

# **Conference Proceedings**

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## **Editors**

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# Editorial Notes

## What is the Bald Eagle and Panda Conference?

The Bald Eagle and Panda Virtual Conference is an annual event, first began in 2014, funded by the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. The conference evolved through the collaboration between Iowa State University (ISU) in the U.S. and Henan Normal University (HNNU) in China. Since 2012, HNNU and ISU have worked together to establish an American Cultural Center on the HNNU campus that can enhance English language training, understanding American culture from a comparative perspective, and enriching curriculum across both universities for the creation of global citizens with wide perspectives and open minds. We seek to enhance critical thinking and open dialogue across the globe.

The Bald Eagle and Panda (BEAP) Conference is preceded by a call for proposals asking students to submit a short essay (250-300 words) describing their intentions for a longer and more complete presentation and/or paper. All proposals were evaluated on the following: importance of the topic within American and Chinese cultural exchange, quality of writing, potential for effective display, and suitability/readiness for presentation. All students were given informative feedback on their proposals. Proposals were either accepted for presentation, accepted but not presented, or declined. Proposers in the first two categories were invited to submit a full paper that would be included in these proceedings and will enter them into the competition for prizes.

All BEAP presentations are pre-recorded and presented on the day of the conference. Presentations are archived and can be viewed at any time after the conference by visiting the Bald Eagle and Panda website: <https://baldeaglepanda.wordpress.com/>. After each presentation, the authors are available for live questions and answers.

The conference proceedings include all of the submitted papers to the conference. It is important to note that the papers have not been edited. These papers are published as originally submitted (minor stylistic changes for uniformity) by the students. With few exceptions, these papers were written by undergraduate students in China for whom English was not native. The reader will note great variability in the depth, style, grammatical correctness, and topic across the collection of papers. We reserved the original papers as evidence of the thinking and ability of these student presenters. We invite the readers to enjoy the originality, the diversity, as well as the perspectives.

## What is the Bald Eagle and Panda Series?

The BEAP conference is a part of the Bald Eagle and Panda Series that includes guest 3 lectures at various universities in China, a quarterly newsletter for undergraduate students in China, and recorded professional lectures by world renowned faculty on topics of importance to both China and the U.S. We are proud of the accomplishments of the students and others who participate in the BEAP series. Our plans are to continue to enhance our offerings and to work together to enhance international understanding and ultimately peace.

Linda Serra Hagedorn, Ph.D.

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Beijing Foreign Studies University

**A Study of the Sino-US Joint Leadership in Climate Change Cooperation**

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**Abstract**

It is a research on the joint leadership of China and the United States in Climate Change, analyzing the potential cooperation that can be developed to promote the bilateral relationship between two countries, while also benefit the global society through global governance. First, in the introduction part, the study presented the diachronic development of the Sino-US cooperation in climate change, discussed the main reasons of the existing collaboration and demonstrated the benefits of such partnership. Most importantly, the researcher studied on the two potential ways of cooperation in the future—setting up overseas NGOs and building multilateral platform for technology exchange, in order to provide suggestions to strengthen the relationship between China and the United States. At the end of the research, it was proved that these two approaches are feasible and would help improve the partnership through global governance.

Key words: climate change, Sino-US relationship, global governance, cooperation

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## Introduction

The natural environment that crutches the life of human beings is now in crisis, and the problem of climate change has sounded the alarm. At the end of 2015, after a long negotiation, the representatives of 195 countries came out with a binding resolution to deal with climate change – the Paris Agreement.

As two major carbon emitters, China and the US played a decisive role in the adoption of the agreement.

Long before the achievement of the Paris Agreement, both countries have been laying the foundation of the bilateral cooperation in climate change since the Sunnylands meeting in 2013. Under such frameworks as the U.S.-China Climate Change Working Group (CCWG), U.S.-China Clean Energy Research Center (CERC) and the U.S.-China Climate-Smart/Low-Carbon Cities Summits, China and the United States are actively expanding practical cooperation and would continue to further enhance the cooperation. Now, in the global community, the US and China are the major contributors to reaching the historic agreement and the leaders in combating climate change through a series of measures<sup>1</sup>.

For instance, in June 2016, the Eighth Round of China-US Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED) was held in Beijing, showing both countries' determination to tackle the problem with technological cooperation in various fields. Moreover, China and the US took the G20 Hangzhou Summit last September as a critical opportunity to gain more support from other member states and thus to

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<sup>1</sup> The White House Office of the Press Secretary. (2016). *U.S.-China Climate Change Cooperation Outcomes*. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/09/03/fact-sheet-us-china-cooperation-climate-change>



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achieve more practical results in such areas as energy accessibility, clean energy, energy efficiency, and global energy governance<sup>2</sup>.

