

# Teaching Quality Assurance of Chinese-foreign Cooperation Education in Provincial Universities in Western China

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**Abstract:** This research is dedicated to examining and assessing the mechanisms employed in ensuring and managing teaching quality within Chinese-Foreign Cooperative Education (CFCE) universities situated in the western provinces of China. The study particularly aims to delve into and scrutinize the influencing factors affecting the internal teaching quality of CFCE, including the construction of the teaching staff, the quality of student resource, teaching conditions, and teaching management. Given the perceived weaknesses in these aspects, the establishment of a sound teaching quality assurance system is posited as an instrument in enhancing CFCE's outcomes, ultimately facilitating the attainment of desired results and fostering Chinese-foreign cultural exchange. The study methodology used is qualitative, utilizing a semi-structured interview approach. The selection of research samples, comprising interview participants, was conducted at three CFCE universities in Shaanxi, which serves as a representative western province in China. The investigation endeavors to elucidate the challenges, strategies, and outcomes associated with teaching quality assurance within CFCE. The research findings not only shed light on the influencing factors but also propose strategies that pivot around the student-oriented concept. Additionally, the incorporation of high-quality foreign educational resources and the adoption of scientific evaluation methods are recommended strategies. These approaches aim to improve the teaching quality of CFCE, contributing to the growth and success of students and advancing the high-quality and sustainable development of CFCE.

**Keywords:** Provincial universities, Western China, Chinese-foreign cooperative education (CFCE), Teaching quality, Assurance

## 1. Introduction

Chinese-Foreign Cooperative Education (CFCE) has emerged as a novel educational paradigm following China's implementation of reform and opening policies since the early 1980s. This innovative approach seeks to integrate advanced foreign educational ideologies, managerial practices, and novel pedagogical methods that diverge from entrenched domestic traditions (Donthu et al., 2021). The infusion of these foreign elements is instrumental in cultivating talents with a global orientation—an imperative for China's active participation in the international market and competitive landscape. In addition, CFCE plays a crucial role in advancing China's education system and promoting its integration into the global economy, thereby contributing to the country's modernization and globalization (Li & Liu, 2019).

In the 21st century, the education system requires innovative approaches and a fresh perspective on how teaching and learning are conducted. In order to meet the growing demands of globalization, it is necessary to implement changes in the education system to ensure that future generations receive the highest quality education that is relevant to the 21st century (Puruwita et al., 2022). Against the backdrop of the prevailing trend of internationalization in recent years, there has been a notable shift in domestic teaching systems and policies, favoring collaborative educational initiatives with various countries, particularly those in Europe and North America. This lays the contextual foundation for the current implementation of CFCE in the western provinces of China.

The implementation of CFCE in the western provinces represents a strategic developmental initiative endorsed by the central government. Since the initiation of reforms and opening policies in the 1980s, nationwide efforts have been dedicated to supporting CFCE, aiming to contribute to local social and economic development (Liu & Wang, 2021). Prominent urban centers, including Xi'an, Chongqing, Chengdu, and Lanzhou, have become pivotal hubs for CFCE, attracting a diverse array of universities from the Western world and thereby enriching the educational landscape. Nevertheless, despite the swift expansion of CFCE in these areas, a multitude of problems exist, significantly affecting the quality of education (Qing, 2020). This study aims to evaluate the current condition, identify common obstacles, and provide strategies for improving the quality of teaching in CFCE institutions in the western provinces of China. The assessment is based on semi-structured interviews and reliable secondary research.

To date, considerable emphasis has been directed toward the scale of investment and overall development of CFCE universities in China. However, scant attention has been devoted to the assessment of teaching quality within these institutions, presenting a particularly pronounced issue in CFCE universities situated in the western provinces of China. This research endeavors to address this gap by analyzing prevalent challenges and issues encountered by CFCE universities in the western provinces of China. The study systematically evaluates the factors influencing teaching quality and proposes practical methodologies to improve the instructional standards in these institutions. The intended outcome is to contribute to the scholarly discourse by providing insights into the often-overlooked aspect of teaching quality within the context of CFCE.

The research problems addressed in this study pertain to the effective evaluation of teaching quality in CFCE universities situated in the western provinces of China. The investigation's scope includes particular inquiries that are encompassed by the following questions:

- (1) What is the current situation of CFCE development in the western provinces of China?
- (2) What accomplishments, challenges, and problems characterize the teaching quality within CFCE universities situated in the provinces of western China?
- (3) What effective measures can be implemented to enhance the teaching quality in CFCE universities located in the western provinces of China?

