



**INFLUENCE OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES, ECONOMIC
ENVIRONMENT, AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN LEADERSHIP
STYLES TOWARDS THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER
EDUCATION IN GUIZHOU, CHINA**

By

CHEN XIAOFEI

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

November 2024

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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November 2024

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The internationalization of higher education (IHE) has emerged as a transformative strategy in response to globalization, with leadership playing an essential role in directing complex challenges and opportunities. This study explores the leadership styles of International Affairs Directors (IADs) in Guizhou's Higher Education Institutions (HEI), assessing how government policies, economic environments, and organizational cultures influence their approaches to advancing internationalization. Using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model as the theoretical framework, the research highlights the connection of external systems and individual leadership behaviors. The Full Range Leadership Model (FRLM) provides insights into the effectiveness of transformational, transactional, and distributed leadership styles within this context. Data collection methods include semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and thematic analysis, focusing on 11 higher education institutions in Guizhou.

The findings discover that government policies, such as the Belt and Road Initiative and the Double First-Class strategy, shape institutional internationalization agendas. Economic factors, including resource constraints and regional development goals, further influence leadership adaptability. Organizational culture emerges as a critical determinant, with supportive environments fostering inclusive and visionary leadership. Despite the potential for international collaborations, challenges such as resource limitations, cultural barriers, and misaligned institutional priorities hinder progress. The study highlights the importance of leadership approaches to address these challenges, emphasizing adaptability, cultural intelligence, and strategic alignment with regional and global trends. This research contributes to the discourse on IHE by providing actionable recommendations for enhancing leadership effectiveness in resource-constrained settings like Guizhou. It advocates for capacity-building, policy alignment, and a holistic understanding of leadership dynamics to optimize internationalization outcomes. The findings have implications for policymakers, institutional leaders, and researchers seeking to advance internationalization in similar contexts worldwide.

Keyword: Economic Environment, Government Policies, Internationalization, Leadership Styles, Organizational Culture

SDG: GOAL 4: Quality Education

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PENGARUH DASAR KERAJAAN, PERSEKITARAN EKONOMI, DAN
BUDAYA ORGANISASI DALAM GAYA KEPIMPINAN KE ARAH
PENGANTARABANGSAAN PENDIDIKAN TINGGI DI GUIZHOU, CHINA**

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Pengantarabangsaan Pendidikan Tinggi (IHE) telah muncul sebagai strategi transformatif dalam menghadapi globalisasi, dengan kepimpinan memainkan peranan penting dalam mengarahkan cabaran dan peluang yang kompleks. Kajian ini meneroka gaya kepimpinan Pengarah Hal Ehwal Antarabangsa (IAD) dalam Institusi Pendidikan Tinggi (HEI) di Guizhou, dengan menilai bagaimana dasar kerajaan, persekitaran ekonomi, dan budaya organisasi mempengaruhi pendekatan mereka dalam memajukan pengantarabangsaan. Menggunakan Model Ekologi Bronfenbrenner sebagai kerangka teori, kajian ini menekankan hubungan antara sistem luaran dan tingkah laku kepimpinan individu. Model Full Range Leadership Model (FRLM) menyediakan wawasan mengenai keberkesanan gaya kepimpinan transformasi, transaksional, dan teragih dalam konteks ini. Kaedah pengumpulan data termasuk temu bual separa berstruktur, analisis dokumen, dan analisis tematik yang memfokuskan kepada 11 institusi pendidikan tinggi di Guizhou.

Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa dasar kerajaan seperti Inisiatif *Belt and Road* dan strategi *Double First-Class* membentuk agenda pengantarabangsaan institusi. Faktor ekonomi, termasuk kekangan sumber dan matlamat pembangunan wilayah, turut mempengaruhi keupayaan kepimpinan untuk menyesuaikan diri. Budaya organisasi muncul sebagai penentu kritikal, di mana persekitaran yang menyokong mampu memupuk kepimpinan yang inklusif dan berwawasan. Walaupun terdapat potensi untuk kolaborasi antarabangsa, cabaran seperti kekangan sumber, halangan budaya, dan keutamaan institusi yang tidak selaras menghalang kemajuan. Kajian ini menekankan kepentingan pendekatan kepimpinan untuk menangani cabaran ini, dengan memberi penekanan kepada keupayaan menyesuaikan diri, kecerdasan budaya, dan penjajaran strategik dengan trend serantau dan global. Kajian ini menyumbang kepada wacana IHE dengan menyediakan cadangan praktikal untuk meningkatkan keberkesanan kepimpinan dalam konteks yang terhad sumber seperti Guizhou. Ia menyokong pembangunan kapasiti, penjajaran dasar, dan pemahaman holistik terhadap dinamik kepimpinan untuk mengoptimumkan hasil pengantarabangsaan. Penemuan ini memberikan implikasi penting kepada penggubal dasar, pemimpin institusi, dan penyelidik yang berhasrat memajukan pengantarabangsaan dalam konteks yang serupa di seluruh dunia.

Kata kunci: Persekitaran Ekonomi, Dasar Kerajaan, Pengantarabangsaan, Gaya Kepimpinan, Budaya Organisasi

SDG: MATLAMAT 4: Pendidikan Berkualiti

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Educational Administration). The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALT	Authentic Leadership Theory
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CIO	Chief International Officer
CLT	Complexity Leadership Theory
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CPI	Consumer Price Index
DGE	Director Of Global Engagement
DIO	Director Of International Operations
EU	European Union's
EUA	European Universities Association
FRLM	Full Range Leadership Model
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GZNU	Guizhou Normal University
GZU	Guizhou University
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
IADs	International Affairs Directors
IAH	Internationalization At Home
IAU	International Association Of Universities
IDAs	Individualized Development Accounts
IHE	Internationalization Of Higher Education
ILT	Inclusive Leadership Theory
PC	Party Committee
PPI	Producer Price Index

SIO	Senior International Officer
SJTU	Shanghai Jiao Tong University
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, And Mathematics
UC	University Of Cordillera
UIBE	University Of International Business And Economics
VPIA	Vice President Of International Affairs



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Recent studies have provided deeper insights into the Internationalization of Higher Education (IHE) and the essential role of leadership within this context. De Wit (2023) emphasizes the evolving nature of IHE, emphasizing the necessity for adaptable leadership to navigate the complexities of globalization and technological advancements. This perspective emphasizes the importance of leaders who can effectively integrate international, intercultural, and global dimensions into higher education institutions (HEIs). In the Chinese context, Zhou et al. (2022) analyze China's higher education policies from 2010 to 2020, identifying key approaches such as the establishment of Confucius Institutes and international student recruitment. These strategies reflect China's commitment to enhancing its global educational influence and the critical role of leadership in implementing these initiatives.

Leadership styles significantly impact the success of IHE initiatives. Aboramadan et al. (2020) explore various leadership approaches, including servant and transformational leadership, within higher education. Their findings suggest that inclusive leadership is particularly effective in managing diversity and fostering an environment conducive to internationalization. The COVID-19 pandemic has further influenced IHE, prompting shifts toward digital and blended learning models. The International Association of Universities (IAU) (2020) discusses these

transformations, emphasizing the need for leaders to adapt to new modalities of education delivery and to continue promoting international collaboration despite mobility restrictions. Recent literature highlights the dynamic nature of IHE and the essential role of adaptable, inclusive leadership in navigating the challenges and opportunities presented by globalization and technological change. These insights are particularly relevant for IADs in regions like Guizhou, China, as they work to align institutional strategies with evolving global trends.

