

A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a Master Degree in Management from the NOVA – School of Business and Economics.

An Internationalization Strategy: How can NOVA – School of Business and Economics attract more Chinese students?

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A Project carried out on the Master in Management Program, under the supervision of:

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8th of January 2015

Abstract

In the present report I intend to study the Chinese higher education market and Chinese students' rationales behind the selection of a foreign university, so as to propose simple, feasible, effective measures that will ultimately attract more Chinese students to Nova SBE. In order to do so, it was developed a qualitative research that lead to some interesting highlights, namely the fact that parents have a fairly large influence on the foreign school and country the student chooses. Regarding Nova SBE, the research revealed that Chinese students find courses and professors interesting, but they have difficulties in communicating with locals and claim that the school lacks a systematic, coordinated approach to their integration in the university, something that should start earlier in the process.

Key Words: Internationalization strategy; higher education system; Chinese higher education market; Chinese students' behaviors and motivations while studying abroad.

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1. Introduction

The aim of this report is to study the Chinese higher education students' market and the Chinese students' behaviors and rationales behind the decision of studying abroad and the country chosen for that purpose. Consequently, the objective is to design a feasible and realistic internationalization strategy and plan that will ultimately attract more Chinese students to Portugal and, more specifically, to NOVA – School of Business and Economics (Nova SBE), the business school for which this report was developed. Therefore, during this report I will start by exposing the methods used to study Chinese students' behaviors and motivations when choosing a country or a school as their “study abroad” destination, followed by a Situation Analysis that will cover an overview and the internationalization strategies of Portugal, China and Nova SBE, crucial to understand the foundations and rationales behind the higher education market of the countries and school at stake. The report includes as well, the major challenges faced by a Chinese student abroad and the main trends in higher education today. Taking into consideration all the data collected, exposed and analyzed throughout the project, this report presents its chief results and recommendations as well as an implementation and control plan on how to improve Nova SBE's attractiveness and awareness in the Chinese higher education sector. Regarding the Methodology used, this report was based on a qualitative analysis that included several sources of secondary data and an In-Depth Interview developed on November 2015. As for the Literature Review, it is important to refer that it was distributed throughout the entire report, as tackled different topics.

2. Methodology

a) Research Design

The purpose of this research is to study the motivations and behaviors of Chinese students regarding their decision making process on what country and school should they choose as

their abroad destination, as to improve Nova SBE's chances of attracting more and more Chinese students to study in the campus. Therefore, the research population is the 13 Chinese students that are currently pursuing any type of long-term course at Nova SBE, in the sense that they are the ones who can expose what the school is doing right and wrong and suggest recommendations that will ultimately help Nova SBE attract fellow students from China. As to collect and study their insights, an Inductive approach was followed and an in-depth interview was developed. At the same time, and according with an Interpretivist philosophy, I also studied the Chinese higher education market, relying on secondary data and having developed a SWOT analysis of both, in order to understand fully each one of the sides and take into careful consideration both perspectives. Regarding Nova SBE in particular, an Organizational Resources Platform was also performed as to understand the key strengths and weaknesses of the school.

