of physically strong men. On another hand, men are more suitable in doing economy, management and political affairs because they behave more rationally and calmly. Women, generally, perform no so good as men especially dealing with emergent situations. The two aspects consist of the first reason (nature of human) why masculinity is the dominate the social structure of China or even the world.

The second reason is the historical factor. As mentioned above, China had been feudal

society and influenced by Confucianism for more than 2400 years. In the Confucius thought, there are special items regulating women's behaviors and thoughts. The most famous is the so called "*The three obediences and the four virtues*". It forced women to obey their father before marriage, obey their husband after the wedding and obey their son if their husband died. Also, the first "*virtue*" is that women should have good morality, they must be faithful to their husband, keep their duty and to preserve their purity. The second one is their behavior and wearing, ladies should behave elegantly and politely, and their dress should not be frivolous casually. The third "*virtue*" is their ways of speaking, which means they should know what could be said and what should not be talked. The last is that women need to know how to keep the house tidy, how to deal with husband, son and the parents in law. These rules or principals restraint women's rights to speak, to behave and to think. Even though China had entered into the new society for more than one century, these old thoughts still exist in people's mind in a way and need time to clear them up. Nevertheless, China has many good Chinese traditional virtues on the relationship of men and women which may, in return, influence Norwegian's behavior. Between couples, we advocate "*Jv an qi mei*" and "*Xiang jing ru bing*" which aims to stating that couples treat each other with respects and kindness. What is more, we also have phrases like "*hao nan bu gen nv dou*", it means that gentlemen would never harass women. These virtues are treasures of our ancestors gave to us and point out the ways to deal with the relationship of masculinity and femininity. There are more idioms virtues than that. It is no doubt that during the educational cooperation with Norway, Chinese universities and Norwegian universities have enough strength to carry the weight of difference in masculinity. Maybe that will be the fruit of what the cooperation can bring to both of the universities and to both nations.

### **5.3.3 Individualism and Collectivism**

The individualism and collectivism can be explained from both historical and demographical perspectives.

Firstly, China had a period of planed economy system from 1950s to the early of 1980s. Even today, many western economists think that Chinese economy is not

marketing economy structure because they see the government involving a lot in the economical affairs. However, Norway in on another end. It has a typical and mature market economy and price has been used as tool to coordinate the balance of supply and demand. The difference in market reflects the relations of people in the economic society. On another hand, our previous generation suffered a lot from the “*commune system*” forty year ago, which divided people into different communes and all members of communes work together and eat in the same cauldrons. Even though after more than 30 years, that generation are still, more or less, influenced by this collectivism which in a way passed on to our generation. While Norway had a very good system to distribute labor at that time, the individual contribution is highly valued and the heroism is admired by the society. In the workplace, the role of individuals are different from China because employees’ importance is higher. The collectivism in China exists in many places, little to housework sharing, big to large national projects. The value of individual seldom being mentioned and the success of the group covers the contribution of single people.

Secondly, the population is another factor that determine the high individualism in Norway and high collectivism in China. From economic perspective, large population will easily lead to collectivism because there are so many people waiting to work and to make a living, individualism only exist in a very small scope or in some special situations. There is very limited space for individualism but large amount of occasions for collectivism in a nation with huge population. Here in this case, China has 1.4 billion people which means there is a very solid basis for collectivism, Norway has only about 4.2 million people and good economy, so Norway is suitable for individualism.

With more and more foreign companies moving to China in recent years, collectivism has been taken place by individualism to some extent. People get more motivations both at home and in the workplaces, thus they would like to work harder. We can notice obvious changes after the open policy in 1978, more and more elites in different fields has been appearing, they become very rich and are in high social positions, their contributions to the development of China were great and huge. Their individualistic efforts thus are rewarded with huge wealth and great fames.