The Sino-US partnership in climate change is formed principally because of the great potential for cooperation. Climate change has been one area where the interests of two sides converge. They can benefit greatly from such cooperation, politically, economically and environmentally.

For one thing, the US wants to take over the leadership on this issue<sup>3</sup>, which was previously dominated by the European Union, but a partner to share the burden of international aid is needed. For another, as a rapidly rising power and the largest carbon emitter, China was desperate in promoting its image of a responsible stakeholder and enhancing its global influence, but it lacks the strength in technology to achieve this on its own. With so many common interests and few conflicts, the two countries realized that only through cooperation can they address this challenge.

What's more, as the two largest economies, the biggest developing and developed country, and the permanent members of the UN Security Council, the Sino-US cooperation serves as a keystone in the decision-making process and final solution in global affairs. Therefore, cooperation between China and the US would make the combat with climate change more effective and efficient because the collaboration and the leadership of both countries will provide the world a better future environment and exemplify successful bilateral cooperation for other countries.

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<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China. (2016). *The 8th Round of China-US Strategic and Economic Dialogue Holds Special Joint Conference on Climate Change*. Retrieved from [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/zxxx\\_662805/t1370522.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1370522.shtml)

<sup>3</sup> The White House Office of the Press Secretary. (2016). *U.S.-China Climate Change Cooperation Outcomes*. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/09/03/fact-sheet-us-china-cooperation-climate-change>

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The collaboration of United States and China received wide approvals among scholars and researchers from both countries in terms of its significance in strengthening the bilateral relationship and guiding the global community. For example, the attitude of the interest parties has shift from blaming others to handling the issue positively (Zhao, 2015). Also, technological cooperation, such as clean energy industry, will stimulate dialogues between scholars and businessmen (Oh, 2012).

However, the existing partnership was merely the first step towards better cooperation.

The Sino-US cooperation in climate change is beyond the scope of bilateral relationship—it reflects both countries' ambition to pursue joint leadership and address this global issue (Karlsson, 2011). With the responsibility to lead the global cooperation, whether China and the US can drive other countries into actions, or even yield an effective global resolution is the utmost goal of this bilateral relationship. If this is achieved, the Sino-US relationship will be renewed along with the successful establishment of the partnership in global governance (Liu, 2016). To accomplish it, there are a lot more that can be done to benefit both countries and the global community.

Among the great possibilities on the future path of Sino-US cooperation, it is found that many scholars notice the potential of the communication of non-governmental organization (Schroeder, 2009) and the multi-lateral technology exchange (Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen & McGee, 2013). Thus, this research is aimed at analyzing the potential collaboration in climate change in this two aspects and providing suggestions for the future development of Sino-US relationship. And the result is expected to enlighten other researchers who endeavor to work for the friendship between China and America.

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## Overseas Non-governmental Organizations

First, overseas environmental organizations can be set up through joint efforts. China's non-governmental organizations have played an important role in public affairs and international conferences<sup>4</sup>. For example, the CYCAN has been taking part in the UNFCCC conference since COP13, focusing on promoting communications between China and other countries, and encouraging the young to engage in the discussion of climate change. Additionally, The Global Environmental Institute (GEI) has devoted itself to the technological assistance in the South-South Cooperation.

However, presently these organizations have limited capability in promoting international cooperation (Cabr , 2011). The function of NGOs in China can be further developed to cooperate with the US and benefit international aid, which did not always accommodate local conditions before and might be inefficient because of the lack of education and popularization when the top-down measures were taken (Pashollari, 2015).

Under the guidance of Sino-US cooperation in environmental organizations, China can not only provide targeted countries with ideas and technology which is needed for green industry and green lifestyle, but also introduce the NGO models and cultivate NGO talents for them, which was exactly what America did to help China in the past few decades. According to The Report of The Philanthropy Study on International NGOs (USA section) in China<sup>5</sup>, the environmental NGOs from the US have been collaborating with China's NGOs in establishing local organizations for a long time, investing in a large

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<sup>4</sup> Zhang, Lijun. (2016). China's non-governmental organizations in the field of climate change. *Public Diplomacy*. Retrieved from <https://vpn.bfsu.edu.cn/>, DanaInfo=www.cnki.net

<sup>5</sup> China Charity & Donation Information Center. (2012). *The report of the philanthropy study on international NGOs (USA section) in China*. Retrieved from <http://mat1.gting.com/gongyi/2012/2012earthhour/Americanreport.pdf>

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number of programs and raising the public awareness on environmental issues. It deserves a shot, therefore, for China to duplicate this model overseas with the US. By promising these countries with talents for environmental protection and more local NGOs, the green development paths would suit the local conditions and people's willingness better, while such cooperation pattern would promote the influence of both countries overseas and help achieve global governance jointly.

