
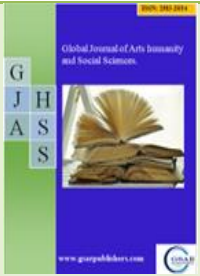


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MOTIVATION IN THE INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION OF CHINESE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT INFRASTRUCTURE UNIVERSITY KUALALUMPUR

BY

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Abstract

With the deepening of globalization, political, economic, and cultural exchanges among countries have been strengthened, and international and regional learning and exchanges have been increasing, especially in the context of the increasing income of domestic residents, the declining threshold for studying abroad, and the more diversified market demand for talents, studying abroad has become a common phenomenon in China. After the end of the global epidemic, Chinese students continue to go abroad to study and live in the countries where they study. As a student studying in Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur, the authors witnessed the foreign students studying in IUKL one after another. Among them, there are undergraduate, master, and PhD students. Foreign students can successfully complete their studies and must adapt to the study and life in Malaysia. Chinese students at IUKL are faced with the problem of intercultural adaptation, and different intercultural situations have corresponding related motivations. In this study, 20 international students of different years at IUKL were selected to conduct semi-structured interviews. This study explored the motivation of Chinese students at IUKL in intercultural adaptation, and the strategies to improve intercultural adaptation. This study uses qualitative research methods, citing the interview outlines of Long (2017) and Zhang (2022), and supported by Black & Mendenhall's (1991) cross-cultural U-shaped theory. This study concludes that there are two main types of motivational strategies in the cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese students in IUKL, namely, interest in knowledge and self-development. Furthermore, this study gives the motivation strategies of Chinese students in IUKL in intercultural adaptation from three aspects of students' individual, family, and school. This inspires future scholars to pay more attention to the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students studying in Southeast Asia and other countries, in order to give students greater support and help, and also to do a good job of cultural exchanges and dissemination between the two countries by virtue of the special status of foreign students.

Keywords: *Intercultural adaptation, Chinese international students, Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur, Motivation, Intercultural adaptation*

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INTRODUCTION

Under the environment of increasingly frequent international exchanges, Zhou (2023) pointed out in his research that Chinese universities are at a critical stage of strengthening the overall level of quality education. At the same time, Xue (2023) found that the rapid development of international education has accelerated the exchange and dissemination of ideas and cultures between different

countries. In order to enrich their own experience and broaden their horizons, more and more people choose to study and live overseas. Baidu Internet search information shows that with the continuous development of "one belt and one road", China and Southeast Asian countries are increasingly closely linked, and cultural and economic exchanges are frequent. China Daily (2023) reported that Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said in his talks with Malaysian Foreign Minister that Malaysia is a friendly neighbor of China and



a priority direction of China's peripheral diplomacy. More and more Chinese students choose to study in Southeast Asia, and majority of them are recognized by parents and students because of Malaysia's own multilingual advantages. In this context, Wang (2021) described that Malaysia is rich in language resources and has important external and internal values. Similarly, Wang et al. (2023) claimed that Malaysian private higher education institutions have been expanding their autonomy in running schools, actively meeting the needs of the international study market, and rapidly occupying a share in the international market of Asian higher education with the advantages of low fees, flexible courses, and diverse forms, thus becoming an important transit station for studying abroad. After the global epidemic is over, Chinese students have returned to study and live in their countries of study. At the same time, Zhao (2023) postulated that culture is a dynamic process of continuous accumulation and inheritance across time and space. After a long period of historical evolution, each nation-state has formed its own unique cultural tradition. In the case of more and more Chinese students returning to IUKL, this study actively prepared the interview outline, prepared the interview confidentiality instructions, actively contacted Chinese students in teaching buildings, study rooms, apartment buildings, and other places, and made different interview plans. This study focuses on the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in IUKL and their different motivations in the process of cross-cultural adaptation. Qiu et al. (2021) found that many foreign students could not overcome the crisis period, had psychological barriers, could not adapt to the environment, affected their studies, and affected their physical and mental health. Chinese students living and studying in Kuala Lumpur will also face academic, physical, and mental health problems. The motivation of overcoming difficulties and solving problems has become one of the research focuses of this study. This study will clarify these questions, find out the types of motivational strategies in Chinese students' intercultural adaptation, and put forward the corresponding strategies.