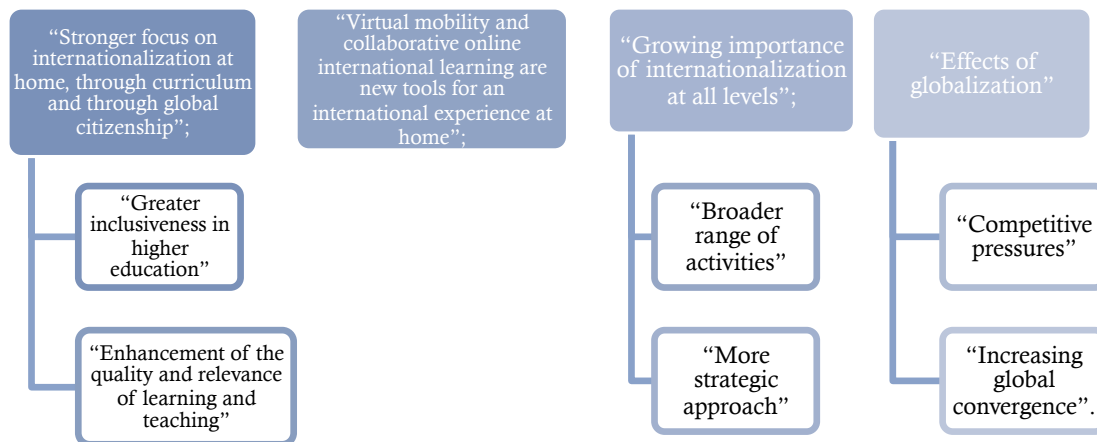
b) Data Collection

Concerning data collection, I used essentially qualitative data. In fact, secondary data like reports, government publications, journals, books and databases were crucial to understand the Portuguese and the Chinese higher education sector. Moreover, an in-depth interview was conducted to 3 Chinese students pursuing different types of degrees at Nova SBE. The interview consisted of 4 sections, had a duration of approximately 30 minutes, was audio recorded and later transcribed and categorized, and had one key objective, to comprehend the motivations at play when choosing a school to study abroad and the challenges faced at their arrival in Portugal and in Nova SBE.

3. Major Trends in Higher Education

According with the Directorate-General for Internal Policies of the European Parliament in *Internationalization of Higher Education*, there are a series of trends that will shape the next

few years when it comes to the internationalization of higher education. Next are presented the most relevant ones to this analysis in particular:



4. Situation Analysis

China, as will be developed next, is the largest exporter of students in the higher education market. Therefore, it is easy to understand the reason why Nova SBE wishes to attract more Chinese students, not only due to its market size, but also because of Chinese student's educational quality. In this sense, the market holds countless potentialities, as China spreads its diversity in the world and becomes one of the greatest economic giants of the current world.

In this section of the report, I will explore both the Chinese higher education system, in order to grasp the main differences and (possible) similarities between the Nova SBE and Chinese universities and comprehend how one can take advantage of the potentialities of the Chinese higher education sector as to ultimately bring more Chinese students to Nova SBE.

a) Nova School of Business and Economics

i) Overview

Nova SBE was born in 1978 out of the need to break with outdated educational traditions and programs on economics. Nowadays is one of the most renowned business and economics schools in Portugal and the only one accredited simultaneously by AACSB, EQUIS and

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Association of MBA. In this school currently study 1400 bachelor students, who are either pursuing economics or management degrees, 850 Masters students, who can choose between economics, management or finance, and 40 PhD students. Besides, there are 130 people pursuing an MBA degree at the school, which also welcomes 350 exchange students, from 30 different nationalities, in bachelor degrees only. Regarding masters, the school is even more international. For instance, the Masters in Management counted in 2014 with 350 new students, from those 45% were Portuguese, 18% came from Western Europe, mainly from Germany, and 5% came from Asia. There were also students from North America, Africa, Northern and Southern Europe and others. As for the Master in Finance, from the 120 students who choose this program in 2014, 41% were from Portugal, 21% from Western Europe and 8% from Asia. Students also came from Africa, America in general and Northern and Southern Europe. Finally, regarding the masters in economics, out of the 50 students, the majority of them were Portuguese (42%), followed by Western Europeans (20%) and Southern Europeans (12%). Asian students accounted for 4% of those enrolled in the Masters in Economics (Nova School of Business and Economics, 2015).