### **Technology Exchange Platform**

Also, the US and China can promote the establishment of a technology exchange platform. Two countries have already built up various platforms to enhance bilateral technology and academy communication between institutes, researchers, governments and civilians. Whereas, since the essence of Paris Agreement is to realize cooperation between developed and developing countries<sup>6</sup>, the cooperation framework should not be limited to bilateral form, and a multilateral platform could be built for the international community in two ways.

Firstly, the US and China can make full use of the existing system<sup>7</sup>, namely the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the South-South Global Assets And Technology Exchange (SS-GATE), to work on technological and academic summits on climate change affiliated with these organizations and programs, through which professionals are able to exchange the latest progress in scientific

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<sup>6</sup> United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). (2015). *The Paris Agreement*. Retrieved from [http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/paris\\_nov\\_2015/application/pdf/paris\\_agreement\\_english\\_.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/paris_nov_2015/application/pdf/paris_agreement_english_.pdf) <sup>7</sup> Zhang, Chun. (2015). Analysis of the possibility of Sino-US cooperation under the framework of the agenda after 2015. *Fudan American Review*. Retrieved from <https://vpn.bfsu.edu.cn/DanaInfo=www.cnki.net> <sup>8</sup> Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, Sylvia & Jeffrey, McGee. (2013). Legitimacy in an Era of Fragmentation: The Case of Global Climate Governance. *Global Environmental Politics*. Vol. 13, 2013, pp. 56-78.

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research on a large scale and find the potential cooperation partners for their countries. Also, China and the US can further develop the existing “minilateral” climate forums such as the Asia-Pacific Partnership, the Major Economies Meetings, and the G8 climate process, which only provide sites for the negotiation among a few influential states<sup>8</sup>. To reach this goal, the US and China can first announce the accomplishments of their technology cooperation and strengthen their dialogue in relevant fora complementary to the UNFCCC<sup>7</sup> and encourage other countries to join the discussion.

As another option, the US and China can set up a technology trade platform specially designed for dealing with climate change, either attached to the UNFCCC, or independent as other international organizations. Rules can be made to better protect the intellectual property right of developed countries (Schüller, 2012), and the chance of cooperation among more countries can be created (Bhasin, 2014).

## **Conclusion**

The US and China have some divergences in international affairs, however, both countries hold a strong sense of responsibility in face of global warming. Enhancing partnership in climate change has significant impact towards the improvement of Sino-US relationship in global governance and joint leadership. The above measures will not only help alleviate the burdens of both countries and build up the image of responsible stakeholders in the international community, but also benefit other countries through better international aid programs and technology exchange platforms.

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<sup>7</sup> The White House Office of the Press Secretary. (2015). *U.S.-China Joint Presidential Statement on Climate Change*. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/09/25/us-china-joint-presidential-statement-climate-change>

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In a joint conference of S&EG, John Kerry noted that, the two countries are expected to show a stronger leadership to shift the world away from intensive, high-polluting energy consumption. The global community has placed high expectation on the next steps taken by the US and China, and both countries will spare no effort to lead the rest of the world to a better prospect in coping with climate change.

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# Education in perspective: China & the US

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Education is an old topic while people constantly discuss in our era. As a powerful way to pass civilization and endow people with fruits of human wisdom, education is of great importance and worth of our attention. With the fast development of our time and increasingly intense competition, education is taken on the agenda once again.

This essay discusses the difference of education concepts between China and the West and through the comparison of family education, after-school training and aim of education, underlying reasons will be revealed ,which will provide us an inspiration for mutual

learning ,helping to improve the education in both countries.

## **The origin**

Education came along together with the beginning of human beings.

The Chinese character "教" ( Chinese pinyin: jiao , it means teach) first appeared on an oracle bone which is a pictograph resembling a lash driving children to learn. Later ,in Shuo Wen Jie Zi, a Chinese dictionary of words and expressions, teach means if the teacher sets an example,the students need to follow, from which we can see the superiority of teachers and their role as a model to emulate. In China,to teach is to impart knowledge to students, during which process, students learn what teachers teach.This teacher-centered approach,has been adopted for a long time in China since there is a time-horned tradition of regarding teachers as authority. Deeply beneath lies the Confucian idea of of respecting teachers and valuing education.