### **5.3.4 Uncertainty Avoidance Index**

Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) generally shows characteristics, such as the resistance to innovations, highly formalized management and the constraining of innovations by rules. The reason is obvious, it is to avoid losses on the way to innovate new things and reform the old systems. It has much to do with the personality of the individuals and the culture of the organizations. If a nation or a group of people with its special culture advocates challenging the new and the unknown, then the UAI will become very low; on the contrary, if these people or nations are stick to stability and safety, then the UAI is at a low level. The results has much to do with the overall environment and the core value of society. China has strongly encouraged its citizens to be innovative and be critical, at the same time, the government provides supports for innovation. Even more than 30 years ago, China took its biggest challenge ever to change the old societal system and free the thought and production forces. From that point of view, Chinese people have good tradition and reasons to accept the uncertainty and take the risks on their way of life. Norway, as the typical developed countries, has very healthy environment for cultivating the young to explore the unknown future and areas. Norway has less formalized management systems and employees feel more comfortable to innovate and invent. Thus, like China, Norway also has a very low UAI.

## **5.4 Possible benefits from educational cooperation**

*It is not easy to measure the benefits schools gains from bilateral cooperation. Here in the program between UiN and CUST, the benefits are more than amount of money, actually, both institutions pay for this program rather than gain from it.*

### **5.4.1 Possible benefits for students and professors**

In general, students under this program are the biggest beneficiaries. students are from Norway or from China and have a chance to study in an all-new environment and experience something that are awesome and amazing. CUST students coming to Bodø

have chances to know many international students from other countries, this opportunity enable them to broaden their views and enrich their social life. They get easier access to the unpolluted nature in Arctic region and can travel around many places and countries. While for those Norwegian student, they will be attracted by the diversity of culture in China, including history, food and arts and so on. Chinese lifestyle and philosophy of living are new and different for them which would enrich their knowledge about this mysterious country. The stay in CUST would increase these Norwegian students' interest in China and deepen the insight into the business culture and habits. When they come back to Norway, they will more likely consist of the main forces dealing with China and Chinese affairs in the future. All of these points are the benefits for these students. No matter where they will work, the experience living in High North and in China will make contribution to the success of the students under this program and in return, these students will reinforce the relations between two nations in different ways.

For those professors, they welcome more international students to Bodø and to CUST. International students make the class more active and more vivid because they have different background, their ways of thinking are different. In addition, they are all individuals and have different religions and extraordinary life experience, the involvement of these international student will enrich the content of the class. Professors and students are able to teach and learn together and mutually. The more involvement of international students, the easier the mindsets could be avoided and happier the class become. Many professors like dealing with international students and talking to them, because these students bring new and fresh ideas from them and it is beneficial for them to teach from a new angle and perspectives. The words of Tor Korneliussen proved what I said:

*“So I am very glad to have the class because I would like the class of international business to consist of many nations, it's better for the learning. If you are Norwegian, you tend to think in a Norwegian mindset and Norwegian point of view about the world. So it's really good for student if you can have access to many ways of thinking”.*



### **5.4.2 Possible benefits for institutions**

There are potential economical or commercial benefits for UiN and academic gains for CUST from the educational cooperation. Chinese families now are rich enough to send their kids abroad and are capable of financing themselves. For many Chinese parents, giving their boys or girls better education is much more important than money, every year there are a large number of Chinese youngsters studying in other countries and paying by their parents. However, the situation between Norway and China is that there are only a very little number of Chinese students choose Norway as their destination of study and most of those studied in Norway mainly were financed by Norwegian government in a way of receiving scholarships. What I want to say is that the cooperation between Norway and China will enhance the fame of Norwegian institutions among Chinese students, just like UiN, in Changchun, many students know about this universities and have a basis understanding of the education quality of UiN. The reason why Chinese students do not choose Norway as their study destination is that they have no idea about the quality of Norwegian education and situation about Norway. With the deepening of the educational cooperation between UiN and CUST, more and more Chinese students and employers will know about Norwegian education and institutions, at that time, studying in Norway and UiN will probably become a popular and new trend among Chinese students. At that time, education will become a kind of commodity in a way, which are able to bring new ways of economic growth for Norway, such as consumption, tourism and housing market and so on. Actually one century ago, United States started its international education policies and attracted many Chinese students. After one century cultivation, now US becomes the best example in international education cooperation and thousands of Chinese students come to US and promote the local economy and development of universities there.