The IHE has undergone significant transformations in the last five years, driven by global, economic, and institutional changes. Recent studies emphasize that globalization and the evolving dynamics of international education have heightened the need for adaptable strategies. For instance, Marinoni and Van't Land (2024) present findings from the sixth IAU Global Survey on the future of internationalization, noting a shift toward hybrid approaches that integrate digital and physical mobility, especially in the post-pandemic context. This highlights the importance of developing comprehensive strategies that address the changing global landscape of higher education.

In the Chinese context, recent government initiatives highlight a renewed focus on high-quality internationalization. Li and Xue (2024) explore policies such as the Belt and Road education initiative and the updated Double First-Class strategy, which aim to enhance China's global educational influence. These policies reflect a shift from quantitative expansion to qualitative improvement, emphasizing innovation, global collaboration, and sustainable development in higher education.

Leadership plays a crucial role in navigating these transformations, particularly in countries like China, where government policies heavily influence institutional operations. Zheng (2024) discusses how university leaders in China are balancing the complexities of globalization with state-directed priorities. The study highlights the critical role of leadership in implementing policies, fostering institutional growth, and addressing global challenges.

Economic factors also significantly impact IHE, as universities align their internationalization strategies with global market demands. Kapfudzaruwa (2024) compares approaches in the Global North and South, illustrating how economic rationales shape IHE policies. The study provides insights into China's strategic use of internationalization to attract global talent, enhance research capabilities, and strengthen its position in the knowledge economy.

The organizational culture within Chinese universities has evolved to support transnational education models. Li, Dai, and Zhang (2023) examine how institutions adapted to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly through virtual mobility and collaborative research initiatives. These adaptations highlight the resilience and innovation within Chinese higher education, reinforcing its commitment to international collaboration.



1.2 Research Background

Globalization and internationalization are two interrelated yet distinct forces shaping the landscape of higher education. While globalization refers to the broader social,

economic, and technological trends influencing the 21st century, internationalization describes the targeted institutional responses to these trends through specific policies and practices. Together, they drive transformative changes across universities, influencing aspects such as student and staff mobility, curricula, institutional collaboration, and global competitiveness (Lee & Stensaker, 2021).

The conceptualization of IHE has expanded significantly over the years. Initially focused on student mobility and cross-border education, recent frameworks emphasize the broader integration of global perspectives into academic and institutional practices. Knight (2023) highlights the importance of incorporating global citizenship education into internationalization strategies, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This shift from mobility-centered approaches to more inclusive strategies like Internationalization at Home (IAH) ensures that all students, including those who do not participate in mobility programs, benefit from global learning experiences (Brandenburg et al., 2020).

Internationalization fosters academic collaboration through joint research, dual-degree programs, and global partnerships. Mok (2022) identifies these collaborations as critical drivers of innovation, addressing global challenges such as climate change, technological advancements, and public health crises. Teichler (2023) emphasizes the growing significance of interdisciplinary research facilitated by international partnerships, which enrich academic outputs and enhance global knowledge networks. Beyond research, internationalization influences curriculum design by embedding global perspectives and promoting intercultural dialogue. These efforts help universities prepare students to navigate diverse cultural and professional environments.

Global university rankings remain a powerful influence on internationalization strategies. Institutions often compete for higher rankings to attract international students, faculty, and funding. Lee and Stensaker (2021) argue that rankings drive strategic priorities, such as research output and global partnerships. However, critics like Altbach and de Wit (2020) caution that an overemphasis on rankings risks commodifying education and detracting from its broader social mission. The growing complexity of internationalization requires robust quality assurance frameworks. Institutions must ensure the credibility of cross-border programs, joint degrees, and other collaborative initiatives. Leask and Carroll (2022) propose comprehensive quality assurance mechanisms to safeguard academic standards and institutional reputations. These frameworks are particularly critical as universities navigate challenges related to diverse regulatory environments and cultural expectations.

Cultural integration remains a focal point of IHE. As universities become more diverse, fostering intercultural competence among students and staff is essential. Deardorff (2023) highlights the importance of training programs, global curricula, and extracurricular activities that promote cultural sensitivity and understanding. These efforts enhance students' global employability and prepare them to navigate multicultural workplaces.