While in the West , the word education derives from the Latin word "educare" which means draw something out . In this sense, teachers need to bring about what the students have inside,during which teachers need to guide ,revoke the students' potential and help to bring out the best of the students. During this natural activity of education, teachers are the guide and students and teachers have equal status in learning and

teaching.

Due to different history,cultures and ethnic characters, there are many differences in Chinese and Western education. Here are some

aspects.

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## 1 . Family Education

In China, many Chinese parents wish their children to be the best ,want them to be the top student and have excellent grades.However, many Chinese parents have failed to realize the importance of family education and overlooked it for some reasons.Instead ,they turn to other forms of education such as school education and extra training classes.Since grades takes an important part in the evaluation system , parents attach great importance to it and try every means to help their children get good grades ,for example, many Chinese parents arrange a busy schedule for their children and ask them to have extra classes after school ranging from traditional subjects to different art classes such as the piano ,opera ,violin etc.,which we can see a great amount of western influence.Still some Chinese parents only focus on the marks their children can get but can easily overlook other capabilities such as the ability to live independently, interpersonal communication skills and the ability of social adaptation,which has created many children with high grades but low ability .And this is not appropriate for students' all round development.

While as for western parents, they regard their kids as independent individuals and believe their children have their own will, which we can trace back to some thoughts in the Bible on the relationship between parents and children. Strongly influenced by their religion ---Christianity, they believe their children,once grown up need to find their own way and make a living by themselves.In their eyes,the ability of living independently and adapting to the society are much more important than the mark itself. And when their children become adults ,they need to fend for themselves. Independent thinking. Do not rely on parents and teachers to do everything for you. In western education, it is largely up to the students to put in the effort to excel. In contrast,many Chinese students at this age are like flowers in the greenhouse cared for by their parents.

However, with the increasingly frequent cultural exchanges with the West, Chinese parents also began to change. They now also focus many parts other than grades, such as their children's hobbies,their aptitude and their happiness.Despite that there are still some Chinese parents like the Tiger Mother, more and more Chinese parents care about their children's healthy and mental development instead of merely focusing on the marks.

**More Thinking :**As we know , parents are the best teachers and family education in no means should be overlooked .Its importance can't be too emphasized.Chinese parents need to give due attention to family education and really take some actions to advance the cultivation of the next generation.

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## 2. Training School

Chinese training schools are developing in leaps and bounds in recent years and education training companies surge like mushrooms after spring rain. Why do Chinese training schools become so popular and why do Chinese parents put so much emphasis on extra-class training?

There are several reasons. Since some Chinese parents are just busy with their work, therefore they have little efforts, time and attention to put on their children. Some parents just don't know how to teach since they don't have the expertise or the knowledge. Besides due to traditional thought and realistic need, they want their children to have good grades and do credit to their family so they choose to send their children to the training school.

In addition, competition and peer pressure are always there. Parents compete with one another to send their children to after school classes so as that their children can get better grades to go to a good school even if the children are already good kids and perform very well in the class. They want their children to pursue excellence and be the best. Some Chinese parents even pin the hope of their unfulfilled dreams to their children, which is quite different in the United States.

As a matter of fact, public schools in China help to solve the problem of education equality while failing to help solve the problem of efficiency, leaving much room for extra demand. And this is where the market plays. In this case, training school and classes come out to satisfy people's needs. There seems to exist a paradox of equality and efficiency and it's always hard to strike a balance between the two. Even if there is a balance, it requires a compromise. But people, no matter from which country, they all want their off-springs to enjoy the best education and have the best outcome. So they would try every means to get their kids into the best school and are even willing to pay a great deal of money to help achieve that goal.

There is a Chinese saying that children shall never fall behind at the starting point. (决不让孩子输在起跑线上) While in the United States,

they believe that the finishing line determines. (终点决定一切), which is outcome-oriented.

