Construction of Educational System of International Students in China from the Perspective of the Theory of Communicative Action

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Abstract: At present, the key mission of China's international student education lies in quality enhancement and efficiency optimization to achieve connotative high-quality development. The essence of educating international students constitutes a form of communicative action. To facilitate such communication, it is imperative to foster equal dialogue and cultivate mutual understanding and consensus. Drawing upon Habermas' Communicative Action Theory as the analytical framework, this paper first elucidates the core tenets of the theory. Subsequently, it identifies prominent issues in the current educational management of international students in China through the theoretical lens. By integrating theoretical analysis with practical considerations, the study proposes targeted solutions to address these challenges and establishes a systematic approach for optimizing China's international student education system.

Keywords: intersubjectivity; interculturality; instrumental rationality; lifeworld; construction of educational system of international students in China

1. Introduction

In his keynote address at the 2018 National Education Conference, President Xi underscored the imperative to "develop an internationally competitive education system for international students in China." [1] He asserted that "quality constitutes the lifeline of China's international student education, with its international competitiveness fundamentally hinging on quality enhancement." Despite remarkable achievements attained through years of rapid expansion, persistent issues plague the educational management of international students in China. These include homogenized pedagogical models, overly utilitarian management practices, and inadequate attention to international students' cross-cultural adaptation, social integration, and linguistic communication needs. Such deficiencies have impeded both the quality improvement of international student education and the connotative development of China's higher education system. At its core, addressing these challenges necessitates rationalizing the dynamics among teaching faculty, administrative staff, international students and domestic Chinese students. The Communicative Action Theory proposed by Jürgen Habermas, the preeminent contemporary German Marxist philosopher, has exerted profound influence not only within philosophical discourse but also in resolving pedagogical relationships and educational practices. This theoretical framework provides critical insights for refining the educational management of international students.

Firstly, on the front of theoretical enrichment, the theory of communicative action furnishes a robust theoretical framework for examining the communicative behaviors of international students in China. The essence of this theory resides in its exploration of interpersonal interactions and social behavioral patterns, and from this theoretical perspective, the communicative behaviors of international students can likewise be scrutinized. Throughout their sojourn in China, international students are required to actively participate in diverse social interactions, grapple with cross-cultural exchanges, and acclimate to a novel learning environment, all of which inherently involve communicative endeavors. By leveraging the theory of communicative action, we can delve deeply into the issues pertaining to teaching and management modalities, language communication, and cross-cultural adaptation encountered by international students during their academic pursuits in China. This endeavor serves to enrich and broaden the applicability of the theory of communicative action within the realm of cross-cultural education. Additionally, the theory of communicative action is characterized by its interdisciplinary nature, permitting its integration with other pertinent theories and research domains. The education of international students in China constitutes a multifaceted field that spans across disciplines such as education, psychology, sociology, and linguistics. The theory of communicative action has the capacity to synthesize the theories and research methodologies of these disciplines, thereby offering a holistic research lens and facilitating a comprehensive grasp of the education of international students in China.

Secondly, from the perspective of advancing international student education, the theory of communicative action offers profound interpretive and predictive insights into interpersonal communicative behaviors. By leveraging the analytical

framework of this theory, we can elucidate the multifaceted issues and challenges that international students confront in the Chinese educational context. Furthermore, the theory furnishes researchers with a comprehensive set of guiding principles and strategic frameworks, enabling them to anticipate, comprehend, and interpret the complex behavioral patterns exhibited by international students. This theoretical lens thereby facilitates the identification of avenues for improving international student education and promoting the seamless adaptation and integration of students into the Chinese learning environment.

Lastly, from the standpoint of policy formulation and practical guidance, the theory of communicative action demonstrates its versatility not only in explaining phenomenological aspects but also in providing actionable and empirically grounded directives. Through a rigorous examination of the communicative behaviors of international students in China, we can distill a series of evidence-based recommendations for educational support and service provision. These recommendations constitute a foundational basis for the formulation of policies pertaining to international student education and the implementation of practical guidance measures. By conducting an in-depth and meticulous analysis of the communicative behaviors and educational needs of international students, we can offer valuable insights and suggestions to educational institutions and relevant stakeholders, thereby enhancing the support and service infrastructure for international students and fostering their intellectual growth and holistic development within the Chinese educational system.