Likewise, opportunities thrive for universities that embrace holistic and sustainable internationalization strategies. By integrating digital tools, fostering equity, and emphasizing global citizenship, institutions can enhance their global impact while remaining true to their academic mission (Knight, 2023; Marginson, 2021).

1.3 Problem Statement

This primary aim of the study is to explore the implementation of IHE particularly in less developed regions like Guizhou, China. It emphasizes the complexity of integrating international, intercultural, and global dimensions into education, involving activities such as curriculum internationalization, global partnerships, and mobility programs. Leadership, especially the role of IAD, is critical in navigating these processes. Government policies shape IHE by providing opportunities through funding and strategic initiatives while imposing regulatory constraints. Also, economic environments and organizational cultures play dynamic roles in shaping resources and institutional attitudes toward internationalization.

The research explores how government policies, the economic environment, and organizational culture influence the leadership styles of IADs in Guizhou Province. These three factors are linked and play a crucial role in shaping how universities in the region approach internationalization and global engagement.

The Guizhou Provincial Government has taken active steps to support and encourage internationalization. Policies such as financial incentives, streamlined visa processes, and the organization of international events have created a favorable environment for universities to attract global talent and establish partnerships. These measures empower IADs to implement internationalization strategies more effectively, providing the necessary resources and regulatory support to facilitate global collaborations (Jia & Chen, 2021). In addition to supportive policies, Guizhou's economic landscape has significantly improved over the past decade. The province has

become a hub for emerging industries like big data and cloud computing, leading to an increased demand for international education and innovation. This economic growth has also provided universities with the resources to expand their global outreach and enhance international collaborations. As a result, IADs are better equipped to align educational initiatives with the province's broader economic development goals, creating opportunities for innovation and knowledge exchange (Jia & Chen, 2021).

Organizational culture within Guizhou's universities also plays a dynamic role in shaping internationalization efforts. Many institutions have integrated internationalization into their missions and strategies, demonstrating a strong commitment to global collaboration. For instance, Guizhou University has explicitly stated its goal of becoming a world-class institution with a strong international reputation (Li, 2020). Such institutional alignment provides IADs with a clear vision and a supportive environment to lead internationalization initiatives effectively.

The focus of the study is on exploring how government policies, economic environments, and organizational cultures shape the leadership styles of IADs in enhancing internationalization efforts. Leadership is depicted as a crucial driver in guiding these processes, determining the success of strategic initiatives and navigating challenges unique to less developed regions like Guizhou, China. This consistency highlights the study's aim to evaluate the effectiveness of leadership styles in promoting internationalization while addressing contextual factors and providing practical recommendations for HEIs. This alignment between the theoretical discourse on leadership influence and the research objectives reinforces the study's relevance and rigor in addressing critical gaps in the internationalization literature.

Government policies, economic environments, and organizational culture are crucial factors in shaping leadership styles in IHE, particularly in less developed regions like Guizhou, China. Government policies influence IHE by providing funding, regulatory frameworks, and strategic initiatives that either enable or constrain internationalization efforts. Economic conditions impact universities' ability to allocate resources, form global partnerships, and sustain mobility programs, aligning educational goals with broader regional development strategies. Organizational culture plays a main role in shaping institutional attitudes toward internationalization, with some universities integrating global engagement into their missions while others encounter internal resistance to change. In this context, the role of IADs is critical, as they navigate these external and internal influences to implement effective internationalization strategies. However, existing leadership approaches often struggle to adapt to the socio-economic, cultural, and policy-driven complexities of less developed regions. Rigid policies, limited resources, and inconsistent institutional support create challenges for IADs in leading internationalization effectively. This study aims to explore how leadership styles interact with these contextual factors, addressing gaps in research and providing insights into more adaptable, contextually aware leadership models for advancing IHE in Guizhou.

