

FACTORS AFFECTING SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ADAPTATION OF CHINESE STUDENTS IN THAILAND

Wisuthtinath Wipakkitanan ¹, Chalermopol Tapsai ²

^{1,2} College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Dusit, Bangkok, Thailand

¹E-Mail: wisuthtinath.wi@ssru.ac.th

²E-Mail: chalermopol.ta@ssru.ac.th

ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the Innovative Factors Affecting Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University., with a specific focus on Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University in Bangkok. Through a survey involving Chinese student that enrolled Chinese students, the study identified significant influences Personality, Language skills, Previous intercultural experience, and Cultural identity.

The result found that Thai universities' Cultural identity, lower Previous intercultural experience, and strong academic image significantly influenced Chinese students' decision to study there, with advertising having the biggest impact. This suggests Thai universities should focus on promoting their academic strengths and affordability to attract more Chinese students.

Keywords: Chinese Students, Cultural Adaptation, Social and Cultural

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

The vibrant tapestry of Thailand's higher education landscape is increasingly adorned with the presence of Chinese students, drawn by the allure of academic excellence and cultural immersion. However, successfully navigating the transition from their familiar surroundings to a new cultural context presents both opportunities and challenges (Sun et al., 2020).

Influencing the social and cultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand, providing for universities and support services to foster a welcoming and enriching environment. By understanding of individual, environmental, and interactional factors, can empower Chinese students to thrive in their academic pursuits and embrace the richness of Thai culture. This discovery will shed light on the key determinants of successful adaptation, paving the way for a more inclusive and fulfilling educational experience (Boonphadung & Seubsang, 2021).

OBJECTIVE

To study factors Affecting Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand.

1.2 Research scope

1.2.1 Content Scope

This research aims to investigate the factors Affecting Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand., Thailand. Specifically, the study will focus on Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University as the location for conducting the survey. The main respondents will be Chinese students who have chosen Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University as their study destination. The research will be conducted during the year 2023.

1.2.2 Population scope

Research Data used in this study were obtained from Chinese students who have used to study or is studying bachelor, master and doctor degree who study Thai universities in Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

1.2.3 Scope of area

Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University Thailand.

1.3 Conceptual framework

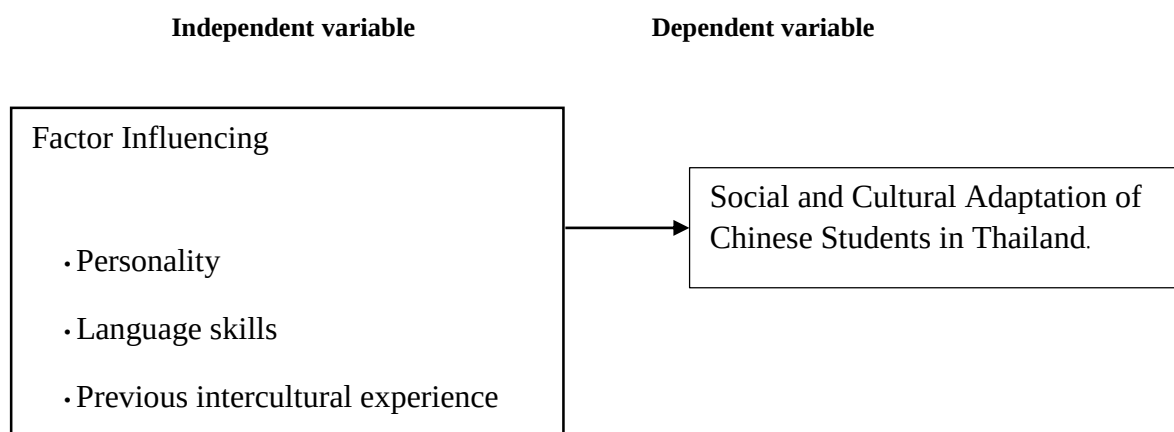


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Source: (Wong, S. Y., & Lee, J. J. (2023)

METHODOLOGY

2. Research methodology

2.1 Research design

This study adopts a quantitative research approach, which entails explaining phenomena through the collection of numerical data analyzed using mathematical techniques, particularly statistics. Professional quantitative research hinges on accurate data. Thus, the questionnaire design, population selection, sampling strategies, and data collection were methodically structured to ensure reliability.

2.2 Population and samples

2.2.1 Population

Chinese students studying in Thai universities in Bangkok, Thailand. Specifically, the study will focus on Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University (Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, n.d.).

2.2.2 Samples

A sample group of 378 Chinese students from was selected using a simple random sampling method, which means that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected.