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1 The content of teaching quality**

Given the rapid evolution of CFCE over the preceding decades, the matter of teaching quality has emerged as a central concern in the realm of education. Essentially, teaching quality encompasses a comprehensive array of factors, spanning from the provision of conducive learning environments to the competence of educators. When considered from the standpoint of learners, teaching quality largely consists of two distinct aspects, which are listed and explained as follows:

#### **2.1.1 Supports for learning**

As emotional beings, learners have the ability to evaluate and feel the external environment that provides support. It is widely believed that providing learning support is crucial in cultivating students' passion for learning. On a university campus, for example, the availability of remarkable and sophisticated educational facilities, such as intelligent teaching buildings, laboratories, libraries, and teaching equipment, bears fundamental importance in supporting academic advancement among students (Chen et al., 2021). While these represent tangible supports, there exist numerous intangible

supports that are equally vital in the educational context. According to Wu (2021), the teaching quality of an educational institution also encompasses the effective and efficient supportive framework derived from scientifically sound administration and management principles (Gong & Lv, 2017). These supports are expected to increase learners' training, leading to an improved overall competence that allows students to take on a wider range of duties after graduation. This framework aids educators in evaluating teaching efficacy by scrutinizing student performance. In the context of CFCE, influenced by diverse educational values, assessments may place a greater emphasis on the formative performance of learners, extending beyond the confines of purely academic achievements on campus.

### **2.1.2 Teacher competence and qualification**

Undoubtedly, the role of a teacher is pivotal in determining the quality of instruction across various educational levels. This encompasses a diverse array of prerequisites for educators, involving both a well-structured knowledge base and specialized teaching strategies designed to foster active student engagement. As posited by Zhang et al. (2023), a proficient teacher typically exhibits strong leadership skills, a quality integral to cultivating an optimal learning environment within the classroom. In such an environment, students tend to align their behavior with the educational objectives. Seasoned educators also demonstrate adeptness in establishing a conducive learning climate within formal classroom settings, facilitating effective and efficient communication between the instructor and students (Mitchell et al., 2007). Proficient teachers, from the students' perspective, manifest adept utilization of resourceful imagination and creative methodologies to engage learners actively. Particularly noteworthy is their ability to convey knowledge through the deployment of specialized interactive skills and techniques during instruction. Furthermore, experienced and creative educators excel in guiding students to critically evaluate and assess their own work in both academic and real-life contexts (Weinstein et al., 1998). They are adept at fostering active imagination, creative problem-solving and flexible adaptation among students in diverse learning and professional environments. So on the whole, these attributes collectively contribute to the enhancement of teaching quality, cultivating academically adept and highly performative individuals among students upon graduation.

### **2.1.3 The purpose of CFCE**

The purpose of CFCE has been reflected in a wide range of governmental documentation guiding the development of CFCE domestically. This purpose finds explicit articulation in the "Implementation Measures for the Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools." Article Three of this legislative framework unequivocally expresses the state's endorsement of collaborative educational endeavors between Chinese and foreign institutions, particularly those enjoying universally acknowledged academic stature and commendable educational and teaching quality. In addition, it has been clearly announced by the Implementation Measures that high-quality educational resources are what is urgently desired by China for further participation in international competition. This is basically crucial to China's internationalization process after it has entered the WTO.

## **2.2 Factors influencing teaching quality assurance in CFCE organizations.**

Teaching quality has been a major target of academic studies and governmental regulations in CFCE development. Extensive scholarly investigations and regulatory frameworks have been directed toward comprehending the multifaceted factors that exert influence on teaching quality within CFCE institutions. Three principal factors have garnered prominent attention in this discourse.

The first factor is resource input, a pivotal determinant in shaping high-quality campus facilities aimed at enhancing students' academic competence and overall capabilities (Lin & Liu, 2014). Resources are gathered by CFCE entities primarily through a variety of means, including multifaceted donations, national and local government support, and mutually advantageous business partnerships. These sources of support are shared by the majority of CFCE organizations in China.

These sources of assistance have made a significant contribution to the ongoing growth of CFCE programs across China.