The problem with the current leadership style lies in its limitations in effectively addressing the complexities and challenges of internationalizing higher education, particularly in less developed regions like Guizhou, China. Existing leadership approaches often lack adaptability to the unique socio-economic, cultural, and policy-driven contexts of these areas, resulting in a gap between strategic objectives and practical implementation. IADs, who play an essential role in driving

internationalization, often face constraints from rigid government policies, limited resources, and organizational cultures that may not fully support international collaboration. Moreover, there is a lack of empirical research on effective leadership styles tailored to the specific needs of local universities in less developed regions, further complicating IADs' ability to lead effectively. These issues highlight the need for a more nuanced, flexible, and contextually aware approach to leadership in international higher education; one that can bridge the gap between policy directives and institutional realities.

In this study, other elements such as technological advancements, demographic factors, and geopolitical influences are not taken into consideration due to their indirect impact on the leadership styles of International Affairs Directors (IADs) in the context of internationalizing higher education (IHE) in Guizhou, China. While these factors undoubtedly play a role in shaping internationalization strategies at a broader level, this research specifically focuses on the direct and immediate influences of government policies, economic environments, and organizational culture, as these elements exert the most significant and observable impact on leadership decision-making and institutional strategies. Additionally, including too many variables would dilute the study's focus, making it challenging to develop a comprehensive analysis of leadership dynamics within the chosen scope. By narrowing the research to these key contextual factors, the study ensures depth in its findings and provides actionable insights relevant to institutional leadership in IHE. However, future research could explore the interplay between leadership styles and other emerging global trends, such as digital transformation and shifting student mobility patterns, to expand on this study's findings.

1.4 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to investigate how government policies, economic environment, and organizational culture influence the leadership styles of IADs in promoting the internationalization of higher education in Guizhou Province, China. The study selects three primary elements of organizational culture, economic environment, and government policies based on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model to explore how these factors shape leadership styles in internationalizing higher education institutions (HEIs) in Guizhou, China. These elements are the most influential in shaping leadership due to their dynamic interaction across institutional and societal levels. By focusing on these dimensions, the study aims to provide a distinction understanding of the leadership dynamics driving internationalization within Guizhou. The decision to focus on these three factors was driven by their relevance to the study's context and their role in providing insights into leadership within nested systems of influence. Though the study acknowledges the importance of other elements, such as individual leader characteristics or historical contexts (chronosystem), these are considered less central to the framework. Instead, they interact indirectly with the chosen elements, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of leadership styles. This layered approach allows for a holistic analysis of how external and internal factors converge to shape leadership in the internationalization of higher education. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. examine how government policies affect the leadership styles of IADs in enhancing the IHE in Guizhou Province.
2. analyze how economic environment influences the leadership styles of IADs in enhancing the IHE in Guizhou Province.

3. explore how organizational culture impacts the leadership styles of IADs in enhancing the IHE in Guizhou Province.
4. explore what difficulties encountered by IADs in advancing internationalization efforts and how do they resolve them.
5. evaluate the effectiveness of the leadership styles of IADs in enhancing the IHE in Guizhou Province.

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the research objectives, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How do government policies affect the leadership styles of IADs in enhancing the IHE in Guizhou Province?
2. How does economic environment influence the leadership styles of IADs in enhancing the IHE in Guizhou Province?
3. How does organizational culture impact the leadership styles of IADs in enhancing the IHE in Guizhou Province?
4. What difficulties encountered by IADs in advancing internationalization efforts and how do they resolve them?
5. What is the effectiveness of leadership styles among IADs to enhance IHE in Guizhou China?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it investigates the factors influencing the leadership styles of IADs within the unique context of internationalization in Guizhou Province, a less developed region in China. The research addresses a critical gap in the literature concerning the role and impact of IADs on internationalization efforts in China, particularly in local universities that face distinct such as resource limitations, less

established global networks, and weaker institutional capacities compared to their counterparts in developed regions. By examining these issues, the study provides valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers, offering a deeper understanding of how leadership styles can either facilitate or hinder the process of IHE.