In the past, in the process of studying intercultural adaptation, scholars took the overseas students or the overseas students who will enter China as the research object, each of which has its own focus of attention. In addition, Xue (2023) postulated that researchers in developed countries such as Europe and the United States used many research methods, including questionnaire survey, interview, integrated observation, narrative research, key event method, case study, and so on. Most of the studies on cross-cultural adaptation in China are based on traditional descriptive studies and extensive questionnaires. There is a lack of in-depth problem-solving and the application of guiding research methods, and the research methods are traditional and single. Yan (2023) pointed out that many scholars have studied the cross-cultural adaptation of foreign students, believing that the target language or second language learning of foreign students directly affects their adaptability to the intercultural communication environment. Furthermore, Zheng (2023) stated that domestic research on intercultural communication mostly focuses on introduction, introduction, communication, and so on. There are also some scholars who try to avoid communication problems between

different cultures from a cross-cultural perspective. Ma and Zeng (2023) pointed out in their research that due to the diversity and differences of world cultures, they intend to look at the similarities and differences between Chinese and Western euphemisms from an intercultural perspective, so as to avoid the failure of communication caused by different social cultures. Zhong (2022) showed that the level of learning motivation of college students is low through research, and the results of relevant learning motivation surveys show that the problem of learning motivation of college students needs timely attention from society and schools. Hong (2021) emphasized that many overseas students have the courage to go out to study in a strange country with dreams and ideals. There are often many times that are not as perfect as the ideal, even at the moment of arriving at school, we will find many facts that are different from the imagination. In view of the related problems, Zhou (2023) suggested that colleges and universities should provide students with cross-cultural communication education services with high value, new timeliness, and strong professionalism so that students can open up the cultural horizon of intercultural communication and reasonably expand their cross-cultural cognition. On this basis, the study of Chinese students' motivation of cross-cultural adaptation in IUKL is a supplement to previous studies. Thus gives the foreign student individual, the guardian, and the school certain enlightenment, also will provide certain help for the future scholar's research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies On Motivation

Through the literature, we can see that different researchers have different definitions of motivation and learning motivation. Wang and Wei (2019) pointed out that in psychology, motivation usually refers to the internal motivation that directly pushes people towards a certain goal or the internal process that stimulates and maintains goal-directed behavior. Motivation is not only the consequence of previous activities but also the internal motivation that directly points to future goals and drives subsequent actions. Furthermore, Hu and Dong (2020) found that learning motivation is the internal driving force of students' individual learning activities, and it is the basis of learning behavior, which can promote the generation of learning behavior and affect students' academic performance in the form of learning behavior. Similarly, the studies by Li and Liu (2022) and Hu and Dong (2020) are parallel in terms of dynamic tendency of learning motivation. Li and Liu (2022) stated that learning motivation refers to a motivation tendency to stimulate and maintain individual learning activities and make them point to certain academic goals, which is the internal motivation to directly promote students' learning. Cai (2020) pointed out that in terms of learning motivation, girls are better than boys in intrinsic value and extrinsic value.

In the same way, Chen (2022) and Cai (2020) shared a similar view that learning motivation restricts students' enthusiasm for learning and affects the learning effect. Learning motivation will also vary from person to person. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2021) also concluded in the study that the learning motivation of girls is generally higher than that of boys, especially in the aspects of

seeking knowledge and progress, social orientation, and fear of failure, while boys are slightly higher than girls in material pursuit and personal achievement. The study by Yang and Feng (2022) and Zhang et al. (2021) are parallel in terms of learning motivation is influenced by other factors. Yang and Feng (2022) pointed out in their research that learning motivation is the driving force of learning behavior, and learning motivation is influenced by social and personal factors. The theoretical research on the classification of learning motivation determines that the questionnaire is divided into two parts: internal learning motivation and external learning motivation. The internal motivation is determined as two dimensions of interest in knowledge and self-improvement, and the external motivation is determined as two dimensions of life, employment, and achievement honor. In addition, Huang (2023) also emphasized that there is a significant negative correlation between gender and external learning motivation and self-confidence, and girls' external learning motivation and self-confidence are lower than boys'. Lately, Chang and Ma (2024) concluded that the more vague and uncertain the motivation, the more likely it is to have higher and even unrealistic expectations. Expectation and motivation are inextricably linked. At the same time, Wu and Mei (2024) believe that individual behavior is influenced by their own personality traits, the response of individual traits will be activated under specific situational characteristics, and the interaction of cognitive, emotional, and motivational factors.