The second determinant impacting teaching quality is the faculty composition, sourced from diverse channels. Particularly, the inclusion of staff from foreign nations is regarded as a significant factor influencing the instructional standards within CFCE institutions. The strategic recruitment of high-quality faculty members from Western countries serves as a pivotal mechanism for CFCE organizations in China to disseminate and propagate cutting-edge educational ideologies within the domestic landscape. This, in turn, contributes to a profound transformation of the education system, paving the way for substantive reformations in the future.

Another crucial issue that affects the quality of teaching is the evaluation system that university administrations adopt. Currently, this element is seen as a vulnerability because of a significant disparity in conceptual alignment. There is a clear difference between China and Western nations when it comes to how they understand and define "teaching quality" (Lu et al., 2013). The current consensus among CFCE groups shows a provisional compromise on teaching quality, emphasizing the need for critical unanimity on its definition.

According to Alias & Razak (2023), education has undergone significant development due to technological advancements and novel teaching methods. It's important to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies in addressing academic needs and overcoming student obstacles. Currently, one of the biggest obstacles to quality assurance in CFCE programs is the lack of efficient control in the assessment of teaching quality. This situation continues because many CFCE programs have inadequate oversight, which results from differences in teaching approaches and different conceptions of what constitutes quality in classroom pedagogy. (Lu et al., 2017).

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Semi-structured interview**

Both primary and secondary research are used in this research. While the secondary data mainly include academic studies and governmental documents related to CFCE during the recent decades, the primary research has been designed via a semi-structured interview by the researcher to obtain personal response of faculty staff (including teaching and administrative members) in three CFCE institutions in Shaanxi, China.

In the primary research phase, the interviewer seeks to explore the extent to which the interviewed faculty members are inclined to confront the challenges inherent in enhancing teaching quality within these institutions. The interview comprises a set of nine questions, organized around three overarching themes.

##### **1. Resource Allocation and Campus Infrastructure**

The concept of teaching quality is broad and goes beyond the effectiveness of instruction in a classroom. It is also greatly impacted by the basic amenities present on campus, which include classroom buildings, libraries, computer equipment, and other teaching tools that are essential to forming the learning environment. These are certainly dependent on significant investment resources.

##### **2. Innovative Pedagogy in Classroom Management**

Significant determinants of teaching quality encompass the innovative aspects of pedagogical interactions within formal classroom settings. Given the cultural and communicative disparities between China and foreign nations, CFCE uniquely capitalizes on its advantage in innovative teaching methodologies. This facilitates impactful in-class exchanges between educators and students, fostering more effective engagement and participation in the instructional process.

### 3. Standardization and supervision

Although innovation and individualization in classroom communication are important, it is also crucial to have standards and supervision procedures in place to assure teaching quality at CFCE institutions. The interviewer has invited the participants to talk about their personal experiences and feelings in this regard during the interview.

## 3.2 Sampling and sample size

A total of 15 participants have been enlisted for this interview. The individuals selected are picked at random from the faculty and administrative staff of three universities affiliated with the CFCE in Shaanxi. The researcher attempted to speak with each sample individually in order to convince them to participate, and eventually they gave their assent. These academic and administrative staff were chosen because they have knowledge of the internal factors that affect the caliber of instruction in local CFCE organizations. These samples are accessed primarily in person.

## 3.3 Analytical methods.

### 3.3.1 Qualitative analysis

This study primarily adopts a qualitative research methodology with the aim of investigating the factors influencing the internal teaching quality within CFCE organizations in China, along with the associated issues and challenges. According to Bryman (2006), a qualitative research approach involves the utilization of concepts and theories to delve into the inherent logical relationships of a social phenomenon. In the context of this research, the qualitative approach primarily relies on the perspectives articulated by the interviewees. Consequently, the research is fundamentally empirical, emphasizing the need for careful selection of appropriate research samples to ensure the representation of authentic and reliable information.

### 3.3.2 Inductive reasoning

Inductive reasoning, in contrast to deductive reasoning, represents an alternative methodological approach. While deduction involves progressing from a general idea to a specific conclusion through logical inference, inductive reasoning employs specific data such as concrete facts, statistical information, and quotations from influential scholars (Feng, 2010). Unlike deduction's top-down logical approach, inductive reasoning adopts a bottom-up strategy, aiming to derive a general conclusion from concrete and substantial information (Cresswell, 2009). In the context of this research, inductive reasoning serves as the methodological framework to synthesize the general experiences of CFCE organizations domestically, with a focus on enhancing teaching quality.