Furthermore, the study sheds light on the challenges and opportunities faced by IADs, including navigating complex government policies, leveraging limited economic resources, and fostering an organizational culture that embraces global collaboration. These challenges are combined by the need for IADs to balance institutional goals with external pressures, such as meeting international standards and managing global partnerships. Equally, opportunities arise from the growing recognition of Guizhou's potential in the international education arena, fueled by national policies and the region's growing development. By identifying a leadership style model that aligns with the unique socio-economic and cultural context of Guizhou, the study not only contributes to the academic discourse but also provides practical recommendations for enhancing leadership effectiveness. These conclusions are relevant not only for Guizhou but also for other regions in China and developing countries facing similar dynamics, thereby extending the study's applicability and impact in advancing internationalization efforts worldwide.

Based on the context and focus of the study, it analyzes the relationship between various influencing factors such as government policies, the economic environment, and organizational culture and the leadership styles of IADs. By examining how these factors shape the effectiveness of leadership in internationalization efforts, the study

identifies patterns and traits that are particularly effective in addressing challenges and leveraging opportunities within the context of Guizhou's higher education system.

Among indicators used to determine effective leadership of IAD is the achievement of institutional internationalization goals, such as increasing student and faculty mobility, forming international partnerships, and integrating global perspectives into the curriculum. Effective leadership also involves strong stakeholder engagement, demonstrated by collaboration with government bodies, external partners, and internal stakeholders, including faculty and students. Another essential indicator is adaptability, where leaders must respond to external challenges, such as economic constraints, shifting policies, and cultural complexities, while ensuring alignment with organizational objectives.

The study contributes to the advancement of leadership theories by applying them to the context of internationalizing higher education in less developed regions like Guizhou, China. It examines how government policies, economic environments, and organizational cultures influence the leadership styles of IADs, enriching existing theories such as transformational and situational leadership and providing insights into their adaptability in diverse contexts.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the scope of the study is limited to 11 HEIs directly managed by the Guizhou provincial government, which may not be representative of all HEIs in China or other countries. Therefore, the results of this study should not be generalized beyond the selected

institutions. Secondly, the sample size of the study is relatively small, and the participants are limited to individuals who have been identified as IADs of the 11 selected institutions. Therefore, the findings may not be applicable to other stakeholders in IHE. Thirdly, there is a lack of long-term research data on the effectiveness of leadership styles of IADs, which limits the ability to draw definitive conclusions. Finally, this study relies on the perceptions of IADs and does not include external indicators to verify the effectiveness of leadership styles.

Despite these limitations, this study provides important insights into the leadership styles of IADs in promoting IHE at selected HEIs in Guizhou. The results can be used to inform the development of effective leadership strategies in the context of IHE. Additionally, the study highlights the factors that influence the effectiveness of leadership styles, including government policies, economic environment, and organizational culture.

1.8 Definition of Terms

The definition of terms in this study is carefully selected to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research objectives and context. These definitions are based on established literature and fitted to the unique focus of the study, particularly on the IHE and the leadership styles of IADs in Guizhou, China. This study uses the following terms with the meanings as defined below:

1.8.1 Higher Education

Higher education refers to the stage of learning that occurs at institutions such as universities, colleges, polytechnics, and vocational schools, where individuals pursue academic, professional, or technical qualifications beyond secondary education. This level of education typically leads to the attainment of degrees, diplomas, or certifications and focuses on developing advanced knowledge, critical thinking, and specialized skills in various fields (Tight, 2020). In this study, higher education refers to the optional final stage of formal learning that occurs after secondary education, which usually lasts for three years or more and leads to a bachelor's degree or higher. Higher education is also known as post-secondary education, third level education, or tertiary education.