As a matter of fact, training school has been there for quite a long time in China. As early as the inception of the imperial examination, training schools began to pop up. The imperial exam that started in the Sui Dynasty is a decisive event for ancient Chinese intellectuals. It means a good opportunity to become an official. As the Chinese saying goes, "A good scholar will make an official". The imperial examination is not simply an exam. It is also a chance to change your fate. If you get the top grades, you are called the Number One scholar and fame, wealth and beautiful women will follow. When the imperial examination became a make or break event in people's life, various forms of training academies came into being. The ancient Chinese education system is composed of the official school, private school and the academy of classical learning. Because of sufficient school buildings, ample funds and fine management system, the academy becomes an important base to cultivate intellectuals and offer extra training. The academy first appeared in the Tang Dynasty as an official organization storing books. Later, due to wars and political struggle during the late Tang Dynasty

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and Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms, the government couldn't provide enough schools at that time, so the academy took the role of training students and cultivate people. But during that time, the operation of the academy wasn't very standard. Since the imperial exam became more important in the Song Dynasty, different academies surged up providing training to intellectuals who wanted to do well in the imperial examination, of which the Yue Lu Academy in the Hunan Province in Southern China was a typical example. By the time of Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties, the academy fell gradually under the sway of the then government. It became a truly training school as a subordinate organization of the imperial exam system.

Even though the imperial exam system was abolished in 1905, its influence on Chinese people's thoughts and minds still lingers. It inevitable affects Chinese people's opinions about education and led to the formation of exam-oriented education. As for the reason why Chinese people attach such importance to tests and exams, we can also trace it back to the imperial exam system. They have been caring about it for a long period of time and since now the evaluation system is still featured by tests, they will still care about it. As for Chinese people nowadays, they also need to take a series of exams to become a civil servant. The test has always been there and since it is a such important gauge ,it is no wonder that there are so many training schools serving people's needs.

However, when it comes to the United States, there is no such tradition of having extra classes or attending so many training schools like their Asian counterparts do .Even for some training schools, they are often not about the major subject taught at school but for developing the specialty of the children. Their education is the so called quality education. There are some reasons behind it.

First, many American parents believe not to fall behind the finishing line instead of the starting point. In the United States, if a teacher gives too much homework, which may make inroads into students' free time , their parents would often complain and protest against it. They don't want to see their children deprived of their innocence and free time to play. They also don't want to see that their children have to spend too much time on

study.

Secondly, a person who can only study is not popular in the United States and such person can often be called nerd ,which is not a good word. Instead, students with talents in other aspects such as sports , music and painting are very popular.

Thirdly , most public schools in the United States offer a 13-year free compulsory education and students don't need to take exams to enter them. If they want to enter a good school, they need to live in the area around that school. In contrast , due to the different admission system, Chinese students need to take many tests and even need various

certificates of competition in order to be in a certain middle school, which really makes a burden and cause students to have extra classes.

Fourthly, some American people just don't realize the importance or attach such importance to education as Chinese parents do.

But it doesn't mean there is no training school in the United

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states. There are still some after school classes in improving math, physics and chemistry since these subjects become more difficult, especially in the senior high school and students can choose based on their own needs. But in China, training schools seem to have always been there for Chinese parents even if their children don't want to go.

**More Thinking:** When there is need, there is the market for education. While Chinese parents rush to send their children to training school, one thing should always be born in mind---“The aim of education is to bring happiness to our children.”

### **Education in a whole view (two types of education)**

While exam-oriented education and quality oriented education are adopted respectively in China and the United States due to different national conditions, there are also many other things quite different pertaining to education. The concept of value, purpose of education and method of education between Chinese Education System and Western Education System are differentiated in many academic fields. Here is the illustration which may offer a penetrating view towards education in both countries.

### **Basic concepts of education value and its methods**

Teaching concept is commonly used in Chinese education system which is based on contents of the textbook. Students learn knowledge through classes that are conducted by teachers inside the classroom. This concept is effective in raising the so called “good student” who always obey rules and regulations, inheriting traditions and habits.

Guiding is the main concept of education widely used in western countries. It emphasizes the rights and respect of children, which is based on a mutual trust and understanding. Schools provide students with fulfilled self-management, support them to manage themselves. Western children have more freedom and privacy without much instruction; they are more persuaded by enlightening and leading.

Westerners intend to offer children opportunities to develop themselves, discovering their potential specialties and abilities. They encourage children to study with interest under pleasure, doing what they want to do and trying the best they can. Thus western children are more responsible and confident; they have a higher grade of self-esteem because of self-learning and

self-management.

### **The aim and purpose of education**

A great philosopher Spencer once said, “Education has for its object the formation of character.”

A 19th Century British educator John Henry Newman once said in his book *The Aim of a University Education* that “ But a University training is the great but ordinary means to a great but ordinary end; it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national

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taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power, and refining the intercourse of private life.”