Studies On Intercultural Adaptation

In the past, different scholars have different views on intercultural research. Constantine and Okazaki (2020) stated holds that intercultural adaptation is a process in which individuals intentionally understand another culture from the original cultural context. Also moreover, Gao (2020) believes that the university stage is a critical period for physical and mental development and adaptation to society. The mental health and academic status of college students affect individual development from a micro perspective and are related to the construction of a harmonious society from a macro perspective. In the same way, the study by Wang (2021) and Gao (2020) are parallel in terms of intercultural understanding. Wang (2021) showed that intercultural adaptation research began in the United States. The speed of adaptation depends on the individual's personality, age, motivation, tolerance of foreign culture, acceptance of foreign culture, and so on. Likewise, Yang (2022) found that intercultural adaptation (Cross-cultural adaptation, also known as "cultural adaptation", refers to a person who lives in a new cultural environment for the first time, constantly overcomes the negative impact of cultural shock, makes corresponding adjustments or changes in all aspects, and ultimately adapts to the new cultural environment and the ability to communicate effectively. The study by Yan (2023) and Yang (2022) are parallel in terms that interculture needs a process of adaptation. Yan (2023) pointed out that educational background, length of study abroad, whether to participate in cultural experience or whether to have been to Indonesia, and other factors, there are also some differences in intercultural language adaptation. Similarly, Zheng (2023) postulated that one thing in one culture

has no corresponding reference in another culture, which leads to difficulties in cultural sharing and communication. Kafoune (2021) used the following definition in his paper: intercultural adaptation refers to the process in which an individual in a different culture makes adjustments in cultural patterns, such as diet and living habits, behavioral norms, and ways of thinking, and gradually adapts to a different culture and forms appropriate social abilities.

In this study, intercultural adaptation is defined as the cultural adaptation of Chinese students in the process of studying in Malaysian universities, such as learning, living, interpersonal relationships, and so on. Zeng and Li (2022) found that under the special background of the global epidemic, gender, education, sojourn time, overseas experience, personality, support from relatives and friends and other factors had different degrees of influence on the results of intercultural adaptation and strategy selection of Chinese students. In the same way, Wang (2023) supported the view of Zeng and Li (2022) that school administration, teachers, and foreign students can achieve intercultural adaptation more smoothly by defining learning motivation, paying attention to cross-cultural training, attaching importance to language learning and grasping the key aspects of intercultural adaptation.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Based on the above literature review and gaps in research, the first purpose of this study is to determine the motivation and intercultural adaptation of Chinese students at Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur. The second purpose is to explore the strategies of improving cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese students at Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, in-depth interviews were used as a qualitative research method. The types of qualitative interviews are: 1. 1. Unstructured (informal) interview (informal conversational interview); 2. Semi-structured interview (general interview guide approach); 3. Structured (standardized open-ended) interview. However, the choice of interview methods should be based on the most important consideration of achieving the research purpose. This study used semi-structured interviews to collect data. A random sampling method was used to interview 20 Chinese students in IUKL. This study is supported by Black & Mendenhall's (1991) intercultural U-shaped theory. According to the theory of intercultural adaptation, intercultural adaptation can be divided into three categories: general adjustment, work adjustment, and interaction adjustment. This study argues that cross-cultural adaptation can be divided into stages of adaptation, and each person's ability to adapt overseas is different, which can also be divided into the adaptability of life, environment, and humanities. Nowadays, society is becoming more and more internationalized, and the development of information can enable people to quickly receive the culture of different countries, so that they can understand the local life and humanities in advance, and can quickly adapt to the local environment in other countries. The

interview outline of intercultural adaptation is adapted from Zhang (2022). There are 12 items in total (Interview questions are attached). The semi-structured interview outline is compiled around the relevant contents of IUKL Chinese students' life, study, and cultural adaptation in Kuala Lumpur. IUKL is located in the multimedia corridor (near Serdang/Kajang) about 22 kilometers from the center of Kuala Lumpur. In 2011 and 2013, IUKL was recognized by Manufacture Quality Assurance as an outstanding five-star university in Malaysia. This study takes the Chinese students in IUKL as the research sample. In this study, the

interview data were compiled and coded, F represents the interviewed Chinese students, and the 20 interviewees were numbered F1-F20. Interviews involve different grades, namely undergraduate students, master students, doctoral students, collect interview information, do a good job of analysis and collation, and draw research conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research field of this study is Chinese students of different grades and majors at IUKL in 2023.

