

# Analysis of Cultural Adaptation Strategies for International Students in China Based on Humanistic Concepts

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**Abstract.** In terms of psychological adaptation, international students have factor averages higher than the norm and emotional problems; At the level of social and cultural adaptation, there are challenges in terms of ideological concepts, learning, and daily communication. The influencing factors include individual traits such as personality, language, cultural background, as well as environmental factors such as educational management, social support, and cultural distance. Based on the humanistic concept, the adaptation can be promoted through the establishment of cross-cultural psychological counseling, community organizations, "one gang one" mode and other strategies. After implementation, the psychological and socio-cultural adaptation has achieved remarkable results. It is necessary to implement the guarantee strategy from the construction of teachers and campus culture to promote the development of education for students studying abroad.

**Keywords:** International Students; Cultural Adaptation; Humanism; Influencing Factors; Adaptation Strategy.

## 1. Introduction

International students from different cultural backgrounds gather on Chinese campuses to embark on a unique cross-cultural journey. Cultural differences are like an invisible barrier, often causing international students to face many difficulties in the process of adaptation. From psychological anxiety and confusion to difficulties in integrating into society and culture, these challenges not only affect the personal growth of international students, but also pose new requirements for higher education management. Adhering to the development concept of people-oriented, deeply exploring the cultural adaptation issues of international students, actively seeking effective solutions, has profound significance for promoting cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries and advancing the internationalization of education.

## 2. The Current Situation of Cultural Adaptation among International Students Studying in China

### 2.1 Psychological Adaptation Status

In the study of the psychological adaptation status of international students studying in China, it was found through the scientific self-assessment scale SCL-90 that some international students exhibit noteworthy situations in multiple psychological factors [3]. Their average scores of compulsive, terrifying, paranoid, and psychotic factors are higher than the Chinese youth norm, indicating that they may face more complex psychological challenges than local youth. Another survey deeply analyzed the feelings of international students living in China. Although their overall satisfaction with life in China is at a basic level, there are more serious problems in terms of emotional and cultural conflicts. Specific data shows that factors such as somatization, interpersonal relationships, depression, fear, and psychoticism have significantly higher average scores than the Chinese youth norm, which clearly reflects the difficulty of psychological adjustment for international students in cross-cultural environments [2] [4]. Not only that, with the help of psychological health sampling screening, discussions and interviews with international students, and the accumulation of daily work experience, we further understand that they generally have anxiety and hostile emotions in real life.

## **2.2 Social and Cultural Adaptation Status**

In terms of ideological adaptation, with the deepening of life in China, international students' understanding of China has undergone significant changes. Many overseas students have misunderstood China's economic development when they first arrived, but after experiencing it personally, they have completely changed the stereotype of "China is a backward country" in the past, and at the same time, they also have a true understanding of the friendliness and enthusiasm of the Chinese people, thus reversing the previous negative view [1]. During the process of learning adaptation, international students face many challenges. Due to poor language communication and differences in teaching philosophy and methods compared to their own country, they encountered numerous difficulties in the early stages of learning. They actively responded, learned to abide by the school's rules and regulations, tried to communicate with teachers in Chinese or put forward teaching opinions in a tactful way, and actively interacted with China's mainland students to promote language learning and deepen their understanding of Chinese social culture. In the field of life and social adaptation, international students undergo complex cognitive, emotional, and behavioral changes, striving to seek a rebalancing.

## **3. Factors Affecting Cultural Adaptation of International Students Studying in China**

### **3.1 Individual Trait Factors**

Outgoing and outgoing international students may be more proactive in participating in social activities, communicating and interacting with Chinese teachers, students, and classmates, thus adapting to cultural differences more quickly. Some international students who are good at expressing themselves are able to actively seek advice from others, share their culture, and are more likely to accept new cultural concepts and lifestyles. Introverted and introverted international students may appear more passive in cross-cultural communication, making it difficult to integrate into new environments and increasing the difficulty of cultural adaptation. The Chinese proficiency of international students is directly related to their learning, life, and social interactions in China. International students with weak Chinese language foundation will encounter many obstacles in classroom learning, communication with teachers and classmates, and daily life. For example, not being able to understand the teacher's explanations in class, not being able to accurately express one's own ideas, and having difficulty communicating deeply with others in social situations can all hinder their adaptation to Chinese culture. International students come from different countries, and their cultural backgrounds differ from Chinese culture. This difference is reflected in multiple aspects such as values, ways of thinking, customs and habits. Some Western countries emphasize individualism, while Chinese culture emphasizes collectivism, which may lead to difficulties for international students in adapting to teamwork, collective activities, and other aspects.

