ABSTRACT

Collaboration has become a critical trend in the field of distance education. Many studies indicated that academic administrators believe in the positive impact of distance education, but they did not consider their roles in making distance learning programs effective. It is beneficial to investigate the administrators’ perceptions of establishing relationships with the other partners for enhancing the competitive advantages of their distance learning programs. This study examines the incentives that drive distance education administrators to consider collaboration. It also reveals how the administrator’s role influences the function and development of collaboration.

In order to uncover administrators’ incentives for interorganizational coordination, this study implemented semi-structured interviews and document reviews for data collection through a case named INAC, which was an international academic joint venture by using videoconferencing technology. Eight interviewees comprised two higher-level administrators, 4 mid-level administrators, and 2 lower administrators. The open and axial coding techniques were used to process collected data. The findings indentified four administrative incentives: the opportunity of international exchanges, technology, organizational prestige, and commercialization. These incentives influenced the interorganizational coordination in terms of goals.
development, participant recruitment, resource leveraging, communication enhancing, and course design. In addition, the INAC project was compared with the literature based on Mattessich’s model (2003). It illustrated how the collaboration components, such as leadership, evaluation, communication, goals, budget, and technology, influenced the development of interorganizational coordination in the practical context.