### 3.3.3 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis serves as a methodological approach for the examination and synthesis of prevalent themes within extensive and intricate existing data sets (Blaikie, 2000). In this research, the application of thematic analysis is particularly directed towards situations involving general experiences. The researcher aims to discern fundamental aspects that are crucial in providing guidance to CFCE across diverse regions. Preliminary themes are developed through a synthesis of primary and secondary research, with the objective of identifying elements that comprehensively encapsulate the experiences related to teaching quality assurance in CFCE organizations. Thematic analysis is anticipated to yield a profound theoretical analysis of the underlying research questions.

## **4. Findings and discussion**

### **4.1 Findings**

#### **4.1.1 Summary of the replies**

The interview comprises nine questions designed to probe three key informational dimensions: resource allocation, classroom teaching processes, and standardization and supervision of teacher behaviors. Questions 1 and 2 specifically focus on the resources at the disposal of CFCE institutions in China. In Question 1, the interviewer seeks insights into the sufficiency of resource inputs within these universities. The majority of respondents have asserted that CFCE enjoys a significant advantage in garnering support from diverse sources, both domestically and internationally. For instance, as exemplified in the following response:

Sample Q: I think a significant advantage of CFCE lies in the substantial financial resources it has garnered, facilitated by support from both domestic governmental sources and overseas donations. These resources have enabled the acquisition of advanced facilities on campus, encompassing digital libraries and various internet-based equipment that are highly sought after by students.

Question 2 aims to explore the interviewee's individual perspectives regarding campus facilities and assess whether they have accessed supportive resources for their development. Predominantly, respondents have concurred that they benefit from an advantageous position in constructing advanced and lately innovative facilities with substantial funding. Nevertheless, dissenting opinions have surfaced, expressing a degree of concern, as illustrated by the following example:

Sample C: Well on the whole this is an optimistic matter in our university. Presently, we possess adequate financial resources for the construction and upkeep of advanced facilities. Nevertheless, I am uncertain about the sustainability of this situation, given our location in Shaanxi, an economically disadvantaged inland in western province compared to the more affluent eastern coastline regions. Consequently, there is a concern that future support for the construction of new facilities may be limited, especially considering the current economic fluctuations domestically. It is important to note that campus facilities and the quality of education are significantly impacted by the broader economic environment.

Question 3 delves into the innovation of the teaching process within classroom settings. Given that CFCE represents a novel initiative in transforming traditional education in China, innovation becomes a pivotal criterion for gauging its effectiveness. This is intricately tied to the cultural and structural distinctions in education between China and the Western nations collaborating with the aforementioned CFCE organizations. Responses to this question predominantly affirm the presence of innovation, as exemplified in the following instance:

Sample O: The university administration has exhibited considerable courage in endorsing adaptable teaching methodologies, accommodating instructors with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Notably, the encouragement of bilingual teaching has yielded positive outcomes, enhancing both the language proficiency and cognitive skills of students. Additionally, the promotion of teaching innovation and diversity has contributed to heightened student engagement in class. Using English teaching as an example, the implementation of innovative communicative teaching methods has sparked considerable interest among students during classroom interactions, thereby fostering improvements in their language and interpersonal competencies.

Question 4 seeks to ascertain whether any form of supervision or monitoring is employed to oversee the teaching conduct of overseas instructors in the classroom. To the interviewer's astonishment, a substantial number of interviewees have voiced their opposition to the implementation of supervision or monitoring measures. These individuals have articulated diverse rationales, with one representative response exemplifying skepticism about the necessity of in-class supervision:

Sample J: In my opinion, classroom supervision is a double-edged sword. While university administrators presume that supervision aids in regulating the teaching process and ensuring the achievement of educational objectives, it is also believed to foster standardization, seen as crucial in guaranteeing teaching quality. Nevertheless, I am of the opinion that these assumptions are not always effective. Teaching is inherently a creative endeavor, demanding innovative thinking and creative methods from instructors. Excessive supervision, therefore, can hinder the encouragement of innovation in classroom interactions.

Question 5 is designed to investigate the perspectives and opinions regarding the necessity of adopting standardization or regulatory measures pertaining to teaching behavior in the classroom. A majority of the interviewees have registered their dissent towards stringent supervision within the class. An illustrative instance is provided by Sample F, who believes that such strict oversight is detrimental to fostering the enthusiasm for innovation among teachers.