Table 1 Descriptive statistical analysis of population background

| Chinese students | Gender | education level | Major | Study abroad experience |
|------------------|--------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| F1 | Male | Undergraduate | Engineering | No |
| F2 | Male | Undergraduate | Engineering | No |
| F3 | Female | Undergraduate | Management | No |
| F4 | Male | Master | Engineering | No |
| F5 | Male | Master | Management | Yes |
| F6 | Female | Doctor | Education | Yes |
| F7 | Female | Doctor | Education | Yes |
| F8 | Male | Doctor | Education | No |
| F9 | Female | Master | Engineering | Yes |
| F10 | Male | Doctor | Education | No |
| F11 | Female | Doctor | Management | No |
| F12 | Female | Doctor | Management | No |
| F13 | Female | Doctor | Management | No |
| F14 | Male | Master | Engineering | No |
| F15 | Male | Master | Engineering | No |
| F16 | Male | Doctor | Engineering | No |
| F17 | Male | Doctor | Engineering | No |
| F18 | Female | Doctor | Education | Yes |
| F19 | Female | Doctor | Education | Yes |
| F20 | Male | Master | Management | No |

The research field of this study is Chinese students studying in different years and majors at IUKL in 2023. It can be seen from the student information summary table 1, that there are 20 students interviewed, including 9 female students and 11 male students; there are 3 undergraduates, 6 postgraduates, and 11 doctoral students; there are 8 civil engineering majors, 6 management majors, and 6 education majors; Six of them have studied abroad (two in the UK, two in Malaysia, one in the US and one in Thailand), while 14 have not been abroad. First of all, in the abstract and interpretation stage, this study is mainly to integrate and carefully read all the text information, and conduct a preliminary collation and analysis. Based on the open coding method of interview outline by Long (2017) and Zhang (2022), the researcher read all the text data one by one, named and labeled them according to the outline of the text. Secondly, through axial coding, the similar labels are merged and categorized, and then repeated comparisons are made to sort out the themes. Finally, in the stage of discovering the association, the researcher first seeks the relationship between others, and finally classifies the questionnaire content and the interview, codes them, and handles them anonymously.

Table 2 Interview Content

| Interview Content | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------|
| Question | Chinesestudents | Content |
| | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. How do you feel about Malaysians? Why did you come to Malaysia? | F1 | <i>I feel that living off-campus (near KLCC) has made me more aware of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysian life, and the locals. F1 said that there is a mosque in the school, and every day you can hear the sound coming from it and feel different foreign cultures.</i> |
| | F2 | <i>I appreciate and respect Malaysian culture.</i> |
| | F4 | There is no sidewalk on the road near IUKL, and there are many cars, so it is not safe. |
| | F5 | <i>I have the foundation of Asian culture and is deeply interested in Malaysian multi-ethnic culture, I can adapt to it.</i> |
| | F1, F2, F3, F5, F7, F10, F11, F15, F17, F20 | They said that they came to Malaysia to study because they were interested in foreign courses. |
| | F8, F10, F11, F17 | In the interview, they said that they came to IUKL to study to fill the gap that they had not studied abroad before and to add some intercultural learning experience. |
| 2. Among your friends in Malaysia, are there more Malaysian friends or more Chinese friends? Is it the same department or across schools/departments? | F1-F20 | Basically, there are more Chinese friends. |
| 3. What activities do you participate in? Is it positive? | F1 | <i>I will participate in some activities organized by the school.</i> |
| | F2 | <i>I'm not very interested. I participate less.</i> |
| | F10 | I don't participate. |
| 4. Do you feel lonely in Malaysia? Especially on holidays. | F3, F6, F7, F9 | They say they are often homesick. |
| | F8, F10, F16, F17 | Don't feel lonely. |
| | F5 | I used to go to school abroad, but I couldn't go home often. There will be no feeling of loneliness. |
| | F19 | I know very well that I will not be homesick if I have to complete my study task in the limited time in Malaysia. |
| 5. Will you be looked at differently in your daily life because of your Chinese identity? | F1-F20 | I don't think so. |
| 6. How do you know the Chinese students who come to study with you? Do you often communicate or travel together? | F3 | I came here by myself, and I didn't know my classmates until I came here. |
| | F14 | Three colleagues from our company came here together. We will go out to travel together on a daily basis. |
| | F18 | I came here with a classmate so that we can take care of each other and live and study outside without loneliness. |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| 7. Do you spend more time in Malaysia with Chinese people or Malaysians? Or working alone? Why? | F1, F8, F10, F20 | They said that they could not accept the diet at all, as long as the food with spices could not be eaten at all, which was very different from the eating habits of local students in Malaysia. They have more daily contact with Chinese students. |
| | F3, F6, F12, F13 | Four female interviewees pointed out that Malaysian locals are used to drinking ice water, while Chinese students are used to drinking hot water. Although there are differences |
| 8. Do you find it difficult to fit in with the social circle of Malaysian students? Or is it difficult for Malaysian students to get into your circle of friends? Why? | F1-F20 | In the process of getting along, there is no difficulty in getting along. Approve the working attitude and methods of IUKL staff in general. |
| | F18 | I am very grateful for the help of IUKL. The day I arrived in Kuala Lumpur was a program vacation. The staff was very helpful. |
| | F2 | I think language is very important because I don't understand Malay and my English is not very good. Therefore, there are still some difficulties in communication. |
| 9. Do you try to fit in with the Malaysian people or social circles? For example, join some clubs or activities? | F12 | I also want to participate in some activities, but I still need to exercise my language, otherwise integration will become a very embarrassing problem. |
| 10. Did you encounter any difficulties in the process of trying? What would you do? | F1, F2, F4, F8, F10, F17, F20 | They believe that there are still some difficulties in living habits and cultural adaptation. |
| 11. What do you think are the obstacles to communication? | F4 | When I was in China, I was most afraid of English, and it was difficult for me to speak English. |
| | F10 | Before I came to LUKL, I hardly spoke English in China, and my spoken English was very poor. |
| | F17 | I don't understand some professional terms, and I need to study the language carefully. |
| | F20 | One of my roommates is Chinese, one is Syrian, and the other is Malay. Through daily communication, I can improve my intercultural communication skills. |
| 12. Do you think this obstacle can be overcome? Or have you made any efforts for this situation? | F6, F7, F8, F10, F11, F12, F13, F16, F17, F18, F19, | The view of lifelong learning is increasingly recognized in work and life. Continuing IUKL learning is to better increase professional knowledge, acquire new knowledge, and enrich oneself, so as to help oneself grow in a cross-cultural environment. All kinds of difficulties can be overcome. |