2. The Connotation of Communicative Action Theory and its Implications for International Student Education in China

2.1 Intersubjectivity and Interculturality

The concept of intersubjectivity constitutes a pivotal category within the realm of 20th-century Western philosophy. Prior to the advent of this notion, traditional Western philosophical discourse was constrained by the subject-object relationship, wherein the comprehension of subject attributes remained confined to the paradigms of "subject-object" or "subject-medium-object." This simplistic relational framework, known as "subjectivity," while efficacious in addressing relationships between humans and objects or nature, tends to succumb to the pitfalls of "dogmatism," which disregards the subjective initiative of individuals and overemphasizes objective necessity, or "solipsism," which excessively prioritizes subjective initiative while neglecting the objective existence of others, in the context of interpersonal relations. The emergence of the information age and globalization has shifted the focus towards dialogue and exchange among subjects, leading to the rise of intersubjectivity. This conceptual shift transforms the traditional philosophical construct of the "isolated subject" into an interactive entity, facilitating interactions between the self and the other, the individual and society, and among various subjects, thereby promoting coexistence.

Habermas, in his seminal work, synthesized phenomenology and critical theory, and ingeniously integrated the "speech act" theory posited by the British language philosopher Austin, thereby establishing the "Communicative Action Theory." This theory, grounded in general pragmatics and centered on intersubjectivity, emphasizes that in the communicative process, individuals operate as mutual subjects, engaging in interactions that foster consensus, understanding and dialogue. The very essence of communicative action is embodied in the manifestation of intersubjectivity.

The conceptual extension of intersubjectivity into multicultural contexts constitutes interculturality. As a latent manifestation of intersubjectivity, interculturality emerges from yet transcends linguistic structures, focusing on the dynamic interactions and transformative processes when distinct cultural paradigms collide. Its ultimate aim resides in fostering equitable dialogue across diverse cultural frameworks and linguistic systems. Habermas posits that each cultural paradigm is grounded in specific historical conditions and embodies inherent rationality. His theories of Communicative Action and Discourse Ethics provide viable approaches to resolving contradictions between cultural paradigms. The purported "cultural conflict" essentially stems from "the assertion of a particular culture's superiority or uniqueness, coupled with the denigration of others—a phenomenon driven by self-serving political strategies and parochial nationalism"[2]. Within pluralistic contexts, "discursive equality and democratic engagement rooted in communicative rationality must prevail among differing belief systems, values and cultural traditions. Any coercive imposition through military, political, or economic means warrants staunch opposition"[3].This pluralistic cultural perspective demands that all cultural paradigms transcend their inherent traditional and axiological limitations. As equal participants in dialogue, they must cultivate mutual respect through prejudice abandonment and misinterpretation mitigation.

2.2 Instrumental Rationality and Value Rationality

In his seminal work Legitimation Crisis, Habermas establishes the foundational dichotomy between the System and the Lifeworld[4]. The System, constituting the socioeconomic and political apparatus, operates through technocratic rationality and monetized logic. Within this framework, instrumentalized actions governed by market mechanisms and bureaucratic

systems prioritize control efficiency over communicative value. On the countary, the Lifeworld emerges as a linguistically-mediated fabric of intersubjective understanding[5]. This dynamic network, embedded with cultural knowledge and normative expectations, facilitates communicative actions through value-oriented rationality. In non-marketized social spaces, language-mediated interactions enable consensus-building processes that minimize discursive dissonance, thereby ensuring cultural transmission and normative integration. Crucially, the Lifeworld serves as both foundation and sustainer of communicative action, while such action reciprocally enriches the Lifeworld through cumulative knowledge sharing. This dialectical relationship underscores Habermas' critique of system colonization over Lifeworld structures.

2.3 Reconstructing Communicative Rationality

The systemic colonization of the Lifeworld by instrumental rationality constitutes a defining feature of contemporary society. As competitive logics permeate social spheres, communicative action becomes supplanted by marketized exchanges — a process precipitating the corrosion of value-oriented rationality and normative disintegration. Habermas' analysis reveals that this colonization dynamic destabilizes the very foundations of social integration. The displacement of consensual norms by technocratic control mechanisms not only voids the Lifeworld's capacity for cultural reproduction but also engenders a structural crisis of legitimation. Such crisis manifests in the decoupling of systemic imperatives from the democratic will-formation processes essential for sustaining a rational society.