CUST is also a bigger beneficiary in the cooperation relationship and the possible benefit should be the academic gains. Even though till today there is little cooperation reaching to the area of research and exchange of professor, CUST is still working together with UiN to achieve that goal. According to the information Pål Pedersen provided, in the future, both parties will focus on the joint researches and exchange of

professors. This could be a great opportunities for teachers of CUST to learn in UiN and do researches with famous professors in Bodø. Also, the CUST will also benefit from the exchange of professors because UiN has very good professors and they are experienced in teaching business students and social science. That would be a great harvest for CUST from the cooperation with UiN.

### **5.4.3 Possible benefits for nations**

The biggest benefit of this kind of cooperation for the two countries is that this educational cooperation is channel of exchange and basis of mutual understanding. Firstly, both nations economically and politically need each other. China has a very large market for salmon and other sea food, natural resources like oil and gas, and Norway is known for salmon feeding and rich for oil and gas, so, the two cannot ignore the existence of each other because they have broad basis for business and cooperation. On the other hand, China has huge influence on Arctic area and strong interests in Arctic Affairs and Norway, as one of the main participants promoting Arctic dialogue, have duty and right to pull China into the Arctic affairs and want to have direct dialogue with this big stakeholder of Arctic region--China. However, due to some reasons, China stop all the official contact with Norway from 2010 and the top channel for exchange had been blocked. The cooperation in education between UiN and CUST is now a part of cooperation among folks from Norway and China. The good function of this program is to keep the channel between two nations open and if possible ,to drive cooperation in other fields.

The second benefit on the national level is to increase mutual understanding. Because of the distance and difference of culture, the people of two countries lack basic knowledge of each other and thus it is very easy to cause conflicts and disputes. The closed cooperation between universities help people from two countries better know each other, including societal affairs, living habits , history and culture and so on. What is more, educational cooperation is an alternative way of communication between the two nations when the national level exchange stopped.

## **5.5 Summary**

This chapter mainly focuses on the possible benefits of the educational cooperation between UiN and CUST. The first section talked about the benefits for students and professors. Students through this program are able to enrich their knowledge and life experience, they will also have a new perspective towards the world which might be good for no matter their future life or their jobs. Cooperation in education also makes the class more colorful and interesting, professors and international students have very good interaction on the class and they can learn and teach mutually. The second part is about the gains for institutions. The gains here means the potential economic and academic benefits because Norway provides high quality education which are what Chinese students need. It is possible for UiN to recruit more self-financed students. At the same time, the joint research and exchange of professors are very good opportunities for both institutions to enhance their academic power and ability. The last section concentrated on the benefits at the national level. It stated the economic and politic interdependence of each other, when the official communication channel are blocked, the educational cooperation become an alternative for the communication of the two nation and promote the exchange in other fields. Also the benefit also lies in the increasing the mutual understanding of the public in two countries and decrease the possibility of conflicts and misunderstanding. In all, the cooperation between UiN and CUST is of importance for both universities and nations and bring lots of benefits for at all levels.

## **6 . CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION**

### **6.1 Conclusion**

In this thesis, the case of cooperation between UiN and CUST is taken to explore the mechanism applied by Norwegian universities to cooperate with Chinese universities. Even though different universities may have different paths to cooperate, we still can see some common points by having a closed look at the typical examples. This thesis is based on the interviews with rector, professors and head of international office and the information and data were collected through semi-structured interviews and writing emails. There are in total five important respondents accepting the interview and giving their perspectives from different angles.