Regarding China in particular, in 2014 there were 2 Chinese students taking a Master degree at Nova SBE. In 2015 there are 10 Chinese students pursuing some Master degree at Nova SBE, which clearly demonstrates the increasing relevance and attractiveness of the school in the Asian market.

ii) Internationalization Strategy

Considering the numbers presented in before, the focus of Nova SBE on internationalization is clear. In fact, according with the new Dean of the school, Daniel Traça, the internationalization of Nova SBE and its global recognition as a world-class institution is a priority and the greater driver of the faculty (Traça, 2015). Since its birth, the school has

always fostered an international out looking mentality, being the first school to have an International Office or to have classes taught in English. With the process of Bologna, the school has been adapting its curricula and its programs to make it more attractive and open to foreign students. Several examples of that is the fact that the bachelor degrees are now 100% taught in English or fact that the school has exchange agreements with 140 higher education institutions in 47 different countries, from China to Argentina, or even the fact that faculty members have 25 different nationalities. Concerning China in particular, the school counts with 9 agreements with 9 different Chinese universities, in Beijing, Hong Kong, Macau, Shanghai, Guangdong and Guangzhou. Regarding specific international Masters' programs, the school counts with 2 joint degrees, CEMS MIM and the International Masters in Finance Brazil-Europe and with 7 different double degrees. Moreover, it is possible to spend a semester abroad in partner school, to intern in a company outside of Portugal or to participate in a summer school program overseas.

Regarding how the school is currently attracting international students, as of right now, the main approaches followed essentially focus on e-mail marketing to potential students, taking advantage of the international agreements established and making use of the CEMS MIM's network of schools and resulting international fairs.

Concerning the support given to international students throughout their and adaptation process, the school does not provide a systematic approach to the integration of foreign students. Nevertheless, the school counts with an International Office, to where students might call or go as to take doubts and ask for help. As for specific integration activities, the school's career office organizes in the beginning of the year the Discovery Week, which provides a couple networking and team building opportunities but that it is only available to the masters' students. The school's Students' Union is also responsible for the organization of parties and other events that contribute to the international students' integration. Moreover,

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Nova SBE's students also created the Nova International Club, which organizes several social activities with the objective to incentivize the interaction between foreigners and locals within and outside of the school. Ultimately, it is expected that foreign students make an effort to participate in the activities organized and find their way among their Portuguese and fellow foreign colleagues on their own. As for Nova SBE's, it remains available to support and aid the student in any kind of fashion.

iii) Organizational Resource Platform

An Organizational Resource Platform is an analysis tool that puts together the resources available in an Organization. In this platform the resources are divided into Competences, Specialized Assets and Architecture of Relationships, then appropriately categorized under one of the divisions and finally evaluated taking into consideration their Strategic Importance and Relative Strength. Therefore, the Organizational Resource Platform is especially helpful at identifying the Core Competencies, Strengths and Weaknesses of a Company, which is the reason why I decided to develop one to evaluate Nova SBE's main competencies. Consequently, considering the Organizational Resource Platform that can be found in Appendix 1, it is possible to take away three relevant insights. First, Nova SBE's core competencies are Career, Admissions and Brand Management. Second, its specialized assets and differentiators are the students, the reputation of the school and the international team of professors Nova SBE has. Third, the relationships that most contribute to the creation and spread of knowledge are the networks of Corporate Partners, Alumni, International schools and students' clubs. Taking into account this analysis, it is possible to perform a SWOT analysis on Nova SBE.

iv) SWOT Analysis

The following SWOT Analysis was based on several sources of information, including interviews conducted in November 2015 to current Chinese exchange and masters' students:

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
International Reputation (Top 30 of European Business Schools – Financial Times Ranking 2015)	Lack of current infrastructures, in the sense that the current campus is small for the number of students	New campus soon, which will have brand new facilities and will be able to accommodate and attract more students	International competitiveness, especially regarding schools whose higher education programs are free.
Triple crow accreditation and educational quality	Lack of current infrastructures, in the sense that students might not get placed in subjects of their choice	Globalization of the higher education market, in the sense that Nova SBE is able to attract more and more foreign students	Government disinvestment in education
Geographical location, safety and environment. Nova SBE is located in Portugal which is the 16 th most peaceful country in the world and the 7 th most welcoming country in the world (World Economic Forum)	Lack of a structured welcoming strategy for students outside of Europe and ERASMUS program	Eventual creation and design of an articulate, coherent, governmental internationalization strategy that enables school to take full advantage of internationalization	Globalization of the higher education market, in the sense that pressure to improve Nova SBE's reputation and educational quality increases, in order to meet market demands.
Alumni Network opportunities and events	Lack of awareness regarding Nova SBE and its programs in countries outside Europe, namely China - "In China there is little knowledge about Portugal or Nova"		Lack of an articulate, coherent, governmental internationalization strategy, that fails to take fully advantage of student mobility
Diversity and quantity of international partnerships and programs			