Sample F: Well, I strongly oppose the proposal to adopt any form of supervision or standardized teaching process in class. Indeed, I consider this practice in China to be excessively rigid and outdated. In my perspective, the teaching process should exude passion, indicating that teaching methods and processes should be inherently individualistic. There is, in fact, no universal rule dictating classroom communications and interactions between teachers and students. Therefore, I firmly contend that there is no necessity for any form of in-class supervision or standardization.

Question 6 explores the implementation of bilingual teaching within CFCE organizations and evaluates the perceived benefits of bilingual teaching in enhancing teaching quality. Nearly all respondents have acknowledged the widespread adoption of bilingual teaching in CFCE institutions and assert that it significantly contributes to the improvement of teaching quality. This sentiment is exemplified in the following response:

Sample G: Of course, I think bilingual teaching basically stands for innovative teaching by CFCE organizations. It diverges from conventional monolingual education, which constrains students' thought processes in the classroom. Bilingual teaching brings about a significant advantage in enhancing proficiency in the second language and introducing a novel cognitive approach to learners during class. Utilizing two languages in the classroom entails a frequent alteration of cognitive patterns by students, proving highly advantageous in cultivating their cognitive abilities within distinct linguistic environments.

Question 7 inquiries about the implementation of faculty exchange within CFCE organizations. Regrettably, the responses are predominantly negative due to existing cultural disparities in behavioral tendencies between Chinese and overseas teachers. As articulated by several participants, faculty exchange is infrequently observed on campus, and there is an expressed expectation for enhancements in this aspect in the future.

Sample A: Regrettably, inter-faculty exchange is infrequent within our institution. One primary impediment to such exchanges is the communication gap existing between domestic and overseas teachers, hindering their inclination to engage in collaborative endeavors. Additionally, the extensive workload borne by individual teachers,

consumed by routine tasks like lesson preparation, student assignment assessment, and the compilation of teaching materials, further restricts opportunities for collaborative initiatives.

Question 8 delves at the difficulties that threaten teaching quality in western China's regional universities. According to the majority of the responses, the respondents expressed serious concern about a number of problems in continued cooperation. These issues have been expressed from a variety of angles. Some of them stem from regional rules and regulations, while others are the result of cultural clashes. Take the following for example:

Sample H: CFCE in provincial universities in western China faces a multitude of challenges. Notably, the complete and comprehensive recognition of graduation certifications from these universities remains a formidable obstacle both domestically and internationally. This poses a significant challenge for these institutions. Another hurdle is the struggle to achieve full cultural integration within the university itself. Cooperative education necessitates the interaction of individuals from two distinct cultures, and, in many instances, this interaction proves challenging due to significant conflicts or disparities in cultural perceptions between the collaborating entities.

The final question aims to elicit proposals for enhancing teaching quality within CFCE organizations. The responses reflect a considerable enthusiasm among the participants for addressing this issue. An illustrative example is presented in the following excerpt:

Sample D: To be frank, I propose a comprehensive set of recommendations for enhancing teaching quality at our university. Foremost among these is the imperative need for training domestic teachers in cultural awareness specific to a CFCE organization. In my viewpoint, a CFCE organization diverges significantly from traditional educational institutions in China, embodying educational philosophies that deviate from the teacher-centered education entrenched in Chinese tradition. Equipping domestic teachers in these organizations with knowledge of diverse teaching methods and cultural norms from another educational context would facilitate the enhancement of their teaching innovation and quality. It is crucial for CFCE administrators to recognize and prioritize this need to effectively foster teaching innovation and elevate teaching quality.

#### **4.1.2 The achievements made by CFCE in west China**

The implementation of CFCE in western China serves multiple strategic objectives. Firstly, it represents an educational reform aligning with China's extensive international cooperation and engagement following the nationwide reforms and opening to the global community. Functioning as a form of cultural collaboration with foreign nations, CFCE significantly contributes to the internationalization of the domestic market amid the escalating trend of globalization (Sun, 2019). China's integration into the global market has resulted in a rapid surge in international exchanges, particularly in the realms of talent and technology. CFCE has emerged as a pivotal force in expediting this exchange process. Moreover, CFCE has been instrumental in advancing China's international trade, as a substantial number of well-educated individuals from CFCE institutions enter the workforce, representing a significant advantage, especially since China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Secondly, CFCE is anticipated to make significant contributions to cultural exchange between China and foreign nations. The globalization of China's market has introduced a cultural shift in the realm of education, characterized by the clash of cultures with overseas countries. CFCE is well-suited to play a pivotal role in providing cultural education to the domestic populace. The adoption of CFCE has engendered a discernible trend toward increased cultural understanding and tolerance of foreign nations within the sphere of education, thereby fostering a greater willingness among domestic individuals to engage with the technologies and cultures of other countries (Wei, 2012). This