1.8.2 Internationalization of Higher Education

IHE is the intentional process of integrating international, intercultural, and global dimensions into the purpose, functions, and delivery of higher education. This concept encompasses a wide range of activities, including student and staff mobility, international partnerships, curriculum development with global perspectives, transnational education programs, and the promotion of intercultural competencies. The primary aim is to enhance the quality and relevance of education and research while preparing students to engage effectively in a globally interconnected world (de Wit & Altbach, 2021). In this study, IHE refers to the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions, or delivery of higher education.

1.8.3 Government Policies

Government policies are a set of principles, laws, guidelines, or actions formulated and implemented by governmental bodies to address specific public issues and achieve desired societal, economic, or environmental objectives. These policies guide decision-making and resource allocation at various levels, from local to national, shaping public services and initiatives across sectors such as education, health, and infrastructure (Anderson, 2020). In this study, government policies refers to key elements of government policies of (1) they are created by governments, and they reflect the values and priorities of the government in question, (2) they are used by governments to make decisions and take actions on specific issues, (3) they are typically focused on specific issues, such as education, healthcare, the environment, the economy, social welfare, national security, or foreign policy, (4) they can cover a wide range of issues, from the very local to the very global, and (5) they can address social, economic, and environmental issues.

1.8.4 Economic Environment

The economic environment refers to the external macroeconomic and microeconomic factors that influence the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services within a region or sector. These factors include national and regional economic policies, market conditions, resource availability, and financial stability, all of which directly impact institutional operations and decision-making. In the context of higher education, the economic environment includes government funding allocations, tuition fee structures, international student market trends, and the broader

economic conditions that affect mobility, partnerships, and program development (Investopedia, 2023). In this study, the economic environment specifically refers to how external conditions shape the leadership styles of IADs and their ability to effectively promote internationalization within Guizhou Province, a region characterized by limited resources and economic constraints.

1.8.5 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices that shape behaviors, attitudes, and decision-making processes within an organization. It is a collective framework that influences how employees interact, perform tasks, and align with the organization's goals and vision. Organizational culture is shaped by leadership, history, and external environmental factors, and it serves as a critical determinant of an organization's success and adaptability to change (Cameron & Quinn, 2020). In this study, organizational culture refers to a significant impact on the success of an organization. A positive organizational culture can foster employee engagement, productivity, and innovation, as well as customer satisfaction and loyalty. A negative organizational culture can lead to employee disengagement, turnover, and poor performance, as well as customer dissatisfaction and complaints. Therefore, understanding and managing organizational culture is crucial for leaders who want to create a healthy and effective work environment.

1.8.6 Leadership Style

Leadership style is the way a leader communicates, motivates, and influences others to achieve a common goal (Harvard Business Review, 2023). In this study, leadership style refers to leader's distinctive approach to leading, managing, and developing their team. Leadership style can vary depending on the leader's personality, skills, experience, and goals, as well as the situation and the team.

1.8.7 International Affairs Director

An International Affairs Director (IAD) is a senior administrative leader responsible for developing, coordinating, and implementing an institution's internationalization strategies. Their role includes fostering global partnerships, managing international student and staff mobility programs, promoting cross-cultural competencies, and ensuring that international initiatives align with the institution's mission and goals. IADs play a critical role in enhancing the institution's global presence and facilitating cross-border collaborations to support education, research, and cultural exchange (Hudzik, 2020). In this study, IAD refers to the position that is crucial for helping higher education institutions to achieve their internationalization goals and to prepare students and faculty for success in the globalized world.

1.9 Summary

This chapter discussed aspects such as background of study, statement of problem, research objectives, research question, significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study and definition of terms. This research examines how the leadership styles of IADs in Guizhou, China, are influenced by government policies, economic

environment, and organizational culture. These factors significantly impact the opportunities and challenges IADs face in managing IHE. The study aims to fill this gap by examining how government policies, economic environment, and organizational culture affect IADs' leadership styles in Guizhou. The findings provide practical recommendations for IADs and HEIs in similar contexts, helping develop job descriptions, training programs, and effective leadership frameworks for campus internationalization.



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