b) The Market of Higher Education Students in China

i) Overview

China has one of the most populated higher education systems of the world, counting with 31,5 million of higher education students in 2013 (Euromonitor International , 2015). Actually, according with the Chinese twelfth 5-year plan, 87% of the entire population of 16 to 18 year olds enrolled in high school will likely qualify for some university program, which clearly reveals the enormous potential China has in terms of higher education (Li & Roberts,

2012). These students represent a total governmental expenditure of 3,7% of the national GDP (Euromonitor International , 2015), which translates into an expenditure per higher education student in Purchasing Power Terms of 7,097, which is in turn, considerably low, especially considering that Hong Kong spends an average of 23,749.6 per student in Purchasing Power Terms, the 5th biggest expenditure of the world (Euromonitor International , 2015). According with data from 2009, the country counted with 2,317 higher education institutions, 1,983 of them were publicly owned, which demonstrates the heavy influence the Chinese government has over this industry (Gide, Wu, & Wang, 2010). Moreover, Chinese universities are not equal in terms of what they can offer. In fact, there are four different types of higher education institutions (Ma & Yue, 2015): 1) universities belonging to Project 985, considered to be the best, these are elite institutions with a world class education and administered directly by China's Ministry of Education; 2) universities belonging to Project 211 that aim at educating talents especially for economic and social development strategies; 3) Other degree-offering universities that mainly offer undergraduate courses; 4) Non degree-offering institutes that include junior colleges and polytechnic institutions.

Regarding the international setting of the Chinese higher education sector, it began in 1978 when China opened its economy and entered the World Trade agreement aiming at sending students abroad to learn about the Western ways and their expertise in areas China was lacking. Nowadays, Chinese students represent the largest group of international students in the *Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development* (OECD), accounting for 17,1% of the world's total of people studying overseas in 2010 (Jokila, 2015). The most popular destinations for Chinese students were, in 2010, the USA (21,6%) and Japan (15,3%). Among other trendy destinations were New Zealand and Australia (Pan, 2013). At the same time, in 2007, China became one of the 5 most popular host countries for students studying abroad, especially regarding fellow Asian students, in the sense that almost 68% of

international students living in China belonged to other Asian countries (Pan, 2013). Moreover, economics and management courses register the higher internationalization level (Ma & Yue, 2015). Despite the seeming attractiveness of China, not every Chinese higher education institution is allowed or has the ability to receive abroad students. Actually, programs and curricula addressed to foreign students are limited to certain accredited, elite schools (Huang, 2006).

Still concerning the Chinese higher education international setting, it is particularly important for this report to explore the current relationship of EU and China on the matter. In fact, in May 2005, both regions signed an agreement that established that both parties must support “effective interaction between European and Chinese academia, facilitating research mobility, improving and coordinating more effectively academic expertise” (Pinna, 2009). Moreover, aiming at deepening relations between the sides and as a way to spread the knowledge on Europe and European issues in the Chinese context, the European Studies Centre Program (ESCP) was developed as a “cooperative initiative in the field of higher education built within the dynamic framework of continuously developing relations between EU and China”. Currently there are 17 ESCP centers and 13 are located in different Chinese universities. (Pinna, 2009). Taking into account all the European countries, the United Kingdom is the one with the highest engagement with Chinese universities, taking part in 23% of the Chinese Joint Programs for Bachelor and Master degrees. (Li & Roberts, 2012). In order to do so, the UK focuses on establishing partnerships with Chinese universities, more specifically on creating Double-Degree courses, Joint programs, Franchises or, in extreme cases, Joint Ventures with Chinese institutions. Nevertheless, according with Pinna’s *EU - China relations in higher education: Building bridges in global cultural dialogue* countries like France or Germany also “represent important bridges of shared knowledge and cultural exchange”.