In my point of view, the ultimate aim is to help their children get a better life by education, which is true in both countries. However, parents have different understandings towards it and tend to take different actions in achieving this aim. Some Chinese parents think if you are my child, you need to do what you are told to and obey my rules. Therefore, we can see “Tiger Mom” who set a long list of rules for her two daughters and “Wolf Father” who still uses the most traditional way to teach his children a lesson. Some Chinese parents do care about the reputation in educating their children. Believing their child is their hope and their best product, they think educating their child to become a useful person is their major aim and if not, they will feel ashamed and desperate. While western education develops in a more liberal environment, both in family and at school. Parents take an easy and encouraging approach towards their children.

With the era changing, some Chinese parents also abandon some old ideas of educating their child and learn from their American counterparts or just follow the natural way of education. “Parents should not make choices for their children. Children after the age of 10, has a sense of autonomy and parents need to give them some free space. Let themselves make their own decisions.” Chang Chi Tao said, a Chinese father whose daughter was admitted to Harvard University in 2010.

Education, in its essence, is the dialogue between great minds. It is not only about spreading knowledge, passing down culture, searching for truth but also about people, about communication between different generations.

And when it comes to teacher-student relationships, Chinese students are very meek and Chinese students are asked to be obedient, which is under great influence of the Confucian culture of respecting the absolute authority of teachers. In contrast, western education allows students to be more open. Most of time outside the school curriculum is at students’ own disposal and they are encouraged to express a different opinion in front of their teacher, just like with a friend. This can help to shape the habit of independent thinking and taking the initiative and to be better prepared for the future study. An obvious inclination towards independent thinking is also one of the factors that western education appeals to the interests of many Chinese parents and students.

### **Strength and mutual learning**

Chinese fundamental education is systematic and powerful while US education focuses more on enlightenment, inspiration and creativity. Chinese people think that students with sturdy foundation can receive further knowledge better and Chinese education, on the one hand, is emphasize too much on teaching but neglect the importance of capability; on the other hand, is building up strong foundation but lack of high education. So most Chinese parents think that the primary education in

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China is more stable than those in western countries, and that western high education is more mature than China. If students can have the combination of the two education systems, students could become better developed . And that is why more and more Chinese parents intend to send their children to foreign universities.

In order to maintain the talented Chinese intellectuals, Chinese government needs to take measures to improve the domestic education by learning from others and injecting more vitality into Chinese education system.

### **Conclusion**

As we know ,what sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to the soul. The importance of education mustn't be overlooked.When it comes to education, the nature of it is to respect differences of every individual and helps to bring out the best of them. To evoke , to enlighten and to empower people by education. As the great German philosopher Friedrich W.Nietzsche once said,“Dancing in all its forms cannot be excluded from the curriculum of all noble education: dancing with the feet, with ideas, with works, and ,need I add that one must also be able to dance with the pen?” As we ponder and compare the education between China and the US, we shall learn from each other and carry out the spirit in the following sentence----- Education is not the filling of a bucket but the lighting of fire (by William Butler Yeats) .

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## Access Economy in China and the US

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**Abstract:**

Access economy is a crucial concept in both China and the US economic market in recent years. Based on the access to resources instead of ownership, access economy has attracted huge customers as well as suppliers. In both countries there are voices of support and social backlashes, concerning a wide range of issues such as trust, human connection, safety and law protection. Government intervention and self-regulation are making the access economy market more mature and more adaptive to different environments. Meanwhile capital and demand are leading it to new directions.

**Keywords:** access economy, share, trust, environment, law protection, globalization

**Introduction:**

Access economy is a business model where goods and services are traded on the basis of access rather than ownership. It began to thrive in recent years in both the US and China. Uber, Airbnb and Mobike are typical examples.

The main purpose of this study is to research on the development of access economic models in China and the US in both macro and micro perspective. Cultural comparisons in economic models are also provided in the study.

The booming of access economy in recent years is an exemplar of how a notion, to be more specific, a new economic model, spreads worldwide with unique characters in different environments. This can serve as a mirror to reflect cultural contexts and today's globalization.

## 1. What is access economy?

### 1.1 Debate over this concept

It is universally acknowledged that our world is undergoing a huge wave of economic transformation in which new economic models like Uber, Airbnb and TaskRabbit are thriving. The features of this economic model are that 1) it focuses more on the right to use instead of ownership 2) goods and services are traded through technology, including e-payment, GPS and various APPs or websites.

Some people brought about the term "*sharing economy*", arguing that on those platforms, people share their cars, vacant rooms or free time. However, this idea overlooks the core of it. Companies like Uber thrive not because people can share, but because they can have access to what they need with higher efficiency, it is true of both the customers and suppliers. In fact, "sharing" is market-mediated, when a company is an intermediary between consumers who don't know each other—it is no longer sharing at all. Rather, consumers are paying to access someone else's goods or services. The term *access economy* better describes the essence of this economic model than "*sharing economy*". In this paper, we use the term *access economy*.