In the process of investigation, the research results are obtained from Table 2 through the coding processing of this study, which is carried out from the following aspects.

1. The Situation and Dilemma of Chinese Overseas Students' Intercultural Adaptation

1.1 Multicultural Awareness and Intercultural Adaptation



Before studying in Malaysia and in the process of studying and living, the most important thing for IUKL Chinese students is to have a multicultural understanding and be willing to have a better understanding of the country's culture, lifestyle, and different values. Being able to look at different cultures with a positive attitude can further make themselves adapt to the new environment smoothly. The results of this study supported the study by Yang (2023) that the occurrence of cross-cultural action requires not only cultural coexistence but also communication and mutual understanding between different cultures. The study found that the ability to appreciate Malaysian culture and understand the differences between Chinese and Malaysian cultures is helpful for Chinese students to adapt to life in Malaysia. The interviewees basically expressed their agreement on this point, and they all adapted well. The interviewees basically expressed their agreement on this point, and they all adapted well. *Even though the cultures are different, we appreciate and respect Malaysian culture when we are curious (F2). Interviewee F5 said that because he had the foundation of Asian culture and was deeply interested in Malaysian multi-ethnic culture, he could adapt to it. This echoes the narrative of F2. I feel that living off-campus (near KLCC) has made me more aware of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysian life, and the locals (F1).*

1.2 Mode of Transportation

According to the analysis of this study, the traffic mode of left driving in Malaysia is different from that of right driving in China. Chinese students need to have a process of adaptation. Researchers have found that the convenience of transportation also affects the adaptation of foreign students. IUKL is located about 30 km away from downtown Kuala Lumpur, and the school bus can go to shopping malls, MRT stations, and railway stations. Living and studying here, most Chinese students choose Grab. If you rent a car, you can't get used to it in a short time because of the difference in driving direction. Generally speaking, it is not convenient for Chinese students to go back and forth between the school and Kuala Lumpur. In addition to F4's idea of going out on foot, other respondents said that most of them would contact other students and use Grab software to call a taxi together. The interviewee mentioned that *F4 had said that the traffic was inconvenient, and he preferred to walk in China. The IOI CITY MALL near IUKL was about 3 kilometers away, and he wanted to go there on foot. Similarly, exploring farms and other places about 2 kilometers around, he found that there were few sidewalks on both sides of the road, and the hot weather made his idea difficult to realize. On this point, other interviewees did not express difficulties and felt that it was very convenient to go out by taxi. I feel that the bigger (life difficulties) should be because of the traffic. I prefer to walk, I prefer to walk most of the places within 3 kilometers. However, there is no sidewalk on the road near IUKL, and there are many cars, so it is not safe (F4).*

1.3. Differences in Eating Habits

In IUKL's current life, there are three main ways to eat three meals a day. Small dining room in the study room, DC dining square, cooking by yourself. The former two are mainly Malay and Indian

food, and there are no Chinese restaurants at present. Differences in dietary culture and eating habits may also cause problems in the early stage. Among the 20 students interviewed, F9 and F18 said that there was no problem with their diet, which was acceptable, and they liked the taste of various spices. F1, F8, F10, and F20 are completely unacceptable, as long as the food with spices is completely unacceptable. Almost all of the remaining 14 interviewees said that they were not used to such a diet at present, and although they did not like it, they were trying to adapt. In order to solve the difference in eating habits, respondents said they bought cookers to cook. At the same time, the four girls interviewed by F3, F6, F12, and F13 pointed out that they must drink hot water or warm water every day. Many of them are ice water and are not used to it. These problems reflect the differences in food culture between China and Malaysia, which include climate factors affecting Malaysians' eating habits, diversification of dietary choices, and whether the kitchen is equipped or not. Despite the difference in eating habits, on the whole, it is very convenient to get food, because you can also order takeout in Malaysia.