Firstly, case study methodology had been applied to introduce the whole process of the cooperation by focusing on important events as time nodes. Then, I presented the findings with a matrix and emphasized different aspects of the educational cooperation, which enabled the readers to recall the research questions and to find out answers. The questions are as follows:

- (1) what are the motivations promoting universities to be internationalized? What is the strategic position CUST have in Internationalization strategies of UiN?
- (2) What exactly educational cooperation is about? What do UiN and CUST do in their cooperation?
- (3) What are the difference between strategic alliance and common cooperation relation? Is the cooperation between UiN and CUST strategic alliance? What is the future of the two institutions' relationship?
- (4) How to keep the institutional cooperation going without being affected? What factors may influence the smooth operation of cooperation?
- (5) Who are the stakeholders for the relations between UiN and CUST?

Then I analyzed the following four topics which are including internationalization, educational cooperation, stakeholders and cultural difference on national level and its influences. The relations between educational cooperation and the other three had been pointed out one by one. In the discussion chapter, the focus was still on the three

aspects (namely internationalization, cultural difference and stakeholders), and their relations with educational cooperation, but the discussion is mainly from all new perspectives that is different from Chapter four. This may help readers have a much clear understanding of educational cooperation.

Through this study, I hope to have an insight into the nature of this cooperation between the two institutions, and what is more, to explore the mechanism of how to run educational cooperation and find out the influencing factors and stakeholders. This research is mainly based on data collected from UiN side, thus to figure out certain problems from Norwegian perspectives. Stakeholder analysis mainly concentrated on four typical examples, namely SUI, CI and IELTS, international office and the rector (the head management). It introduced the process how stakeholders are classified and how it influence the cooperation. Also, in the analysis of cultural difference, this research introduced many Chinese culture and traditions, at the same time, it brought in Chinese ways of thinking. Hofstede' s theory on dimensions of culture is the most important model were used to analyze the role of culture on cooperation in education in this case which help reader understand more about these cultural factors. The four dimensions mentioned in this research includes power distance, masculinity, individualism and uncertainty avoidance.

## **6. 2 Summary of the findings**

In the first section of presenting findings, the matrix contains questions asked during the interviews and findings, possible explanations and quotations with orders. These questions are related to the next chapter and shows difference aspects of the education cooperation. There are in total about 10 main questions for interviews being prepared before the interviews and many sub-questions asked during the talks. These sub-questions are of great importance because these questions gave me more detailed answers and important information I wanted. The result were satisfying and encouraging, the data collected were able to show the different dimensions of the case.

The second section is mainly about the internationalization (strategy). Due to the

cultural similarity and geographical location, UiN naturally put their emphasis on Europe especially western Europe. Then, the different aspects of educational cooperation were explored, the questions were mainly around why and how the two join hand together, What content the educational cooperation of UiN and CUST contains, etc. The student exchange is the most common way of cooperation between the in this case, and the cooperation of professors or researches are yet to come even though the agreement had mentioned these things in 2007. Cooperation in education add influences, changing the arrangement and the curriculum, so as to set the acceptable educational standards for both parties. However, the research found that this type of cooperation is a time-consuming program. This cooperation may take decades to cultivate, but the most difficult part is to build a solid basis for mutual trust. Then, because of the imbalance of educational power, the educational cooperation between UiN and CUST are found to be more like a kind of educational assistance. UiN acts as an educational philanthropist and gives free education to Chinese students. This kind of imbalance cannot persist for very long time and grow healthily. Both parties should think about improving the relationship and reflect what role they should play in the cooperation and how to keep this program growing.

The third problem I studied is who are the main stakeholders of this educational cooperation? The reason why I am curious about this question is that knowing stakeholders of cooperation would help me find out the obstacles and the determining elements. Stakeholders here are classified into three categories, namely internal stakeholder, external stakeholder and interface stakeholder. The internal stakeholders are those related people and departments within the school, like the rector, international office and ISU, etc. The external stakeholders are mainly local communities, the local organizations and so on. The last one is interface stakeholders are authorities and language supporting organizations. In this section, four examples has been stated and used exemplify the function of stakeholder, they are SIU, international office, CI and IELTS, and the head management. They are also the most influential and important stakeholders for the educational cooperation in this case.

The last findings is about the cultural difference between two countries and this part is on the national level, which are the most difficult and challenging parts. Cultural difference became very obvious when comparing students from different countries.