marks a substantial departure from the years of cultural isolation in the past. Simultaneously, as an increasing number of foreigners from various industries enter China, there arises a necessity for close cooperation with them. CFCE facilitates a nuanced comprehension of the cultural and behavioral patterns of these foreigners working in China (Wang, 2005). Such understanding proves advantageous in establishing robust cooperative relationships and enhances China's capacity to engage in international cooperation more effectively and efficiently.

The third accomplishment is intricately linked to the strategic development initiatives in western China outlined by the central government in recent years. Economically, the western provinces of China are acknowledged to be relatively underdeveloped, signifying an urgent requirement for external resources to foster sustained growth. The process of globalization, with China's active participation, has exacerbated the economic disparity between the western and eastern regions of the country (Tang & Li, 2020). This presents a formidable challenge for the western provinces. The presence of CFCE in these provinces serves as a mechanism to attract talents and technologies, contributing to local development. Within the realm of higher education, the CFCE plays a crucial role in enhancing campus infrastructure and fostering creative pedagogy. This collaborative effort has resulted in the accumulation of valuable expertise in university administration and curriculum development. All these factors have made a substantial contribution to the development strategy of the western regions as outlined by the Chinese government.

Fourthly, concerning the university management perspective within the context of CFCE, collaborative universities in western provinces have accrued substantial knowledge in establishing an effective support framework for students. According to Lin (2012), adept university management and administration strive to engender an environment conducive to fostering active learning and creativity among students, both within academic realms and professional contexts. Immersed in such an environment, learner's exhibit heightened sensitivity in nurturing their creative competence, a quality instrumental in achieving exceptional workplace performance post-graduation (Martens & Prosser, 1998). Many CFCE universities in the western provinces of China have successfully instituted such supportive frameworks, proving effective in evaluating students' progress and performance.

Nevertheless, in comparison to the economically advanced east coastal provinces and cities, the western provinces of China face geographical disadvantages and economic underdevelopment, which significantly impact the educational quality of CFCE in these regions. Despite these challenges, there has been substantial development in CFCE within the western provinces over the past few decades. Aligned with the central government's vision, the expansion of CFCE is perceived as a solution to rectify the issue of imbalanced resource distribution across the nation, particularly contributing to the comprehensive reform of higher education in the western provinces (Zhu et al., 2021). CFCE serves as an expedited means of acquiring high-quality educational resources and caters to diverse educational needs, representing substantial progress in the western provinces and accelerating their internationalization efforts, especially in the context of the "Belt and Road" initiative. Although CFCE has played a crucial role in advancing this national plan, economic limitations persist in the western provinces. Quantitatively, for instance, as indicated by Zhang (2022), CFCE institutions and programs in the western provinces constitute only 10%, significantly below the average level observed in the east coastline cities and provinces. This stark disparity underscores the considerable gap that still exists, indicating a lengthy journey ahead for the western provinces. Moreover, it is imperative for CFCE organizations to identify existing problems and challenges to inform future development strategies.

#### **4.1.3 Existing problems and challenges of teaching quality of CFCE in west provinces**

Based on the findings from the conducted interviews in this research, several problems and challenges have been identified within CFCE. Primarily, a significant issue lies in the lack of effective regulation of teaching activities and teachers' behavior in the classroom, posing a considerable obstacle to the comprehensive evaluation of teaching quality. Additionally, the term "teaching quality" itself proves challenging to define, given the substantial disparity in educational ideologies between China and its cooperative nations (Xu, 2022). This presents an inherent dilemma for CFCE.