1.4. School Teaching and Administrative Adaptation

Respondents said that in IUKL's daily life, they had more contact with the staff of the school's admission office, visa office, and teaching management office. The 20 interviewees generally approved of the working attitude and methods of the staff. For example, some problems such as visa application and dormitory application can be communicated by e-mail. The communication with the staff on some issues such as course selection and network account handling were also smooth. Almost all respondents' said language was very important. Chinese people basically need to communicate in English, which has a high demand for language. Among them, F2, F12, and F17 indicate that sometimes they do not understand some professional terms and need to strengthen language practice. *I am very grateful for the help of IUKL. When I first arrived in Kuala Lumpur, the program was on vacation. The staff was very helpful (F18).*

2. Motivation of Intercultural Adaptation of Chinese International Students

Through the interview information of this study, it can be found that Chinese students in different grades have different learning motivations in IUKL. Three undergraduate students came to IUKL for different reasons. *The first one failed in the National College Entrance Examination and chose to study abroad (F1). I chose IUKL (F2) because of the introduction of senior high school students. Another student majoring in management wanted to broaden his horizons and chose to study in Malaysia (F3).* One of the six graduate students studied in Malaysia and continued to study in IUKL for a master's degree. Most of them focused on their future self-development and wanted to have better employment opportunities. The 11 Ph.D. students focused more on self-development.

2.1. Interest in Knowledge

Respondents of different grades expressed their interest in studying in Malaysia because they were interested in foreign courses and

hoped to experience different teaching methods. F1, F2, F3, F5, F7, F10, F11, F15, F17, and F20 all said in the interview that they had experienced the difference in the way of class in the courses they had attended. Professors will use the form of group discussion in class to encourage students to think more and discuss the knowledge points they have mastered from their own point of view. *F4 and F5 said that China is now under great pressure of competition, and if there is no strong professional knowledge as a basis, they are worried that they will not be able to find a good job in the future.* The 11 Ph.D. students interviewed all said that the view of lifelong learning is increasingly recognized in their work and life. Continuing IUKL learning is to better increase professional knowledge, acquire new knowledge, and enrich themselves, so as to help themselves grow in a cross-cultural environment. F8, F10, F11, and F17 said in the interview that they came to IUKL to fill the gap that they had not studied abroad before, and to add some cross-cultural learning experience.

2.2. Development

In the study of IUKL, students are faced with the problem of language communication, which makes foreign students have to use English to contact and communicate in daily life. The 20 interviewees agreed that language learning had been strengthened in their study and life in Malaysia. *F4 said that he was most afraid of English when he was in China, and it was difficult for him to speak English.* F10 also expressed similar feelings, believing that the teacher's own English level has made great progress in the process of learning IUKL. *F1 said that there is a mosque in the school, and every day you can hear the sound coming from it and feel different foreign cultures.* Interviewee F16 said that through many festivals in Malaysia, he received a day off notice the day after the state election, which made him feel amazing and experienced different cultural ways. F20 believes that one of his roommates is Chinese, one is Syrian and one is Malay native, and that he can increase his cross-cultural communication skills through daily communication. At the same time, the interviewees all agreed that in terms of self-development, they would find new goals for their lives here, and their development directions and possibilities would be more open.

1.1 Social Relationship

Although the 20 interviewees have profound experience in job hunting interest and self-development, they have completely different attitudes in social relations. Except for F2 and F6, who said they might stay in Malaysia to work in the future, the other 18 respondents said they would return home after graduation. The 18 students all said that if they met students with similar interests, such as playing basketball, badminton, swimming, running, and so on, they could make some local friends. The daily study and lifetime is relatively tense, and others will not deliberately look for friends.

2. Motivational Strategies in Intercultural Adaptation of Chinese Overseas

2.1 Chinese Students

In the process of IUKL learning, Chinese students are not only

the disseminators of Chinese culture but also the experiencers of cross-cultural adaptation. In order to study smoothly, we should make full preparations before traveling. *F2 said that English was hardly spoken in China, so he learned English online before coming to Malaysia.* The results of this study show that learning about Malaysian culture, social status, national conditions, rules, and systems in advance can help Chinese students better adapt to local life.