Here I applied Hofstede's model and divided cultural difference into six dimensions. This thesis focused on power distance, Individualism & collectivism, masculinity & femininity and uncertainty avoidance and to see how these differences work in people and cooperation. All in all, this chapter succeeded in exploring different aspects of educational cooperation between UiN and CUST, and showed the closed relations between them.

## **6.3 Implications**

### **6.3.1 Implication for university**

the cooperation in education between the two institutions shows long-term vision of the head management, and the pragmatic efforts in the last decade enable them to grow internationalized quickly and to place themselves in a higher position. During the process of cooperating, both UiN and CUST became more experienced in cooperating with each other and developed basic trust among people, these benefits are the cornerstone for further cooperation and development. Based on the achievement, the two institutions should take the good opportunities and expand the cooperation to other areas, the most importantly, trying to increase the number of exchanged students.

The two universities should find new cooperation area. Even though the cooperation between two institutions has lasted for ten years, but the cooperation is still limited to the student exchange. The agreements signed in 2007 have clearly stated that *"Both institutions will promote the exchange among students, professors, and researchers to facilitate and increase joint studies and research"*, but the real situation is that within five years after signing the agreement, there was only one visiting scholar (Social Work) coming to Bodø. However, there is also one big drawback that cannot be ignored, that is both parties are not able to supplement the Agreement efficiently, especially on the joint research and exchange of professors. There might be a variety of reasons accounting for this problems, but anyway both UiN and CUST should join hands to solve it rather than discuss the same problems on the table again and again. To solve this problem, the school need to provide a good environment for researches

and regulate the procedures of doing joint researches. The most important part is that researchers from both UiN and CUST should find projects that they all are interested in. Therefore, the head management from both parties should promote the cooperation of joint research and enlarge the scale of students exchange. It is necessary to implement the terms of the agreement and deepen the mutual understanding and trust.

Besides, UiN could started thinking about attracting more self-financed student from Changchun area, because with ten years of cooperation with CUST, the mechanism of recruiting students from that universities is mature, and more students know about UiN and the education quality. I think it's a new engine for the collaboration and will bring in vitality for it. For CUST, it should open more courses taught in English and attract more Norwegian students, and also try to provide stages for foreign students and local students to communicate with each other, to encourage Norwegian students and other international students to join in activities held by Chinese students.

### **6.3.2 Implication for government**

As a very important stakeholder of educational cooperation between UiN and CUST, Norwegian government and Chinese government have duties to ensure the cooperation operate safely and smoothly.

There are two aspects that the two governments can do to make contribution to the cooperation relationship. The first one is the financing support. Both of them has reasons to increase the funding for cooperation in education between them. Since the educational cooperation is almost the only way of communication Norway has with China, in order to warm up the relationship, Norwegian government should incline to China in educational policies. For China, Norway is a very suitable countries for Chinese students and the fact is that very small number of students studied in Norway, so the government should also pour money to support the cooperation.

The second aspect is about language barriers. China sets up a large number of Confucius Institute all over the world and sends Chinese there to teach Chinese language and introduce Chinese culture. However, there are only one or two such



institute in Norway. Many Norwegian students want to study in China but they feel headache about the languages. If Chinese government could solve these problems and send more Chinese teachers there, the situation will change.

## **6.4 Limitations of the research**

There are some limitations in the thesis needing to be mentioned. The first limitation is that this research put too much emphasis on the role of cultural difference and the second one is lack of a tool to measure the amount of benefit from the cooperation. These limitations should cause attentions of researchers who do future research on this field.

Educational cooperation is about bilateral involvement which means the interaction of two cultures. Thus I spent large portion of space and great effort on investigating the influence of different dimensions of culture on the educational cooperation. Because of this, I cannot spare more time and efforts on looking deep into certain aspects, like internationalization strategy of CUST and the educational policies of Norway and China, even though I know I should have done that. It is very hard to find a balance between different parts of this research because the time and ability of mine were limited. Starting the educational cooperation between UiN and CUST has always been a strategic trial for both universities and gained great success in the past ten years, it is very necessary to focus on the change of their internationalization strategies and study the national educational policies, but obviously this thesis failed to stick to these parts. I think this is a very big limitation of the research.