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## 1.2 Definition

There are mainly two forms of access economy. One is P2P (peer-to-peer). Users provide vacant goods and services on online platforms where other users have access to them. Most access economic models nowadays are based on P2P, like those mentioned earlier in this paper.

The other one is B2P (business-to-peer), where companies provide the goods and customers rent them. Zipcar and Mobike are typical examples. What is different with traditional rental business is that the B2P access economy enables its users to enjoy the services with higher efficiency and flexibility with their smartphones.

## 2. Development of access economy

During the past decade, access economy has transferred from the marginal to the mainstream in both the US and China.

### 2.1 The US: birthplace of access economy

In March 2009, Uber was founded in San Francisco, US. With the software in smartphone, users can order nearby cars. Most Uber drivers use their own personal cars, although drivers also can rent a car to drive with Uber. From a smartphone button to a cultural icon, Uber has been regarded as the pioneer of access economy. Now it has spread to more than 500 cities around the globe and is world's largest "taxi" company. The word "uberisation", describing the growth of access economy, reveals its unique position in access economy market.

Airbnb was another giant in access economy market. It was also based in San Francisco, enabling people to lease short-term lodging including vacation rentals, apartment rentals, hostel beds, or hotel rooms. As Airbnb spreads to more than 190 countries, it has a profound impact on traditional hotel business- studies in the US show that the increase in the size of Airbnb market results in the decrease in traditional hotel revenue. (*Zervas, Proserpio& Byers, 2016*)

The Silicon Valley success stories of Airbnb and Uber have catalyzed a vibrant access economy discourse, participated in by the media, incumbent industries, entrepreneurs and grassroots activists. (*Martin, 2015*) Other forms of access economy, including Lyft, a car-renting platform emphasizing human connection, and TaskRabbit, on which users "sell" their free time to finish tasks for others, are quickly growing.

Within the global level of the niche, advocacy organizations have been established. In the US, an organization named Sharable is founded to promote networking, facilitate knowledge sharing between sharing economy entrepreneurs and employ discursive strategies that seek to empower innovations, (*Martin, 2015*) which reflects the prevalence of access economy.

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## 2.2 China: the import and growth of new economy

Access economy in China takes off later than the US. Chinese enterprises in access economy market have learned from the US models and soon explored their own approach of development in Chinese environment.

In 2015, Didi Chuxing, a Chinese version of Uber was established after a few years of operation as Didi Dache. Fierce competition between different P2P taxi platforms went on and finally Uber China merges with Didi, which shows that Chinese access economy has its own competitive localized form.

Cultural and social background differences lead to variation in economic models. Chinese people are not that accustomed to letting a stranger spending night home and vacation house are not that prevalent, so that Airbnb doesn't enjoy huge popularity in China. However, local short-term house renting platforms like Xiaozhu Duandu have much better performance in the market.

China has contributed to access economy in its own way, especially in B2P bicycle market. Companies including Mobike and OfO are committed to promoting "dockless" bicycle renting service. Comparing with traditional bicycle rental service carried out by numerous cities around the world (e.g. Citibike in New York), these platforms enable people to use the bicycles in great convenience. From 2015 to 2016, number of users in dockless bicycle rental market has increased from 2.45 million to more than 18 million and will continue to grow. Several companies are even aiming at global market.

## 3. Pros and cons of access economy

### 3.1 Benefits that access economy brings

#### 3.1.1 Higher efficiency of resource distribution

There's no denying that access economy has changed the way resources are distributed. It helps fight the asymmetry between privileged and vulnerable people of access to information, markets, and financing by enabling more people to be "micro-entrepreneurs" or have access to more resources. (*Ontiveros, 2016*)

In the US, access economy creates millions of jobs and satisfies the needs of more. For example, a typical Uber driver in US is a college-educated man, married with kids, who is supplementing a full-time or part-time job and earning an extra \$300 to \$400 a week before factoring in the cost of gas and upkeep, (*Thompson, 2015*) which also benefits those who can enjoy a ride at a lower price and shorter waiting time.

In China, due to the design of city transport, the distance between subway/bus station and people's destination has long been a big problem. Thanks to dockless bicycles, people can save huge amount of time as well as suffer less from traffic jams.