1.2.1 Adjust Psychological Expectations and Adapt to The New Environment

First of all, foreign students will inevitably experience a "cultural shock" period, if not handled properly, there will be problems in life and learning. Therefore, we should adjust our psychological expectations and not fall too far behind the real environment. Secondly, when emotional fluctuations occur, we should communicate with family members, teachers, and friends in time to find emotional support and eliminate anxiety. Finally, when you encounter problems that you can't solve in your study or life during your study abroad, you can report to IUKL and get help. F18 said, I studied in Thailand before, and this time I will be less nervous in Malaysia. We should maintain an optimistic attitude, establish firm beliefs, and actively adapt to the new environment. Zhu and Li (2021) and Yang and Feng (2022) studies emphasized that learning motivation is influenced by personal factors, and it is particularly important to adjust the state of self.

1.1.1 Strengthen Professional Learning and Enhance Their Own Advantages

At the same time, the study found that the rapid development of international education has accelerated the exchange and dissemination of ideas and cultures between different countries. Chinese students should strengthen the study of professional skills during their study, including language, knowledge base, and professional knowledge, which is very important in the process of studying abroad. Zhou (2023) and Xue (2023) pointed out in their research that Chinese universities are at a critical stage of strengthening the overall level of quality education. *F7 said that the study in IUKL is to strengthen professional knowledge and improve their competitiveness. Learning is a lifelong endeavor, and learning in Malaysia is a part of the process, from which professional knowledge can be improved (F13).* Before studying abroad, you can use your vacation and spare time to learn professional courses; with the help of local teachers, you can improve your cognitive level in all aspects and enhance the relationship with local teachers; you should continue to learn the language to lay the foundation for the dissemination of Chinese culture, and also make your life convenient, study smoothly and adapt to cross-cultural exchanges.

1.1.1 Face Up to Cultural Differences and Improve Communicative Competence

Before studying abroad, Chinese students should be familiar with local customs and taboos, which can effectively reduce unnecessary troubles. We should also establish intercultural awareness and multicultural awareness, treat the cultural

differences between China and Malaysia objectively, and enhance our communicative competence. *F3 said that Malaysian locals are used to drinking ice water and Chinese students are used to drinking hot water. Although there are differences in the process of getting along, we are trying to solve these problems. I especially like walking at home. It's not suitable here (F4).* F1, F8, F10, and F20 mean that they can't adapt to the local food at present. For example, Hong (2021) found in his research that many overseas students have the courage to go out to study in a strange country with dreams and ideals, but often many times they are not as perfect as they are. At this time, foreign students need to face up to cultural differences at the first time, look at the existing problems objectively, and adapt as soon as possible. Xue (2023) claimed that foreign students gradually adapt to the social culture of the host country in order to start their life studying abroad smoothly.

1.2 IUKL

1.2.1 Strengthen the Hardware Construction, Improve the campus Facilities

On the basis of existing hardware conditions, IUKL can increase hardware investment and provide students with a good learning environment. Chinese food canteens will be added and hardware facilities such as libraries and indoor gymnasiums will be renovated. This will attract more students to study. According to the information on the school website, we can see that IUKL's civil engineering, computer, and other specialties have been developing very well. We can make use of the professional advantages, gather more superior resources, and increase publicity efforts.

1.1.1 Increase Teacher Training to Ensure Teaching

First of all, the existing teachers and administrators of the school should be trained, and the relevant personnel should be arranged to do a good job of handover so that they can understand the learning situation of Chinese students before they come to IUKL. *F17 said, I don't understand some professional terms, and the way of communication with teachers in Malaysia is different from that in China.* Through training, IUKL teachers can better understand Chinese culture, so that they can better communicate with Chinese students.

1.1.1 Organize Campus Activities to Improve Adaptability

First of all, IUKL can organize more campus interaction, encourage students and teachers to participate actively and provide opportunities for foreign students to communicate with teachers, so as to enhance the relationship between teachers and students. F2 and F10 indicated that they hardly participated in campus cultural activities and suggested that activities with targeted themes could be organized. Secondly, in the internship of major festivals, such as Eid al-Fitr, the school can invite foreign students to participate in the experience of different customs. At the same time, schools can strengthen humanistic care. Wang (2022) found in the study that most foreign students thought they should take part in the training in time. So as to gain support and experience. Schools can arrange a local person who can speak Chinese or use interlanguage to help foreign students familiarize themselves with the environment and adapt to life in Malaysia. Reasonable arrangements should be made

in terms of clothing, diet, housing, and transportation. A comfortable environment can give interns a little comfort in other places and alleviate the pain of homesickness. Ten of the 11 doctors attended the tea party organized by IUKL. They all said that the activity was very good. They could communicate with their classmates and teachers in a relaxed atmosphere. F7 said in the interview that he hoped to have the opportunity to participate in the future.