The second limitation is that this research cannot find trustable way to measure the benefits for certain stakeholders. The benefits can be classified into visible and invisible. The visible benefit mainly means better jobs waiting for students under the program, and the invisible benefits have a very broad range from the experience to close relations between nations and to mutual trust and understand. There might be some indicators that could be used to measure the amount of both visible and invisible benefits, but in this thesis, I admit that it did not reach that goal, and I still need more

time to do research on this aspect.

I think in the future research, the two limitation of this research could be the direction. Particularly the tools to measure the benefits, which may help both universities and governments to do evaluation on the cooperation, further to refine and support the educational cooperation between UiN and CUST, and also the cooperation between Norway and China.

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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semi-structured\\_interview](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semi-structured_interview)

<http://www.Ieec.cust.edu.cn>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Case\\_study](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Case_study)

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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hofstede's\\_cultural\\_dimensions\\_theory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hofstede's_cultural_dimensions_theory)

<http://www.clearlycultural.com/geert-hofstede-cultural-dimensions/>

<http://siu.no/eng/Front-Page/Global-menu/For-the-media/News/New-funds-for-High-North-cooperation>

# APPENDIX:

## Appendix I: Different types of Tables

**Table.1. Types of International Education Cooperation**

1. People Exchange	The oldest form of educational collaboration. It entails a direct personal exchange. It involves international exchanges of students, teachers, researchers and administrators through scholarships, study visits, curriculum projects and research collaborations. This form of cooperation includes the mechanisms and networks which facilitate people exchange as well as the exchanges themselves.
2. Transnational Education	This can involve educational institutions or centers jointly provided and funded by several countries, or the establishment of campuses in other countries, often in association with a local partner. It also includes the supply of distance education across national borders.
3. Information Exchange	Information exchange is a key source of successful collaboration in education, often involving the establishment of information clearing houses. Examples include the OECD's Education at a Glance, first published in 1992 and now the principal source book for comparative indicators of educational participation and performance in OECD countries, and a stimulus to ongoing international data collection efforts: and, in the EAS area the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Regional Centers and the ASEAN University Network. Other examples include IT platforms such as the European Union's Information Network on Education in Europe (EURYDICE).
4. Regulatory Reform	The enabling, administrative framework that makes other forms of educational exchange possible. Examples include multilateral arrangements for quality assurance recognizing qualifications and allowing credit transfer (e.g., the Bologna Process, and the Lisbon Convention in Europe) and the establishment of cross-country quality assurance mechanisms (e.g., the European Network for Quality

	Assurance in Higher Education, or ENQA, set up in 1999). Regulatory reform can help smooth the flow of students and qualified personnel between countries. Such agreements and frameworks are essential for creating a single market for education and for qualified manpower in a given region
5. Development Partnerships	In a development partnership two or more countries enter into a systematic relationship, often within the framework of a memorandum of Understanding, to enhance education in a less developed country through the cooperation of a more developed partner. This project is mainly concerned with technical, rather than financial, assistance.
Source: McKenzie, et al (2008), page 28. The table is copied in full.	

**Table.2 : Interview Guides**

Interview Guides	Content
Step one	Present the purpose of this thesis
Step two	Tell him/ her about the roles respondent plays and ask for permission for recording the conversation.
Step three	1. What is your experience with cooperating with CUST?
	2. Why do you choose CUST as your partner of institutional cooperation in China?
	3. What is the CUST position in the internationalization process of UIN?
	4. What factors may influence the educational cooperation relationship?
	5. What would the two institutions do to sustain the institutional cooperation relations?
	6. How does cultural difference work in the process of educational cooperation?
Ways of asking questions	a: Could you please tell me about.....
	b: Do you mind if I ask.....
	c: How do you think of.....
	d: What do you mean by saying “.....”?
	f: Do you think it’s possible to.....or not?
Step four	1. End the interview and make a short comments on the interview.