ii) Internationalization Strategy

China's internationalization strategy is what can be called "walking in two legs", in the sense that the governmental policies that have been introduced for the last few years indicate that the Chinese state wants to attract new students and become a world-class studying destination at the same time that increases its efforts to export and diffuse the Chinese culture and language to other countries (Wang, 2014). For this report in particular, the policies adopted to increase the Chinese influence worldwide and the "export" of Chinese students are especially relevant. To do so, the Chinese government has been working on increasing and diversifying the number of joint and transnational programs, partnering with several foreign higher education institutions (Huang, 2007). In fact, according with data from 2007, there are 119 governmental approved cooperative programs, 20 joint schools and 2 joint universities, which were established between China and the United Kingdom (Gide, Wu, & Wang, 2010). Moreover, in order to enhance its global influence and promote the Chinese model worldwide, the government created the Confucius Institutes, which are language teaching institutions within universities' language centers aiming at promoting the intercultural understanding and spreading the Chinese language. Another important part of enhancing its global influence is the Chinese program created to provide educational aid to Africa, granting scholarships to African students, sending teachers and setting up the African Human Resources Fund to train professionals and increase Africa's skilled labor force (Wang, 2013).

iii) SWOT Analysis

Bearing in mind the analysis of Guide, Wu and Wang in *The influence of internationalisation of higher education: A China's study* and Ryan in *China's Higher Education Reform and Internationalization*, and other sources of information it is possible to build the following SWOT analysis on the Chinese higher education system:

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Market size	Lack of international recognition	Students' demands, who require a world-class education	International competitiveness
Chinese culture and language	Lower perceived reputation and educational quality	Increase of the Chinese influence in the world	Globalization of the higher education market, in the sense that pressure to improve Chinese schools reputation and educational quality increases, in order to meet market demands.
Greater Chinese influence in the world	Outdated curricula and programs	Globalization of the higher education market, in the sense that Chinese schools are able to attract more and more foreign students	Brain Drain, only a small percentage of the Chinese students studying abroad returned to China.
Governmental investment in higher education	Lack of English-speaking programs and limited offers to foreign students	Large, untapped market regarding the internationalization of Chinese higher education institutions.	Regionalism, the majority of the foreign students studying in China come from fellow Asian countries

iv) Behaviors and Challenges of a Chinese student abroad

China's society is still characterized by a strong filial piety. This means Chinese children are raised according with the Confucian principles of authority and obedience towards elders and family. Moreover, children are taught to value family traditions and to eventually care for their elderly parents and family members. According with the same principles, getting an education and studying abroad is deeply valued, as it represents an opportunity to have better career perspectives and, in general, a higher salary, which is especially important for parents, given that most will financially come to depend on their children. All these traditions and behaviors are behind the fact that 65% of Chinese students do not choose their place of study, their parents select for them instead. In this sense, when choosing a country or a school for their child to study, Chinese families look for high employment prospects, high reputation and education quality, proximity to home, tuition costs and the possibility of getting a scholarship. Students, on the other hand, prefer a place with good accommodations and living conditions, an English-speaking environment and suitable facilities and infrastructures. Furthermore, students also take into consideration the schools' perceived reputation and quality, and the

diversity of cross-cultural activities one can experience in a certain host country (Bodycott, 2012).

Regarding the challenges a Chinese student might face, the high valuation parents put on their child's education likely represents the major one of them, in the sense that it considerably increases pressure on the student to be successful. This obsession and need to succeed, negatively affects Chinese students' participation in social and recreational activities, which ultimately leads to isolation (Bodycott, 2012). Culture shock is another serious challenge. Indeed, the interaction between local and international students is often limited and difficult to foster, especially when associated with stereotypes and stigma. The failure to adapt to a new culture and language also drives Chinese students away from interacting with locals and fostering new friendships. The same applies for an English-speaking environment (Ryan, 2011).