The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane formula (Yamane, 1973) with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of 0.025 for the sample group, as follows:

$$\text{Using the formula } n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

n = sample size
 N = study population size
 e = is the margin of error (set at 2.5% or 0.025)

the sample size for this study is calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{500}{1 + 500(.25)^2}$$

$$n = 378$$

2.3 Instrumentation

The research tool used to collect data is a questionnaire, which applied theories, concepts, and related research on factors influencing Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand. To defining each variable and creating the questionnaire. Then checked the quality of the questionnaire and set scoring criteria. The development process of the research questionnaire

2.4 Testing quality of research instrument

This research used a questionnaire to examine the content validity of the text in each question to ensure that they aligned with the objectives of the study. The questionnaire was reviewed by three qualified individuals to assess the clarity of the language and the congruence of the questions with the objectives (Index of Item Objective Congruence: IOC), where an acceptable index value must be 0.60 or higher. The scoring criteria were as follows:

The IOC for each question was calculated using the following formula:

$$IOC = \frac{\sum R}{N}$$

Where IOC refers to the index of item objective congruence between the content of the question and the objectives of the study.

R refers to the score given by each qualified individual.

$\sum R$ refers to the sum of scores given by each qualified individual for each question.

N refers to the number of qualified individuals.

An acceptable index value must be 0.50 or higher. And selected questions with an IOC value of 0.50 or higher for use in the study, all of which were evaluated by the three qualified individuals and found to have content validity that covered all aspects of the objectives, with an IOC value ranging from 0.80-1.00.

2.4.1 Content validity

The instrument has been revised based on expert feedback, the content validity could be assessed using the Index of Content Validity (IOC) method, as described in my previous response. The IOC could be calculated by obtaining ratings

2.5 Data collection

This research collected data by using an online questionnaire with a sample group of 100 people, while keeping backup data in case of incomplete or inaccurate responses at a rate of 10%.

2.6 Data Analysis

This research makes inferences about the population based on the sample data, then inferential statistics such as multiple regression analysis (Gujarati & Porter, 2009). Multiple regression analysis can be used to examine the relationships between the dependent variable and multiple independent variables and test hypotheses about the population.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

3. Results and Findings

3.1 Testing the reliability of the questionnaire

To validate the questionnaire's accuracy and reliability (DeVellis, 2016), a preliminary test with 30 sets will be conducted under conditions similar to actual data collection. This aims to assess data collection, comprehension, and communication of question meanings within the sample group. Furthermore, an analysis will be performed to gauge the questionnaire's reliability using the Internal Consistency Method. This analysis will consider corrected item total correlations, ideally at least 0.20, and Cronbach's alpha, introduced by Cronbach (1951) as a measure of internal consistency reliability. A Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.70 is indicative of consistency among the questionnaire items within each aspect as shown in Table 3.1

Table 3.1: Results of reliability analysis (Reliability)

Variables	Number of questions	Reliability Cronbach's Alpha (n=30)
1. Personality	5	0.906
2. Language skills	5	0.913
3. Previous intercultural experience	6	0.934
4. Cultural identity	3	0.904
5. Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand	4	0.938
Total	23	0.969

The results of the reliability analysis from Table 3.1 show that the reliability for the questions in each section range from 0.906 to 0.938, and the overall reliability is 0.969 (n = 30). Additionally, the questionnaire has been reviewed and its content has been confirmed to be appropriate. Therefore, it can be concluded that the questionnaire is suitable for use in collecting data for research.

3.2 Results of the Opinion Level of Factors Influencing Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand.

Results of Data Analysis on the Opinion Level Factors Influencing Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand. Analyzing the data on Personality Language skills, Previous intercultural experience and Cultural identity. The results are presented as averages, standard deviations, and data interpretation in Table 3.2

Table 3.2: Average and standard overall deviation of Factors Influencing Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand.

Factors Influencing Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand overall	Level of opinion			
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level	Sequence
1. Personality	4.27	0.750	High	2
2. Language skills	4.36	0.743	High	1
3. Previous intercultural experience	4.25	0.800	High	3
4. Cultural identity	4.14	0.824	High	4
Total	4.25	0.781	High	

From Table 3.2, the average and standard deviation values of opinions regarding Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand were found to be high, with an average value of 4.25 when considered across all aspects. When considering each aspect individually, found that the aspect with the highest average value was Language skills, with an average value of 4.36, followed by Personality with an average value of 4.36, Previous intercultural experience with an average value of 4.25, and Cultural identity with an average value of 4.13, in order.

3.3 Hypothesis test results

Hypothesis 1: Personality (X1) influences Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand.

Hypothesis 2: Language skills (X2) affects Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand.

Hypothesis 3: Previous intercultural experience (X3) impact Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand.

Hypothesis 4: Cultural identity (X4) influences Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand.