1.1 The Parents of Foreign Students

As the closest person to foreign students, parents play a very important role in the whole process of their study. Liang et al. (2020) and Li et al. (2023) pointed out that the key to improving adaptability lies in the common concern of individual students, parents, and schools. F3, F6, F7, and F9 indicate that they are often homesick in Malaysia. In addition to individual students and schools, parents are a force that cannot be ignored. Parents should not only pay attention to how much professional knowledge students have gained but also to their mental state and daily emotional changes. The conclusion is similar to Li (2022) that different social support will bring different results. The higher the support of parents, the more motivated students will be to face difficulties and solve problems, which will lead to greater gains.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Through the interview results of this study, it can be seen that the motivational strategies of Chinese students from China in Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur in intercultural adaptation mainly focus on two types, namely, interest in knowledge and self-development. Interest in seeking knowledge. In terms of social relations, none of the 18 respondents had a strong need to form new social relations. On the whole, the 20 interviewees have profound experience in job hunting interest and self-development, which makes them feel that they will encounter various difficulties in the process of intercultural adaptation. The most basic diet, transportation, and so on need a period of time to adapt. These conclusions supported Yang (2022) and Zheng (2023) studies where intercultural adaptation is important among foreign student. However, due to strong interest in job hunting and self-development needs, respondents are looking for solutions to the problem, so that they can adapt to life and study in Malaysia as soon as possible. It can be seen that in the process of intercultural adaptation, interest in foreign courses, increasing personal professional knowledge, learning new knowledge, enriching oneself, and foreign culture and experience contribute to professional growth. These conclusions are consistent with those of Zhu and Li (2021) and Yang and Feng (2022), who believe that starting from self-motivation can overcome difficulties and achieve development. According to the records of different interviewees, 20 interviewees F1- F20 are all interested in foreign courses, and they all think that they can increase their professional knowledge and enrich themselves. Yang et al. (2021), Hu and Dong (2020), Li and Liu (2020) all have similar conclusions about the driving force of motivation. In addition to F1, F2, and F3, the interviewees who have no experience of studying abroad hope that this study in IUKL can help them increase their experience of foreign culture. In



terms of self-development, we should better learn foreign languages, experience foreign cultures, increase intercultural communication skills, and find goals for life.

From the perspective of Black & Mendenhall's (1991) intercultural U-shaped theory, intercultural life needs a process of adaptation, and the research results of Constantine and Okazaki (2020), Wang (2021) also conform to the logic of this theory. Kafoune (2021) and Zheng (2023) proposed the process of adaptation and the difficulties encountered, which are similar to the results of this study and consistent with the U-shaped theory. In order to shorten the adaptation process, this study starts from the students themselves. This study proposes to adjust psychological expectations, adapt to the new environment, strengthen professional learning, enhance their own advantages, and suggest that Chinese students in IUKL should face up to cultural differences and improve their communicative competence. For IUKL, this study gives suggestions from three aspects: the construction of campus hardware facilities, the reserve of teachers, and the construction of communication platform. Finally, it calls on parents of Chinese students not only to pay attention to their professional knowledge but also to the psychological state of their children in foreign countries. Based on these findings, this study proposes three major coping strategies.

CONCLUSION

This study explores the types of cross-cultural adaptation motivation from the perspective of Chinese foreign students, which supplements the achievements of most Chinese scholars who study foreign students in China. It is expected that more scholars will broaden their research objects and regions in the future, and provide reference and help for the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students. The results of this study can be inferred to Chinese students of different majors, years, and genders in IUKL, and provide a certain reference value for IUKL to formulate future training plans for foreign students, related management systems, and the organization and planning of student activities. At the same time, from the perspective of Malaysian teachers, it can also help them better understand the current situation of Chinese students in IUKL, help relevant personnel to improve work efficiency, and improve working methods. Good interaction between teachers and students, and good interaction between Chinese students and Malaysian locals can strengthen exchanges between China and Malaysia, and promote cultural integration and common development through the ties of foreign students. Furthermore, this study also provides a reference for future researchers to expand the scope of research, increase the research sample, and understand the motivation and coping strategies of Chinese students' intercultural adaptation.

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