Concerning Chinese students pursuing some type of long-term degree in Nova SBE, Portugal, the research described above, confirmed some of the points mentioned in the sense that communicating with locals is in fact a major challenge that can easily lead to loneliness and isolation – “I speak Portuguese and I cannot speak it as fluently as the native, which makes it impossible for me to communicate with the Portuguese friends and colleagues smoothly”. Finding accommodation and information on visa requirements is another great challenge for these students, who said that this is especially difficult in Portugal, given the fact that the visa takes a long time to be issued and there is no platform available in China that helps with the housing process – “Accommodation is a challenge, because there was no access to a platform like Uniplaces, so you just rely on people coming to Portugal. Visa is also a big challenge, especially because it takes a long time and it is difficult to know about the process and the requirements”.

5. Results and Recommendations

a) Results

The qualitative analysis including the secondary data collected and the interviews conducted provided some interesting insights that are summarized below:

Regarding the Chinese higher education system:

1. China is the biggest exporter of international students, seeing it as a way to spread the Chinese influence in the world. The most common strategies of internationalization are the implementation of Confucian Institutes overseas and the establishment of agreements between Chinese and foreign schools.

Regarding motivations and rationales at play when choosing where to study abroad:

1. Chinese parents, family traditions and Confucian principles play an important part regarding the choice of university and country where the Chinese student will study.
2. Students and parents value different aspects when it comes to the selected foreign university and country. While parents value more international recognition and educational quality, students are more interested in English-speaking countries with good living conditions and universities with diversity of international students.
3. Tradition and history seemingly play another important role behind the decision regarding the country and school Chinese students end up selecting, however the students interviewed did not mention tradition nor history as part of the reasons why they chose Nova SBE and Portugal as their studying destination. Nevertheless, the importance of both these topics cannot be underestimated, especially in a country with more than 800 years of history.

Regarding Chinese students' rationales behind the decision of coming to Lisbon, Portugal:

1. Chinese students choose Portugal because of its agreeable weather, geographical location near the other major European cities and because of its affordable cost of living. Students

also mentioned the fact that when comparing with universities in the UK or USA, the cost of the Portuguese higher education system is fairly cheaper.

2. As for Lisbon, Chinese students prefer this city in the sense that it is the capital of the country, located near other important European capitals, and because it is a small yet vibrant, modern city which has a lot to offer and an affordable cost of living.

Regarding how did the Chinese students became aware of Nova SBE:

1. “I received an offer about Nova Exchange Program, before I did nothing about Nova. In China there is little knowledge about Portugal or Nova”. - And because of it, chose Nova SBE as his studying abroad destination. (Upon further investigation I realized that the program the student was talking about is not Nova Exchange Program, but another one involving 3 years of study at a Chinese university, one year studying abroad and one year in a Masters Degree program – if accepted).
2. Another mentioned the agreement between her Chinese school and Nova SBE’s has the reason she became aware of the school and why she eventually decided to study at Nova SBE’s as opposed to *Católica Lisbon School of Business and Economics*.

Regarding Nova SBE’s strengths and weaknesses according with Chinese students’ perspectives:

1. Beginning with strengths, the students interviewed mentioned interesting courses and nice professors as the main strengths of the school as well as the diversity of nationalities of foreign students studying at Nova SBE – “The course and professors are nice. The diversity and the quantity of foreign students. In other countries, like USA, foreign students are mainly Chinese, in Nova you have more nationalities”.
2. Concerning the weaknesses of Nova SBE, the students mentioned the lack of infrastructures (internet, rooms to study and general facilities) inside the campus, the workload that impedes these students to enjoy the city and some social activities (it is

important to bear in mind that Chinese students are perfectionists, and are likely under pressure to succeed and have perfect grades as to assure a better future to their families) – “the workload of Nova SBE courses and programs, lack of time to enjoy friends and city”.