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### 3.1.2 Positive environmental impact

The Access Economy seeks to minimize the demand for materials and better-manage the waste. In these two countries, access economic models serve as a good way to cut down emissions by meeting our daily needs in a less wasteful way in the first place – it focuses on using what is already available and which can be accessed. (*Ede, 2014*)

### 3.1.3 Trust and human connection

As Joe Gebbia, co-founder of Airbnb puts, access economy helps to “overcome the stranger danger bias”. It is human nature not to trust people with totally different features, (e.g. people from other age group, nations, with different political stance) However, when the “comment” and rating system is established, people begin to trust whoever with good reputation regardless of background. This can indicate that the use of technology involved makes it easier for people to build trust among strangers.

Both China and the US have just started the process of trusting strangers in access economy but huge changes have already taken place. Back to a decade ago, it sounded ridiculous for most people to accept strangers to private car or home, let alone regularly do so to make money. Today, people view it as norms in both countries.

New trust networks and the reputation capital they generate is and will continue to reinvent the way we think about wealth, markets, power and personal identity. (*Botsman, 2012*)

## 3.2 Backlash that access economy receives

### 3.2.1 Safety and regulation issues

Safety issue has come to surface since access economy was born. In July 2016, a West Hollywood rape victim sued Uber Technologies over allegations the ride-hailing company—which pitches itself as “the safest ride on the road”—had been negligent in conducting background checks of its drivers. This was only one of the cases that Uber driver has been accused of rape. There are even more serious cases where young female teacher got killed by Didi driver in Shenzhen.

Since the threshold of joining access economy and serving as provider is relatively low, safety problems seem to be likely to occur. But by far, access economy platforms have taken measure to ensure the safety. For example, after an assault against a passenger is reported, Uber says it immediately removes a driver’s access to the app while the investigation is underway. (*LaFrance, 2015*) Different platforms together with government are trying to stricken the relevant regulation and raising the opportunity cost of breaking the rules.

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### 3.2.2 Law protection and welfare

A crucial characteristic of access economy is that it loosens the relationship between the company (platform) and the employees. In P2P models, “peers” are regarded as independent contractors, so minimum wage, maximum working hours and medical care aren’t usually taken into account, which leads to serious social problems.

Uber drivers, recognizing their value to the corporation, filed a class-action lawsuit wherein they claim that they have been misclassified as independent contractors, (*Harrison, 2016*) but they are in fact full-time employees. In China, there is also discussion that a large proportion of Didi drivers are full-time drivers, but few regulations are to guarantee their income or limit their working hours, since extra working time is common among those drivers but it poses a threat to employees’ right and driving safety.

## **4. An insight into future**

Although China is a developing country, when it comes to access economy, China is in the front line of it, together with developed countries like the US. Access economy opens a new era, in which no country has pre-existent experience, but all the countries explore the field of access economy together in era of globalization.

### **4.1 Praise and support**

In the past decades, the focus of globalization is capital, technology, goods, and services. But the growth of access economy provides us with a new vision. This is about how a notion generates in the US, gradually grow, and foreign companies see the opportunity and bring this notion to their homeland, then the notion develops while adapting to different environments. The economic environment and cultural systems in China and the US are largely different, but they bear the similarity that people in both countries have the need to get access to more resources in a more convenient way, and access economy is the right thing in the right time to satisfy the need.

### **4.2 Direction of development**

In the cases mentioned before, the line between independent contractors and full-time employees is ambiguous in this economic model, especially in P2P form. In solving the problem of safety, welfare and law protection, government interference and self-regulation will play a critical role.

Since access economy is largely dependent on trust, regulations on privacy protection, information security, and the risk control should be taken into consideration. Concerns on monopoly, Malfeasant Competition are important as well, no matter in China or the US.

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### 4.3 Milestone of human history

Are these new companies creating value from nothing, or destroying the value of the formal economy? Are they inventing new, flexible ways for underemployed Americans to work, or are they contributing to the destruction of full-time jobs? (Thompson, 2016) Any answers to these questions may be controversial, but there's no denying that access economy has rediscovered people's unsatisfied needs and the long-buried willingness of trust in human connection. Propelled by exciting new technologies, (Schor, 2016) individuals have more access to goods and services, this is what access economy is for, and it's the milestone of human history because never in any historical time are human beings so connected and accessible to goods, ideas and opportunities.

### Conclusion

In traditional industries, developing countries are largely left behind by developed countries. However, the wave of information technology revolution provides great opportunities for developing countries to grasp. Access economy, a typical form of "new economy" driven by technology and majority's needs, is on the way. Access economy has reshaped people's understanding of consumption, the way resources are distributed and more importantly, trust, regardless of social and cultural differences. China and the US are both countries with huge potential and vitality, which are and will continue to contribute to access economy.

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