### **3.2 Environmental Related Factors**

Reasonable curriculum design, teaching methods, and level of care for international students will all affect their adaptation. If the curriculum is not reasonable, the teaching methods are not suitable for the learning characteristics of international students, or the school lacks sufficient care and support for international students, it will make them feel confused and helpless in their studies and lives, delaying the process of cultural adaptation. If international students can receive patient guidance from teachers, friendly help from classmates, and enthusiastic acceptance from the community, they will be more likely to adapt to Chinese culture. On the contrary, without these supports, international students may feel isolated and unable to integrate into the local society. The greater the cultural distance, the greater the cultural shock faced by international students, and the higher the difficulty of adaptation. Some international students from Asian countries may find it relatively easier to adapt

to Chinese culture due to cultural similarities, while international students from countries with significant cultural differences such as Europe and America may need more time and effort to adapt.

## **4. Cultural Adaptation Strategies under the Humanistic Concept**

### **4.1 Establish a Cross-cultural Psychological Counseling System**

Psychological counselors conduct in-depth understanding and analysis of specific psychological problems that international students encounter during cross-cultural adaptation, such as anxiety, depression, and other emotions caused by cultural shock, and develop personalized solutions. Carry out group psychological counseling activities and organize international students to participate in psychological growth groups. In the group, international students can share their cross-cultural adaptation experiences, listen and understand each other, and explore ways to cope with cultural differences together. Regularly organize group counseling activities with the theme of "Emotional Management in Cross Cultural Adaptation" to guide international students to understand their own emotions and learn effective emotional regulation skills. The training content includes psychological characteristics under different cultural backgrounds, cross-cultural communication skills, and intervention methods for common psychological problems of international students. Through training, psychological counseling teachers can better understand the psychological needs of international students and provide more professional and effective psychological counseling services. Organize teachers to participate in international cross-cultural psychology seminars, learn the latest theories and practical experiences, and invite experts to give special lectures and training at the school. Establish a psychological profile for every international student, recording their basic information, psychological assessment results, and psychological changes during cross-cultural adaptation. Psychological counseling teachers regularly track and evaluate the psychological status of international students based on their psychological records. For international students at high risk of developing psychological problems, timely intervention measures should be taken. If it is found that a certain international student's anxiety continues to worsen, the psychological counseling teacher can increase the frequency of consultation with the international student and adjust the counseling plan.

### **4.2 Building International Student Clubs and Organizations**

International students from Asian countries can establish Asian cultural clubs to showcase and exchange the cultural characteristics of various Asian countries; International students who enjoy music can establish music clubs and organize various music activities. The school provides necessary guidance and support for the establishment of clubs, including the registration process of clubs, arrangement of activity venues, etc. Organize an international cultural festival and invite international students from various countries to showcase their cultural elements such as cuisine, clothing, and art; Organize cultural exchange lectures and invite experts to introduce the history, culture, and customs of different countries[3]. These activities provide a platform for international students to showcase their culture, while also promoting communication and integration between different cultures. Develop a club management system to standardize the activities, organizational forms, and financial revenues and expenditures of the club. Arrange dedicated teachers or administrators to provide guidance to the club and help it solve problems encountered during the event organization process. During large-scale events organized by clubs, schools can provide support in areas such as security and publicity.

### **4.3 Implement the "One for One" Model**

Select outstanding students from the group of domestic students or international students who have been in China for at least one year as helpers. These helpers should have good language skills, strong communication skills, and a helpful spirit. Select domestic students with excellent academic performance and high Chinese proficiency, or international students who have adapted well to life in

China and have rich cross-cultural communication experience as helpers. In terms of daily life, helpers can help international students familiarize themselves with the surrounding campus environment and introduce common sense of Chinese life, such as shopping, dining, transportation, etc; In terms of learning, helpers can help international students understand course offerings, learning methods, and academic standards; In terms of management, helpers can introduce the school's rules and regulations to international students and assist them in handling admission procedures. The evaluation indicators include the living adaptation, learning progress, and satisfaction with the work of the helpers of international students. Through evaluation, timely identification of problems in the assistance process, adjustment of assistance strategies, and improvement of assistance effectiveness. If it is found that international students have not made significant progress in their studies, it is necessary to analyze the reasons, whether it is due to the improper teaching methods of the helpers or the students' own learning attitudes, and then take corresponding measures to solve it.

## **5. The Implementation Effect of Cultural Adaptation Strategies**

### **5.1 Positive Impact on the Psychology of International Students**

The various cultural adaptation strategies implemented by universities have had a positive and profound impact on the psychological level of international students studying in China. The construction of a cross-cultural psychological counseling system is of great significance. During individual counseling, international students can confide in a private environment about their difficulties caused by language barriers, unfamiliarity with new environments, etc. Psychological counseling teachers can use this to help them identify the root of their emotions and teach coping strategies, such as deep breathing relaxation. In group counseling activities, international students share and communicate with each other, feel understanding and support, and effectively alleviate psychological pressure. For example, African international students who participate in group counseling experience reduced anxiety. The "one for one" model helps international students to enhance their psychological resilience. The helpers give practical help in life and study, encourage them mentally, guide them to learn from setbacks, try different ways to overcome difficulties, such as foreign students with difficulties in Chinese learning, become confident and strong with the encouragement of their helpers. Multicultural activities greatly promote the self-awareness and acceptance of international students. In the process of showcasing their own culture and understanding other cultures, they reflect on their own cultural background and values, realize that there is no absolute superiority or inferiority of culture, and then accept their own cultural identity with an open mind to understand and respect other cultures. For example, European international students have gained a more comprehensive and objective understanding of themselves and other cultures after exchanging at international cultural festivals, and have a greater love for their own culture and a strong interest in other cultures.