To resolve the legitimation crisis inherent in late capitalist societies, Habermas proposes communicative rationality as a counterbalance to the hegemonic spread of instrumental rationality. This normative framework requires fulfillment of three validity claims:

(1) Propositional truth: Discourse participants' factual assertions must withstand intersubjective scrutiny;

(2) Normative rightness: Existing social norms must gain collective recognition as legitimate;

(3) Expressive sincerity: Communicative acts must authentically reflect speakers' intentions[6].

These claims find their epistemic anchor in the Lifeworld — the pre-reflective horizon of shared meanings that enables mutual understanding. Through such rational discourse, social actors achieve:

· Coordination of individual actions via consensual worldviews

· Establishment of binding moral norms through democratic will-formation

· Regeneration of the Lifeworld's symbolic structures

The cumulative effect constitutes a paradigm shift from the one-dimensionality of technocratic systems to a deliberative democracy grounded in communicative reason.

In this regard, Habermas' theory of communicative action is of great importance for improving the level of education for international students studying in China, at least in the following aspects:

First, it emphasizes the importance of intersubjectivity. Intersubjectivity highlights the mutual relationships and interactions between individuals, as well as the shared cognition and consensus established through language and symbolic communication. It also pays attention to issues of power and oppression. In the education of international students in China, it is crucial to emphasize the communication and understanding between the students and Chinese teachers, administrative personnel and Chinese students. In the education of international students in China, efforts should be made to create an equal and inclusive educational environment, avoid neglecting or excluding international students, encourage their social interactions, share their experiences and cultures, and promote cross-cultural exchange and understanding.

Secondly, it promotes interculturality. Interculturality emphasizes the mutual interaction and dialogue between different cultures. The education of international students in China should pay attention to help students understand and adapt to Chinese culture, and guide them in exploring Chinese culture. International students may encounter unique Chinese cultural and social customs, which are completely unfamiliar to them. Cultural interpretation and guidance should be provided to help the students understand the background, values and social norms of Chinese culture, in order to facilitate their better adaptation and integration into Chinese society.

Furthermore, it introduces a comprehensive evaluation and participatory platform. In educational practice, the balance between value rationality and instrumental rationality should be emphasized, highlighting the importance of rational communication and consensus. Through dialogue and negotiation, more value-rational decisions and actions should be achieved, rather than pursuing merely the efficiency and interests of instrumental rationality. Whether it is the academic performance of international students or the management outcome performance, comprehensive evaluation should be carried out. In addition to the traditional quantitative indicators such as exam scores and written assignments, various evaluation methods can be considered, such as project-based assessments to comprehensively evaluate the students' knowledge, skills and practical abilities. Comprehensive evaluation helps to better understand the overall competence and potential of international students. When evaluating teaching and management outcomes, more attention should be paid to the students'

participation, learning motivation, and individual development. A student participation platform should be established, allowing international students equal participation rights. Through the participation platform, international students can share their own views and experiences, and also understand and accept the perspectives of others, thereby promoting the formation of shared understanding and the establishment of consensus. The participation platform provides equal opportunities and resources for international students, which means they have the opportunity to express their views, pose questions, participate in discussions, and influence the decision-making process. This democratic participation opportunity will also enhance the students' autonomy and sense of responsibility.

3. Problems in the Current Management of International Student Education

The governance of international student education in China is ontologically constituted by communicative interactions among four key actors: pedagogical practitioners, administrative agents, international learners and domestic student cohorts. Through the theoretical lens of Habermasian communicative action, however, systemic deficiencies in communicative rationality are observed across these intersubjective engagements.

3.1 Adhering to the Unitary Instructional Paradigm and Monocultural Management Model - Disregarding Inter-subjectivity and Interculturality

Education is a paradigmatic scenario of communicative praxis that should adhere to the principle of intersubjectivity. Nevertheless, most Chinese universities persist in employing a mono-subject pedagogical model for international students—a unidirectional and static process prioritizing knowledge dissemination. In this framework, teachers act as knowledge-imparting subjects while students remain passive objects. The pervasive "cramming-style instruction" and "over-regulation" in educational practices undermine the egalitarian teacher-student dynamic, resulting in deficient bidirectional interaction and the absence of reciprocal pedagogical growth.