The statistical hypotheses can be stated as:

H0: Personality (X1), Language skills (X2), Previous intercultural experience (X3), and Cultural identity (X4) collectively affect Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand.

H1: Personality (X1), Language skills (X2), Previous intercultural experience (X3), and Cultural identity (X4) do not collectively affect Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand.

The statistical test used to test the hypothesis is Multiple Regression Analysis, by selecting independent variables into the regression equation using the Stepwise technique at a confidence level of 95%, rejecting the null hypothesis (H0) when Sig is less than 0.05. The results of the test are shown in Tables 3.3-3.4

Table 3.3: The correlation coefficients between factors influencing Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand that affect Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand.

Factor	X1	X2	X3	X4	Y
X1	1.000				
X2	0.699*	1.000			
X3	0.689**	0.757	1.000		
X4	0.590**	0.612*	0.764**	1.000	
Y	0.624**	0.637**	0.762**	0.731**	1.000

*Statistically significant 0.05

**Statistically significant 0.01

X1 represents Personality.

X2 represents Language skills.

X3 represents Previous intercultural experience.

X4 represents Cultural identity.

Y represents Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand.

Table 3.4: Model Summary

R	R ²	Adjust R ²	SE	Durbin-Watson
0.480	0.231	0.223	0.669	1.848

From Table 3.4, Shows the relationship between all dependent variables and independent variables, found that the Adjusted R² value 0.231 means that the variance in the dependent variable can explained by the independent variable, that affect Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand.

Table 3.5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Source of variation	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	80.877	3	26.959	192.177	0.000*
Residual	28.898	206	0.140		
Total	109.775	209			

*Statistically significant 0.05

The multiple regression analysis explored factors affecting Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand: Personality, Language skills, Previous intercultural experience, and Cultural identity. Using the Stepwise method, the analysis revealed an Adjusted R² value of 0.733, indicating that 73.30% of the variance in decision-making stems from these factors.

ANOVA results (F-value = 192.177, Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05) confirmed an overall significant impact of at least one factor on Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand. Specifically, Cultural identity, Previous intercultural experience, and Personality significantly influenced their adaptations (Sig. = 0.000, Sig. = 0.000, Sig. = 0.020, respectively), highlighting their substantial impact below the 0.05 significance level. These findings underscore the significant influence of these factors on Chinese students' selection of Thai universities for their studies. The regression equation can be written as follows:

$$\hat{Y} = 0.572(X_4) + 0.268(X_3) + 0.140(X_1)$$

Factors influencing Chinese students selecting Thai universities include Cultural identity, Previous intercultural experience, and Personality. Cultural identity holds the strongest correlation at 0.572, signifying a significant influence on their choice. Previous intercultural experience follows with a correlation of 0.268, indicating a partial impact. Personality displays a correlation of 0.140, reflecting a moderate influence on their adaptations.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

4. Conclusion and future work

The study found that Language skills, Personality, Previous intercultural experience, and Cultural identity greatly influence Social and Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students in Thailand. These factors explain a significant part of their decision-making variance. Language skills ranked highest, followed by Personality, Previous intercultural experience, and Cultural identity. Improving these aspects could help Thai universities attract and retain more Chinese students. Future research should delve deeper into the specific language skills crucial for adaptation and the effectiveness of various learning methods. Additionally, exploring the interaction between personality traits and cultural factors, the transferability of intercultural skills, and the role of cultural identity in shaping mental health and career aspirations will provide valuable insights.

5. Discussion

The social and cultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand is influenced by a complex interplay of factors. These factors can be broadly categorized into three main groups individual characteristics, environmental factors, and support systems. Individual characteristics include age, gender, language proficiency, personality traits, and prior intercultural experiences. Younger students and those with higher language proficiency tend to adapt more quickly than older students and those with

lower language proficiency. Extroverted and open-minded individuals generally find it easier to adjust to new social and cultural environments. Prior intercultural experiences can also provide students with valuable coping mechanisms and strategies for navigating cultural differences.

6. Suggestions

To enhance the social and cultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand, universities and support services can focus on individual, environmental, and interactional factors. Individual support includes language courses, cultural communication workshops, and psychological counseling. Environmental support involves cultural orientation programs, social events, and dedicated international student offices. Interactional support encompasses intercultural communication training, social integration initiatives, and cultural exchange programs. Additionally, promoting online resources, conducting research, and collaborating with Chinese universities can further enhance the experience. By implementing these suggestions, Thai universities can create a welcoming and supportive environment for Chinese students, fostering their adaptation and enriching their educational experience, ultimately contributing to the internationalization of Thai higher education and promoting intercultural understanding between Thailand and China.

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