### **5.2 Positive Impact on the Social and Cultural Adaptation of International Students**

International student organizations are like bridges, building a vast social space for international students. During the preparation of cultural exhibitions, artistic performances, and other activities, international students actively participate in them, working hand in hand with students from various countries to interact and exchange ideas. They constantly honed their social skills during this process, made friends from all over the world, and gradually integrated into the vibrant campus life. Southeast Asian international students have established deep friendships with their peers in dance clubs, and their spoken Chinese expression has become increasingly fluent, leading to a deeper understanding of campus culture. The "one for one" model has played a unique and important role. The helpers not only help international students solve problems in their daily lives and studies, but also become ambassadors for spreading Chinese culture. During traditional festivals, helpers enthusiastically introduce the rich connotations and unique customs of festivals to international students, accelerating their adaptation to the Chinese cultural environment in daily communication, and positively

transforming their behavior and thinking patterns. For example, some foreign students have learned to express their views more tactfully after learning that Chinese people pay attention to politeness and humility. Throughout the implementation process of cultural adaptation strategies, international students have achieved a qualitative leap in their academic performance. Cross cultural psychological counseling helps international students adjust their learning mindset, successfully overcome anxiety caused by cultural differences, and enable them to focus on their studies without distractions. Caregivers patiently guide learning methods, international students actively communicate with Chinese classmates, further broaden their academic horizons, and obtain rich learning resources. With the assistance of science and engineering international students, they have mastered laboratory operation norms, learned to cooperate to complete projects, and achieved significant improvements in their academic performance at the end of the semester, laying a solid foundation for their academic development.

## **6. Measures to Ensure the Implementation of Cultural Adaptation Strategies**

### **6.1 Construction of Teaching Staff**

To ensure the effective implementation of cultural adaptation strategies for international students studying in China, the construction of the teaching staff is crucial. It is necessary to start from three aspects: cross-cultural training of teachers, introduction of professional talents, and encouragement of teachers to participate in international exchanges. Provide systematic cross-cultural training, covering multicultural knowledge and communication skills, such as organizing "the Belt and Road" cultural training, carrying out nonverbal communication training, and letting teachers master methods through case analysis. Actively introduce professional talents such as cross-cultural psychology experts and international education experts, enrich the teaching staff, and play a leading and exemplary role. For example, a certain university has introduced doctoral students to develop personalized programs to help international students maintain their mental health. We strongly encourage teachers to participate in international academic conferences, cultural exchange activities, and overseas training programs, exchange results during the conferences, such as selecting teachers to participate in the World Cross Cultural Education Conference, broaden their horizons in overseas training, apply what they have learned to teaching practice after returning to China, improve the quality of education, so that teachers can better guide international students to adapt to the new environment, provide high-quality educational services for international students, promote the development of education for international students in universities, and promote multicultural exchange and integration.

### **6.2 Campus Culture Construction**

In the creation of campus environment, multicultural elements are integrated, showcasing cultural works of international students from various countries, setting up multilingual signs, building international cultural exchange centers, and holding rich activities, such as the "Window of World Art" exhibition. At the same time, departments are encouraged to consider multicultural factors when organizing activities to promote integration. In terms of curriculum design, we will develop a cross-cultural characteristic curriculum system. In professional courses, teachers will introduce different cultural academic viewpoints and research methods based on the characteristics of the subject. In general courses, we will offer courses on cross-cultural communication, and optimize Chinese language courses based on the needs of international students and their majors. In addition, a cultural adaptation support network is established, with school management personnel coordinating and formulating policy plans, teachers paying attention to and providing assistance, Chinese student volunteers providing life and study support in a "one-to-one" form, and representatives of international students collecting feedback, such as establishing work leadership groups and suggestion boxes, providing comprehensive and multi-level support to international students,

promoting the smooth implementation of cultural adaptation strategies, and improving their cultural adaptation abilities and educational quality.

## 7. Conclusion

In the context of globalization, the issue of cultural adaptation for international students studying in China has profound significance. By analyzing the current situation, it can be seen that international students face many challenges in terms of psychological and socio-cultural adaptation, which are influenced by factors such as internal personality, language, cultural background, external education management, and social support. The strategies based on the humanistic concept include psychological counseling, community organization, "one gang one" model, etc. After implementation, it has achieved remarkable results in psychological and social cultural adaptation. The construction of the teaching staff and the creation of campus culture provide solid guarantees for the implementation of the strategy. In the future, universities should continue to optimize their strategies, create a more inclusive and diverse environment, help international students adapt better, promote cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries, and achieve the goal of internationalizing education.

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