

## **EXPLORING THE BORDERLESS CULTIVATION MODEL OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION IN CHINESE BORDER SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF YUNNAN PROVINCE**

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**Abstract:** The year 2023 marks the tenth year of China's initiative to build a "Belt and Road" and a closer China-ASEAN community of destiny. As an important part of the "One Belt, One Road" initiative and an important support, the external development of education is particularly important. In recent years, M County, a border city in China, has been actively integrating into the "Belt and Road" initiative, promoting the construction of the open demonstration zone along the border, and actively creating an international education training model with local characteristics, so the study of the current situation of the international education training model of secondary schools in M County without borders can help open up the local education to the outside world.

**Keywords:** Borderless Education, International Education, Borderlands

### **Introduction**

The development of international education can strengthen mutual exchanges and exchanges between countries along the route, seek a common language, deepen feelings, but also build a bond of communication and win-win cooperation and human resources, and consolidate public opinion and social foundation. Ten years since the construction of the Belt and Road, in order to promote the opening up of education to the outside world, China has issued a series of policy notices. 2015, "promoting the construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road vision and action" released a positive signal to carry out cooperation in running schools.<sup>[2]</sup> In 2016, the "Education Action to Promote the Joint Construction of the Belt and Road" mentioned such key points as cooperation in education connectivity and talent cultivation and training, providing a direction and idea for local implementation of education development abroad. By 2020, the Opinions of the Ministry of Education and Eight Other Departments on Accelerating and Expanding the Opening Up of Education to the World in the New Era will emphasize the requirements of strengthening the brand of "Study in China".

Yunnan is an important province in the construction of "One Belt, One Road", and M County

of Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture, located in the southernmost part of Yunnan, has the only border land port with Laos, which is not only an important hub of China's radiation center facing South Asia and Southeast Asia, but also an important bridge and window for the implementation of the strategy of opening to the outside world in Yunnan Province. window. With the opening of the China-Laos Railway in 2021, it will play a role in promoting the opening up of M County to the outside world.

### **Research Problems**

This paper focuses on the current situation of the borderless training model of international education in secondary schools in County M, a border city in China.

- 1) To investigate the current situation and analyze the borderless training model of international education in secondary schools in border areas of China,
- 2) To provide some practices and suggestions for local education.

### **Theoretical framework**

#### *Theory of Education without Boundaries*

The theory describes the provision of higher education across traditional boundaries of time, space and geography, and the resulting impact on many current conceptions of education, and was first focused on borderless education at the higher education level in 1998 in the Australian book *New Media and Borderless Education: A Review of the Integration of Global Media Networks and Higher Education*. Two years later, the launch of "The Business of Borderless Education" expanded and enriched the original concept of "borderless education". At present, the theoretical discussion still stays at the level of higher education, and the concept of borderless secondary international education has not yet been clearly defined. Compared with the definition of the concept of borderless international education in higher education, borderless secondary international education can be understood as the integration of internationalized educational concepts, teaching resources, and methodological innovations into the teaching, research, and service of secondary schools in border areas. The degree of border lessness of international education in secondary schools in border areas is mainly judged from six dimensions: administration without borders, teaching management without borders, staff management without borders, student management without borders, teaching resource management without borders, and educational concept without borders.

### **Literature Review**

In recent years, domestic scholars have conducted multidimensional studies and research on global borderless education. Wu (2018) explored the method of resource allocation for higher vocational education in China by starting with the boundary; Xu (2019) revealed a logic of change from borderless

education to borderless learning in the process of globalization of higher education; Zhang (2022) empirically summed up the concepts and practices of borderless education by taking elementary school as the target; Deng (2022) pointed out that "online education" is a practical experience of borderless education; Lina (2022) started from the basic overview of borderless higher education and further elaborates on the specific theoretical and practical picture of borderless higher education in Australia.

Taken together, the current research of some scholars on this is incomplete, higher education and domestic school management have been involved, but did not fully consider the differences that exist in the regional development and educational levels in transnational education and lacks a certain degree of practicability. Therefore, the research on borderless international education in border areas should start from macro theory, combined with the reality, supported by factual data, narrowing the scope of the research and the region to carry out the research.