Inequities also manifest between Chinese and international students in mixed classrooms. Some international students report that during group discussions, Chinese peers frequently neither comprehend their viewpoints (due to limited Chinese proficiency) nor demonstrate willingness to engage with them. Certain Chinese students even resist collaborative grouping with international peers, apprehensive that such partnerships might compromise their academic performance. Consequently, international students are often relegated to "peripheral participants" rather than being embraced as "core members of the learning community" in these integrated classrooms[7].

The administration of international students in China is also characterized by unidirectional control and subordination. Administrative agents, acting as both formulators and enforcers of institutional regulations, constitute the active subjects of managerial practices, whereas international students are relegated to passive recipients — objects of compliance. Fundamentally, such management operates as a unidirectional process of command issuance and mechanical compliance.

The distinctiveness of international student administration stems from its intercultural dimensions. These students are socialized in disparate cultural ecosystems, shaped by divergent mother tongues, life experiences, value systems and belief structures, coupled with an inadequate grasp of Chinese cultural paradigms. In current administrative practices, educators and staff frequently neglect intersubjective intercultural dynamics, adopting an ethnocentric perspective that eclipses the innate cultural variances among students from different nations. When management frameworks fail to implement context-sensitive adaptations aligned with international students' profiles — while denying them autonomy in decision-making and dialogic spaces — the outcomes tend to underperform. Of course, recognizing cultural plurality does not license divergent cultural narratives to contravene institutional protocols or override the procedural norms of communicative rationality. Authentic consensus between administrators and the administered should not emerge from suppressing differences or homogenizing identities, but rather through intersubjectively negotiated cultural understanding. Such understanding must adhere to the parameters of value pluralism and be operationalized through sustained dialogic engagement.

3.2 The Simplification of Management Assessment and the Instrumentalization of Communicative Behavior - The Proliferation of Instrumental Rationality and the Loss of Value Rationality

The reductionist quantification of managerial efficacy subordinates both educators and administrators to the logic of instrumental rationality — a system prioritizing "operational efficiency" and "bureaucratic standardization." Academics acutely recognize that student cultivation constitutes a soft competency, whereas research output functions as a hard currency for institutional evaluation. Consequently, they either channel energies into disciplinary research for professional promotion or pursue entrepreneurial endeavors beyond academia. Certain faculty members strategically relax attendance regulations and grading criteria for international students to circumvent cumbersome remedial assessment procedures. This practice not only degrades educational quality — thereby impeding the sustainable growth of China's international education sector — but

also fosters international students' perception of systemic exclusion, contravening the principles of convergent management.

Administrative staff, overwhelmed by rigid KPIs, prioritize performative record-keeping at the expense of humanistic student support. The notion of "selfless mentorship" becomes an unattainable ideal under such conditions.

Management personnel are preoccupied with the completion of rigid performance indicators, emphasizing the documentation of management processes, and consequently compressing the humanistic care for international students, let alone the selfless dedication to serve as a "stepping stone" for others.

Teaching faculty and management personnel share the common goal of educating and nurturing the same cohort of international students. However, in practice, they often work in silos, with limited cooperation and exchange. They lack both the awareness of collaboration and the platforms and mechanisms for substantive communication. Apart from some sporadic information sharing on student academic matters, there is little proactive engagement in coordinated planning and in-depth cooperation. This reflects the fundamental conflict and antagonism between the advocated inclusive and egalitarian academic culture, and the required standardized, other-controlled management culture.

3.3 The Absence of Lifeworld and the Lack of Life Services - The Colonization of Lifeworld

As Marx stated, "the human essence is not an abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality, it is the ensemble of social relations." [8] The specific social relations, lifestyles, and cultural traditions "habits" or "ethics" that have been passed down through the history of individuals and their affiliated groups become the substance of the lifeworld, which must be observed across generations. However, according to the feedback from many international students, the interpersonal interaction density is relatively low in China, with limited interactions with Chinese students. Even when interactions occur, they are mostly chance encounters between strangers. Driven by the specific policies and management inertia of a particular historical period, universities often provide international students with a more comfortable living and learning environment, resulting in the segregation of living and learning spaces between international and Chinese students. This spatial isolation eliminates the potential for interaction between the two groups, closing off the avenue for exchange. The absence of the everyday lifeworld and interaction contexts deprives international students of opportunities to make Chinese friends, let alone integrate into the deeper cultural ethos of the Chinese people, leading to their difficulties in social integration.