3. Another weakness appointed was the lack of a systematic approach regarding their integration and adaptation process, according with their statements, the school could have provided more information earlier in the process of application concerning accommodations, visa requirements and cultural differences – “At the arrival at Nova, they help a bit with accommodation because of their dorm, but the support is not systematic and organized. The only thing they did, was to put him into contact with other Chinese girl who was already studying here”.

Regarding the Challenges faced by Chinese students:

1. As it was written before, the major challenges encountered by Chinese students were the difficulty in interacting with locals and fellow students, leading to loneliness and isolation, finding a suitable accommodation in Lisbon, the visa requirements and the lack of information on what and how to obtain them, and cultural differences regarding students' habits like coffee and partying.

Regarding benchmarks and successful internationalization strategies:

1. The United Kingdom has been particularly successful, when comparing to fellow European countries, in the internationalization of its higher education system to China, through the establishment of Double-degree courses, Joint programs, Franchises and Joint Ventures with Chinese universities, each requiring different levels of commitment and duration.

b) Recommendations

The following recommendations take into account the research conducted and the results highlighted before.

The measures presented next are simple yet effective, and will ultimately attract more Chinese students to Nova SBE.

1. The e-mail marketing approach followed by the school should be directed not only to Chinese students but also to their parents, seen as family plays such an important role when it comes to choosing the country and school to study abroad. The e-mails sent to the parents should highlight the history and tradition of the school, its international reputation and educational quality, and especially the future careers opportunities awaiting their children once they decide to study at Nova. This recommendation is even more relevant considering that parents value, above all, the international recognition of the school, which is a clear strength of Nova SBE.
2. The Nova SBE's website should contain a page on the history of the school, how and by whom it was set up, and the principles of its creation, in the sense that Chinese people, especially the ones with a Confucian background, value tradition immensely. A brief summary on the history of Portugal and Lisbon should also be covered.
3. The Nova SBE's website should contain a version translated into Mandarin, not exactly for the students themselves, but for the parents who like to be involved with the students' academic life, play an important part on the school choice and do not speak fluent English. It also facilitates the comprehension of the programs and contents of courses made available by Nova SBE, which is fairly interesting given that Chinese students claim that one of the strengths of the school is the diversity and the contents of the courses offered.
4. Prior to the arrival of the Chinese students in Portugal, Nova should send a "survival guide", via e-mail, with tips on how to find accommodation, how to obtain the Portuguese visa requirements, the main cultural differences and challenges they will likely face and how to overcome them successfully.

5. It is also important to mention that diversifying the number of international agreements established between Nova SBE and Chinese universities has a huge positive impact on the number of Chinese students that come study at the school, in the sense that these agreements are the main source of awareness and one of the chief reasons why Chinese students end up choosing Nova SBE.
6. Nova SBE should develop a Double-Degree program with a Chinese University, following UK's example of focusing on long-term partnerships and international agreements. This alternative, when comparing to establishing a Joint program or a Joint Venture with a Chinese school, requires a lower monetary commitment, takes considerably less time to implement, making Double-Degree programs much more appropriate and effective to Nova SBE. Moreover, a great part of China's higher education internationalization strategy emphasizes on increasing the number of international agreements and partnerships. Lastly, establishing such program would not only attract more Chinese students but also provide a new source of revenue and tuition fees.
7. So as to work on the number of international agreements and create de Double-Degree program, it is crucial to have a person equipped with a commercial and sales background as well as with experience an knowledge regarding the particularities of the Chinese market, in order to identify opportunities and close partnerships.

Ultimately, independently of the measures recommended to increase the number of Chinese students studying at Nova SBE, it is important that the internationalization strategy is deeply embedded in the school's mission and core competencies. Moreover, the commitment must come from the top management of the school and involve the entire staff and faculty. Last but not least, it is crucial to understand that the International Office is taken to be the main reference for any foreign student, in that sense, Nova SBE's International Office should be a focal point of any internationalization strategy and should have a featuring position and

location at the school, similar to the one currently occupied by the Students’ Development Office. Furthermore, the social integration activities presently organized by Nova Students’ Union and Nova International Club should be supervised and set up in partnership with the International Office.