The discrepancy between China and Western countries regarding the concept of "educational quality" is particularly evident. For example, in China, a key index of teaching quality revolves

around the teachers' ability to train students oriented towards exams, ensuring high academic marks across various levels of examinations. Conversely, in Western countries, teaching quality extends beyond mere academic performance, emphasizing the comprehensive ability of students to solve real-life problems (Zhan, 2014). This fundamental difference underscores the varied understandings of educational objectives between China and the Western world. However, there are certain aspects that find common ground:

- i. Learning Ability for Students: Refers to the quick comprehension and internalization of knowledge across different domains.
- ii. Problem-Solving Ability: The capability to apply acquired knowledge in addressing real-life challenges.
- iii. Creativity and Innovation: Effective learning extends beyond understanding and memorizing knowledge; it involves creatively applying acquired knowledge and fostering innovation.

Despite the differences, these aspects are universally acknowledged and accepted in both educational contexts.

Considering the teaching objectives and the concept of teaching quality in CFCE universities in the western provinces, this research has identified several issues. Primarily, a widespread challenge lies in the predominant focus on the academic competence of learners, often neglecting their practical application of knowledge in problem-solving (Zhang et al., 2021). This imbalance has resulted in a deficiency in fostering a creative mindset and the ability to apply knowledge effectively in real-world scenarios, posing a significant concern, particularly in practical contexts.

In the western provinces, where opportunities for internships and practical work experiences are limited, the development of innovative thinking and creative skills remains underemphasized. Faculty members in universities tend to prioritize academic performances, such as the quantity of research papers published and examination scores, for formative assessments. This narrow focus poses a significant constraint on the comprehensive improvement of teaching quality, hindering a more holistic consideration of educational objectives in these regions.

A significant challenge affecting the teaching quality of CFCE universities in the western provinces is the absence of a viable quality control system. In higher education administration in China, there is a prevailing practice of allowing considerable autonomy in individual teacher activities within the classroom. While this autonomy is crucial for fostering innovative teaching approaches, it has resulted in an unregulated assessment of teaching quality. The decentralized management of teachers by university faculty members is a pervasive issue in China. Despite the existence of widely agreed-upon teaching syllabuses, teachers have significant freedom in selecting course content and materials. For instance, in English courses, the choice of learning materials by teachers is excessively discretionary, and there are minimal restrictions on the pedagogical methods they employ in the classroom. This lack of regulation has led to a loss of control over teachers' work. Consequently, there is a notable absence of universally accepted criteria for evaluating teaching quality in CFCE universities. This constitutes a substantial challenge, particularly in CFCE universities in the western provinces.

Thirdly, the absence of a quality control system exacerbates the challenge of faculty quality in CFCE universities in China. Many teachers in these institutions adhere to traditional teaching methods, relying heavily on lecture-centered approaches in their classroom interactions. Furthermore, due to economic constraints, numerous teachers are hesitant to embrace innovative teaching practices. The prevailing tendency is to adhere to a knowledge-focused educational approach. The reluctance of both teachers and students in CFCE universities to engage in innovative approaches contributes to the overall subpar performance in pragmatic language use by learners.

In general, the concept of teaching quality in CFCE universities in the western provinces has been either misconstrued or inadequately monitored. This poses a significant challenge for administrators of CFCE institutions in these regions. To rectify this situation, numerous measures must be implemented.

## **4.2 Discussion**

The overarching conclusion drawn from this study is derived from both the interview outcomes and a comprehensive analysis of pertinent academic and governmental documents. This investigation posits that CFCE, as an innovative educational paradigm, undertakes the responsibility of reshaping and modernizing traditional Chinese education rooted in Confucianism, which traditionally places the teacher at the center of classroom dynamics (Pan, 2017). The traditional Confucian ethos establishes the teacher as both a moral and academic exemplar for students, fostering an expectation that students would not surpass their teachers in knowledge accumulation (Lin & Liu, 2007). A change in this paradigm is required since long-term devotion to the teacher-centric approach has severely limited the quality of education in China.

The rise of CFCE has accelerated this change by challenging traditional teaching techniques in China through the integration of global educational resources and promoting a path towards innovation. Although there has been a favorable trend, there are still worries about the perceived standard of instruction in CFCE organizations.