	2. Express gratitude to respondents.
	3. Ask for permission to use their perspectives.

**Table.3: Important visits from two universities**

Year	Events
2002	First delegation from UiN ( then it was called Bodø University College till 2011) met with Representatives from CUST
2003	CUST visited Bodø/UiN
2004	A delegation from UiN visited CUST
2005	CUST visited Bodø/UiN
2007	UiN visited CUST
2008	There were visits “both ways”
2009	UiN visited CUST
2010	CUST visited Bodø
2014	Bodø UiN visited CUST

**Table. 4 Findings and possible explanation**

Questions	Findings	Possible Explanations	Quotations
1. <i>What is your experience with cooperating with CUST?</i>	<p>--The respondents fit the study with their experience of dealing with CUST.</p> <p>-- The perspectives mainly drive from the UIN sides.</p> <p>--All respondents have been to CUST and involved in the cooperation building</p>	<p>--The involvement in the cooperation relations gives critical perspectives.</p> <p>--It is much easier to have access to the key information about the cooperation.</p> <p>--They have special interests in</p>	N/A



	process.	cooperating with China and CUST.	
2. <i>Why do you choose CUST as your partner of institutional cooperation in China?</i>	<p>--Important alumni help to set a bridge between UIN and CUST.</p> <p>--The rankings and the location makes the two universities become partner</p> <p>--both universities think highly of the cooperation relationship</p>	<p>--Alumni in the local has the most knowledge about the universities and the social relations.</p> <p>--Similarity in different aspects attract different institutions join hand to cooperate.</p> <p>--The willingness to become internationalized is the motivation.</p>	<p>“The boy ..... because he has been a student there before. So therefore these two institutions became the first ones”,</p> <p>“CUST is northern part of China, They are quite similar to the situation, that means something”</p> <p>“they are willing to do their best to integrate them into all the international students and also in teaching”</p>
3. <i>What is the CUST position in the internationalization process of UIN?</i>	<p>--Strategic partner in China and a channel to have talk with China.</p> <p>--Active participant and permanent observer in the Arctic affairs.</p> <p>--Alternatives for the internationalization strategy</p> <p>--Receiver of high North thinking.</p>	<p>--Norwegian universities need China and Chinese universities.</p> <p>--China is very interested in Arctic affairs while UIN is one of the centers for research of the Arctic in high north.</p> <p>--UIN wants to broaden its cooperation, it puts too much emphasis on Russia.</p>	<p>“China has a research station in Svalbard and become the permanent observers of Arctic Council. China is a very interesting partner in doing research in the High North”</p> <p>“But we see, it might be a weakness if we are using all of our resources in Russia or in the Russian cooperation”</p>

		--The problems happened in the world and the Arctic area motivate Norway to talk with other big economies	“the high north thinking questions, climate change, resources in the high north, the biological and ecological questions, what is happening in high north, these questions which i would like to bring into the table discuss this with our partners”
4. <i>What factors may influence the educational cooperation relationship?</i>	--The political relationship between Norway and China may help or block the exchange or cooperation  --The language may frustrate the students and stop the communication between people.  --Cultural difference affect the people and the institutions in many ways.	--Chinese government hate the interference in internal affairs from other countries and often fight back with strong political and economic punishment.  --Language barrier is always a big problem.  --Culture is just like double-edged sword, very hard to adapt to it and make people extremely excited when they integrate into it.	“I think the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010, it was not good for the relationship between Norway and China that time”  “Coming to China, it’s exotic, it’s different”  “I think it’s positive, because we learn a lot.”
5. <i>What would the two institutions do to sustain</i>	--The rectors wrote emails to exchange	--The communication channel should be	“We have international week or international days