### **Research Methodology**

This study mainly searches the concepts and policies related to "international education talent cultivation model" and "borderless education" through China Knowledge and Wipro databases and other resource databases. This study is based on the investigation of internationalized education in secondary schools in Mengla County by means of interviews, mainly focusing on the setting of cultivation goals, process implementation, and system operation, and through in-depth interviews with international students, ordinary students, teachers, and administrators of the two schools, to understand the current situation of internationalized education in border secondary schools without borders, and the highlights of the measures, and so on.

### **Results**

Currently, the secondary schools in County M that conduct international education can be divided into two categories: county vocational senior high schools, which mainly specialize in enrolling international students, and general secondary schools, mainly county No. 1 high schools.

#### 1) Administrative aspects

M County Vocational High School has included the goal of internationalization in its development plan since it was founded in 1986, with a specially set up and independent Foreign Exchange and Cooperation Division headed by a front-line teacher of the school. Partnerships have been established with two schools in Laos, breaking geographical restrictions. The school has invested funds for the implementation of the China (Mengla)-ASEAN Education and Training Center project.

From a county-wide perspective, there have been frequent visits and exchanges between the Lao education sector and the education system in M County. In August and September this year alone, the Lao education and sports system sent the heads of national ministries, departments and eight teacher

training colleges to two schools in the county for exchanges.

### 2) Teaching management without boundaries

Teaching and learning management is an important point of consideration in studying the degree of border lessness in international education. During the epidemic, M County Vocational Senior High School, which enrolled five Lao language classes totaling 251 Lao students via the Internet, adopted online teaching in the form of web-based classes for distance learning. Japanese language education in the first secondary school of the county also adopted online teaching. The two schools made full use of digital technology to carry out online education, breaking through the teaching limitations of time and space. In terms of curriculum, foreign language courses are now offered in all secondary schools in the county. County No. 1 High School has added Japanese language courses in addition to English courses. The County Vocational Senior High School has opened Foreign Language for Tourism (Lao direction) and International Business, specializing in teaching small languages to foreign students from Laos. Local language studies are divided into three main categories: test-taking languages, applied small languages, and Chinese. Test-taking language learning is mainly based on English learning and Japanese learning in County No.1 High School, which is a compulsory course for the college entrance examination, and there is no academic foreign language specialization; applied small language learning is mainly based on foreign language learning for tourism in County Vocational Senior High School, and on the basis of English, the learning of Lao language is added; Chinese language learning mainly refers to the language courses for international students and the Chinese language learning for Chinese students. In the course of teaching, local teachers use the traditional cultures of various countries as an entry point, and for foreign students, they flexibly utilize various teaching methods such as the "object teaching method" and the "association teaching method" to explain and teach. The county vocational high school adopts the education and teaching mode of "dual-teacher, dual-language, dual-class teacher". The first secondary school in the county has not set up any specialized classes for international students and adopts a cultural convergence management mode for international students' education, with no ad hoc dual-education mode. At present, the China (Mengla)-ASEAN Education and Training Center has been listed in the county vocational senior high school, and the school also organizes international education and teaching seminars for relevant personnel and units every year.

### 3) Faculty management without boundaries

In terms of teaching staff, the District Vocational Higher Secondary School has recruited teaching staff with international background and experience and has adopted the strategy of retaining outstanding Laotian graduates of the school to enrich the teaching staff, in addition to distributing recruitment notices to the outside world. In terms of staff development, both schools have acted to provide internationalized training and development of their own staff, and the County Overseas Chinese

Office has also sent out two teachers from the County Vocational High School to Oudomxay Province, Laos, for two years, in 2017 and 2018, to teach. As a result of the epidemic, among the teachers of the county vocational high school, the proportion of "dual-teacher" teachers to full-time teachers has dropped from 52.2% in previous years to about 32.5%, and there are currently less than 50 teachers in the whole school, with more than 18% of the teachers having overseas work and study experience. Both sides encourage and provide support and opportunities for international exchanges and further training for school staff. For the foreign teachers currently available in the school, the County Vocational Senior High School has developed appropriate assessment mechanisms to evaluate and reward them for their teaching. The First County High School provides conditions for its outstanding staff to participate in international activities and encourages them to participate in international activities.