Numerous factors impact the teaching quality of CFCE organizations in the western provinces. In recent years, both regional and national government entities, along with educational administration departments, have increasingly intervened to regulate the intricacies of CFCE collaborations. To begin with, as outlined by Li (2011), a more stringent faculty selection process, inclusive of foreign teachers, has been instrumental in ensuring the quality of staff within CFCE organizations. In the western CFCE universities, the personnel recruitment system has undergone gradual regulation. Nonetheless, due to economic constraints, highly skilled teachers still exhibit reluctance to work in the western provinces, constituting a significant challenge. To attract and retain more talented educators, there is a critical need for increased resource allocation by CFCE universities in the western provinces. Currently, expanding financial support stands as a pressing imperative. Beyond governmental assistance, social contributions represent a substantial funding source. Individual CFCE universities in the western provinces may find strategic collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and commercial entities to be a prudent solution. Indeed, CFCE universities in the western provinces possess a notable advantage in fostering such cooperative ventures.

Secondly, enhancing the quality assessment system is an imperative task for CFCE universities in the western provinces. This endeavor primarily revolves around the establishment of a periodic evaluation framework intended for universal adoption by CFCE organizations. The evaluative dimensions encompass self-regulation among university teachers, student satisfaction levels, and comprehensive assessments conducted by experts and professionals. All these facets are aimed at ensuring effective supervision and evaluation of teaching quality to the benefit of students. Simultaneously, quality assurance and certification processes play pivotal roles in the completion of the quality assessment system. The certification procedures must be stringent, impartial, and reliable. To achieve this, the implementation of a robust supervision system is deemed necessary.

Thirdly, there is a pressing need to redefine traditional teaching objectives, shifting the emphasis from mere knowledge acquisition to the cultivation of students' comprehensive abilities. In essence, the focus should transition from mastering knowledge to honing problem-solving skills among learners. This necessitates CFCE universities to adopt diverse educational concepts and objectives borrowed from Western nations, moving away from the confines of traditional and outdated educational ideals prevalent in China. Achieving this paradigm shift requires cultural tolerance from CFCE administrators. Cultivating cultural tolerance is a crucial step toward embracing advanced and scientifically proven teaching methods, ensuring genuine teaching quality on an international scale.

## **5. Conclusion**

In conclusion, addressing the identified challenges, the most crucial approach to enhance teaching quality in CFCE universities of western provinces is the implementation of an effective supervision system. This system aims to scrutinize the work demeanor and teaching methodologies employed by instructors during classroom interactions. By incorporating a supervision system, it is

anticipated that protocols should be instituted to govern the conduct of teachers in classroom settings (Osagie & Obaseki, 2010). Diverging from past informal practices, educational supervision proves fruitful in ensuring standardized quality management in classroom education (Tang & Chow, 2007). It facilitates the establishment of a widely applicable evaluation system for assessing the teaching performance of instructors in CFCE universities in the western provinces of China. Nevertheless, the adoption of such a supervision system presents challenges due to the inherent dilemmas faced by university teachers and administrators.

In essence, enhancing and sustaining the high quality of teaching in CFCE universities in the western provinces of China constitutes a highly intricate endeavor. The continuous improvement of educational facilities in these institutions plays a pivotal role in attracting and retaining talented individuals. Concurrently, the recruitment and training of teachers possessing genuine competence and capabilities are equally significant (Wang & Li, 2013). The latter undertaking holds particular importance in ensuring the high quality of teaching since teachers occupy a central position in the assurance of teaching quality. To attain this objective, the introduction of an effective supervision system is, at least for the current circumstances, a viable though not optimal solution.

## 6. Co-Author Contribution

The authors have stated that there is no conflict of interest in this article. The study's inception and design were collaborative efforts among all authors. The first author conducted the literature review, analyzed the data, and drafted the manuscript. Afterward, the second author played an important role in critically editing the article to assure its completion.

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#### Appendix: Interview sheet

Dear participants,

Thank you very much for your kindness to participate in this interview. The interview is anonymous and does not concern anything that belongs to your personal privacy. Please be free to answer the following questions.

1. As far as you know, does your university have sufficient resources? How do you know this?
2. Do you have good campus facilities?
3. Does your university administration encourage innovative teaching in class?
4. Do you have any sort of supervision or monitoring of the teaching process by overseas teachers?
5. Do you think it is necessary to adopt standardization or any kind of regulation as far as teaching behavior is concerned?
6. Is bilingual teaching adopted in your university? Does it favor teaching quality improvement?
7. Does the exchange between domestic and foreign teachers are regularly practiced in your university?
8. What challenges lie ahead as far as teaching quality of your university is concerned?
9. What suggestions do you propose for further improvement of teaching quality in your university?