<p><i>the institutional cooperation relations?</i></p>	<p>ideas or opinions.</p> <p>--Mutual visits from both institutions.</p> <p>--International week or days invite Norwegian to advertise CUST.</p> <p>--Professional webpage and advisers give students better insight into CUST.</p>	<p>diversified.</p> <p>--The students are the main forces for the cooperation, universities has responsibility to make students informed of the necessary information of cooperation universities.</p>	<p>during the spring term .... we invite Norwegian students to come.....to take a look at possibilities”</p> <p>“UIN do not have a traditional four or five hundred years, the competition should not be just on international ranks, it should be on what is possible for two partners or three partners to create on quality in research and quality in education”.</p>
<p><i>6.How does cultural difference work in the process of educational cooperation?</i></p>	<p>--bringing in changes in the ways of thinking and behaviors</p> <p>--cultural shocks and integration</p> <p>--promoting talking and tolerance</p>	<p>--Four dimensions of cultural difference can explain it.</p> <p>--closed and frequent contact bridge the gap of hearts and distance.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

**Table. 5 Scores of different Cultural dimensions**

	Norway	China
Power distance	31	80
Individualism	69	20
Masculinity	8	66
Uncertainty avoidance	50	40
Source: Clearly Cultural: Making Sense of Cross culture Communication <a href="http://www.clearlycultural.com/geert-hofstede-cultural-dimensions/">http://www.clearlycultural.com/geert-hofstede-cultural-dimensions/</a>		

## Appendix II: Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Scores of the world

PDI=Power Distance Index; IDV=Individualism Index; MAS=Masculinity

UAI=Uncertainty Avoidance Index; LTO=Long Term Orientation

### Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Scores of the world

country	PDI	IDV	MAS	UAI	LTO
US	40	91	62	46	29
Australia	36	90	61	51	31
UK	35	89	66	35	25
Netherlands	38	80	14	53	44
New Zealand	22	79	58	49	30
Italy	50	76	70	75	--
Belgium	65	75	54	94	--
Denmark	18	74	16	23	--
France	68	71	43	86	--
<b>Sweden</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>--</b>
Ireland	28	70	68	35	--
<b>Norway</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>20</b>
Switzerland	34	68	70	58	--
Germany	35	67	66	65	31
South Africa	49	65	63	49	--
<b>Finland</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>--</b>
Poland	68	60	64	93	--
Czech Republic	57	58	57	74	--
Austria	11	55	79	70	--
Hungary	46	55	88	82	--
Israel	13	54	47	81	--
Spain	57	51	42	86	--
<b>India</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>61</b>
Argentina	49	46	56	86	--

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<b>Japan</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>80</b>
Iran	58	41	43	59	--
Jamaica	45	39	68	13	--
Brazil	69	38	49	76	65
Egypt	80	38	52	68	--
Iraq	80	38	52	68	--
Kuwait	80	38	52	68	--
Lebanon	80	38	52	68	--
Libya	80	38	52	68	--
Saudi Arabia	80	38	52	68	--
United Arab Emirates	80	38	52	68	--
Turkey	66	37	45	85	--
Uruguay	61	36	38	100	--
Greece	60	35	57	112	--
Philippines	94	32	64	44	19
Mexico	81	30	69	82	--
Ethiopia	64	27	41	52	25
Kenya	64	27	41	52	25
Portugal	63	27	31	104	--
Tanzania	64	27	41	52	25
Zamia	64	27	41	52	25
Malaysia	104	26	50	36	--
Hongkong	68	25	57	29	96
Chile	63	23	28	86	--
<b>China</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>118</b>
Ghana	77	20	46	54	16
Nigeria	77	20	46	54	16
Sierra Leone	77	20	46	54	16
Singapore	74	20	48	8	48
Thailand	64	20	34	64	56
El Salvador	66	19	40	94	--
South Korea	60	18	39	85	75

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Taiwan	58	17	45	69	87
Peru	64	16	42	87	--
Costa Rica	35	15	21	86	--
Indonesia	78	14	46	48	--
Pakistan	55	14	50	70	--
Colombia	67	13	64	80	--
Venezuela	81	12	73	76	--
Panama	95	11	44	86	--
Ecuador	78	8	63	67	--
Guatemala	95	6	37	101	--