#### 4) Student management without boundaries

As for students, according to the "14th Five-Year Plan" for Yunnan's education development, Mengla County has issued a notice on the enrollment of international students, which provides a certain level of protection for international student enrollment policies. For the existing international students in the school, the county vocational high school has set up a special career planning course. Both schools regularly organize and encourage their students to participate in intercultural activities for international students, such as the annual "China-Laos Youth Exchange" and "China-Laos Cultural Festival". There is a special dormitory for international students, a special agency in charge of visas, and the County No. 1 High School also offers a counseling service to answer students' questions. After students graduate, both schools provide opportunities for students to further their education. Through school-enterprise cooperation, the County Vocational High School enables Chinese and Lao students to travel to both countries for internships. In terms of further education, Chinese students of the county vocational high school can take the higher vocational examination, and Laotian students can apply for further study in domestic universities after passing the HSK (Chinese language proficiency test); the county No. 1 high school has agreed to enterprises entering the school to promote and provide Chinese students with opportunities to study in high-quality universities in overseas countries. It is understood that at present, the school has a number of students to study in the National University of Laos. After graduation, about 7% of the Laotian students of the county vocational high school are employed in Laos at all levels of party and government organizations, 18% are employed in well-known Chinese enterprises in Laos such as China-Laos Railway Company Limited and China Railway Bureau No.2 Design Institute, etc. 15% go to Beijing Language and Culture University, Yunnan University, etc. to pursue further studies in universities in and out of the province.

#### 5) Educational resource management without boundaries

In terms of educational resources, the county vocational high school has different series of internationalized teaching materials such as "Thai Chinese Annotated and Translated Book", "Chinese

as a Foreign Language Tutorial", "Test Taking Guide for HSK Chinese Proficiency Exam", etc. Although it has opened up the border lessness of the international educational resources, there is a lack of specialized books for the Laotian students. However, at the same time, the county vocational high school currently has a website that provides a complete foreign language to digitize the teaching resources, which is convenient for teachers and students to access together. Both schools now have online education programs and are actively accessing and sharing international quality teaching and learning resources. Both learning institutions have set up platforms for exchanging teaching resources, encouraging teachers to share their teaching experience, teaching materials and teaching methods among themselves. Overall, the degree of border lessness of resources needs to be strengthened.

#### 6) Education without borders

As a border county connected to Laos, M County has always been at the forefront of opening up to the outside world when it comes to the concept of international education in schools. The County Vocational High School has been taking openness to education into account since its founding in 1986. Both schools have also demonstrated tolerance and respect in publicity and other areas that emphasize culture and difference. In general, most of the staff in both schools have a global mindset, while the students, Chinese students are highly receptive to globalization, but are less likely to cultivate a global mindset, and the international students are well culturally integrated and have a more global mindset than their domestic counterparts. As a result of the research, it was found that both schools have behaviors in terms of encouraging teachers and students to participate in international educational activities, and the county vocational high school is more prominent, not only in terms of the construction project of the China (Mengla)-ASEAN Education and Training Center, etc., but also in terms of establishing partnerships with several schools in Laos, which together promote the development of the concept of education without borders.

### **Conclusions**

At present, international education border lessness in County M is in a stage of development. From the six aspects of administrative management, teaching management, staff management, student management, educational resource management and educational concepts, the international border lessness of county vocational senior high schools is higher and more typical. Although the ordinary schools, mainly the County No.1 Middle School, are not perfect in many aspects, they have internationalization consciousness in education concepts, and the students also have the thinking and vision of globalization development. Both sides complement each other.

### **Recommendations**

On the administrative side, we need to implement special funds for international education as

soon as possible, increase the frequency of visits and exchanges with schools in other countries, and encourage teachers and students to participate in international conferences and other activities; on the teaching side, we need to pay attention to the internationalization training of Chinese students, and increase participation in international courses and activities; on the teaching side, the two schools should provide teachers with more opportunities to participate in internationalized education and research and to enhance their thinking without borders; On the student side, international education scholarships should be actively established to encourage participation in international activities, and language and cultural training should be provided for students in need. Increase efforts in further studies and internships abroad and strive to find outlets for internationalized development for students in border cities; in terms of educational resources, increase efforts in the development of teaching materials suitable for Lao students, and prepare specialized teaching materials to improve the quality of education. More internationalized teaching materials and curricula should be introduced; the concept of education should be further improved to strengthen the cultivation of the idea of internationalization without borders for Chinese students, and more encouragement should be given to students to participate in international academic activities to create an atmosphere for learning.

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