6. Implementation Plan

a) Minute

The recommendations proposed in this report are, in general, simple and easy to implement. In that sense, the recommendations involving e-mail marketing should be put into practice by March 2016, as it is the month when the masters’ enrolments begin. Regarding the slight alterations to the website, they should be implemented by July/August 2016, given that the translation to Mandarin is especially crucial to Chinese students when deciding which course to take and the following subject enrollments. As for the implementation of the Double-Degree program and the expansion of the number of agreements established between Nova SBE and Chinese universities, it might take a while longer but it should not take more than a year. In fact, ideally, the Double-Degree program and more agreements should be available by September 2017, so that the classes of 2017/2018 are able to enjoy it. To easily understand the schedule, below is a timeline with the deadlines of the recommendations in general:

Recommendations/Months	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	...	Sep-17
E-mail marketing approach alterations and additions	Development	LAUNCH								
Nova SBE's website additions and alterations			Development				LAUNCH			
Implementation of a Double-Degree Program and expansion of agreements				Development						LAUNCH

b) Men

Regarding the people required to turn the said recommendations into a reality, the translation and the alterations to the website should be outsourced, so as to save money and time. Regarding the new e-mail marketing strategies, they should be developed in house by the Admissions and Development Office. Finally, the expansion of the international agreements

with Chinese schools and the implementation of a Double-Degree program should be put into practice by the International Office.

c) Money

The measures and recommendations suggested in this report were specifically designed so as to be as low cost as possible. In that sense, the e-mail marketing strategy proposed should use the resources already being used by the Admissions and Development Office when sending e-mail, therefore not representing an added cost to the school. Moreover, the establishment of new agreements and the creation of a Double-Degree program with a Chinese university should come from existing networks and partnerships, so as to avoid spending money with new databases and marketing campaigns. With this in mind, only the alterations to the website will involve a direct cost to Nova SBE. Considering that the current cost of a developer in Portugal is approximately 30€ per hour, the cost of these recommendations will depend on how many hours the developer takes to do the changes requested. Assuming that translating the site into Mandarin and adding a page on Portugal's history and traditions takes 2 hours a day, during 30 days, this suggestion will cost in total 1,800€.

8. Conclusion

In the end, I can conclude that the research project met its ultimate goal and answered the stated research question of *How could Nova SBE attract more Chinese students?* In fact, the report provided useful insights on the Chinese higher education market, the motivations of a Chinese student when choosing the foreign university to pursue his or her studies and the main influencers behind that same decision. Essentially, there are three major points one needs to highlight regarding the results of this work project. First off, family and Confucian traditions play a huge role regarding the choice of the foreign university and country where a Chinese student ends up studying. Secondly, students and parents value different attributes when it comes to the ideal place for studying abroad. On the one hand, parents prefer

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international recognition and educational quality. On the other hand, students prefer English-speaking countries with good living conditions. Thirdly, the UK is the European region most successful in attracting Chinese students and engaging with Chinese universities, having established several agreements and joint programs between schools. Moreover, specifically regarding Portugal, Chinese students feel that the country is welcoming and provides an attractive, affordable cost of living. As for Nova SBE, these same students claim that courses provided are interesting, but they have difficulties interacting with locals, argue that communication with the school should start earlier in the application process and that it lacks a structured approach to their integration.

Last but not least, despite meeting its final goal, the research faced some challenges and constrains. The major one was probably the distance between China and Portugal and their respective realities that made it harder to understand point of views and cultural behaviors.

In the future, it would be interesting, as to complement this report, to conduct a research on to the current adaptation process of Chinese students at Nova SBE and how to improve it, so as to develop a cohere integration strategy.

Taking all this into account, one can conclude that investing in the Chinese higher education market and attract more Chinese students to Nova SBE is a true game-changer, due to all the untapped opportunities. As of right now, Nova SBE has true potential to take advantage of the prospects Chinese students present. Nevertheless, there is room for some improvement and with this report and recommendations suggested I hope to help the school realize the full potential of the Chinese higher education sector.

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