The predicament manifests dual dimensions: the absence of Lifeworld juxtaposed with systemic deficiencies in life services. Higher education institutions exhibit structural ambiguities wherein administrative units overseeing international students chronically demonstrate ill-defined jurisdictional boundaries and institutionalized responsibility-shirking. Neophyte international students, grappling with acute acculturative stress, exhibit dependency tendencies extending to quotidian matters. Particularly vulnerable cohorts — those devoid of Sinic linguistic preparation and situated beyond Anglophone linguistic spheres — confront exponentially compounded adaptation challenges.

Personnel in international student services, perennially overburdened by multirole obligations stemming from chronic understaffing, demonstrate constrained efficacy in resolving pragmatic livelihood issues. Paradoxically, administrative entities persist in counterproductive interdepartmental jurisdictional disputes and inefficient internal coordination — a dysfunctionality that not only exacerbates international students' ontological insecurity but also engenders institutional reputational crisis.

3.4 The Lack of Effective Communication and Equitable Dialogue between Teachers and Students - The Absence of Communicative Rationality

According to Habermasian theory, communicative rationality constitutes a linguistically mediated construct characterized by intersubjectivity, procedural openness, and epistemic provisionality. The actualization of such rationality necessitates a tripartite framework:

(1) Linguistic competence: requiring dialogic participants to employ illocutionary-appropriate expressions;

(2) Deliberative parity: mandating consensus-building through symmetrical speech situations;

(3) Normative adherence: obligating mutual recognition of validity claims embedded in communicative action.

Many international students in China have not yet attained proficiency in the Chinese language, while in most cases, the teachers and administrative staff do not master the students' native languages, making effective communication linguistically challenging. Moreover, influenced by Confucian thought, traditional family education, and hierarchical social perceptions, teachers are ascribed relatively high social status and authority as knowledge transmitters and guides. Students, on the other hand, are viewed as a lower-status group expected to respect, obey, and accept the teachings of their instructors. This dynamic renders genuine equal dialogue quite difficult to achieve. The differences between China's educational system and teaching methods and the educational environments familiar to international students can also contribute to communication difficulties. Teachers may adopt an authoritarian teaching approach, while international students may be more accustomed

to open, interactive, and autonomous learning styles. These disparities can lead to communication barriers and a lack of communicative rationality in teacher-student interactions. Furthermore, due to the vast differences in value norms, cultural traditions, communication methods, and interpersonal skills between the Chinese and international parties, both teachers and students are often unsure of each other's expectations and what behaviors would be considered appropriate[9]. This can adversely impact the international students' levels of participation and confidence in social activities, further exacerbating their challenges in social integration.

4. Strategies for Constructing an International Student Education System Guided by the Theory of Communicative Action

4.1 Transforming the Teaching Model and Constructing a Teaching Community

The teaching approach should abandon the previous single-subject model, which is the "subject-object" structure advocated by instrumental rationality, and instead achieve a harmonious integration of value-rationality and instrumental-rationality. The teacher-student relationship should not be solely focused on the absolute transfer of knowledge and skills, but should pay more attention to the exchange of ideas and guidance of the students' thinking[10]. The teacher-student relationship should also not be constrained by hierarchy and interests like a workplace relationship, but rather conducted as an equal dialogue and exchange within a shared value system and discourse.

Guided by the theory of communicative action, the teaching faculty, international student service personnel, international students, and relevant academic departments should establish shared educational objectives, create an environment conducive to exchange and dialogue, advocate dialogic teaching, activate the international students' creative thinking, and form a teaching community.

A comprehensive international student training plan should be formulated, covering training objectives, curriculum system, teaching plans, practical teaching and so on, which should be regularly reviewed and revised to meet the educational and teaching standards of the relevant disciplines. Curriculum resources suitable for international student training should be continuously developed, and the international compatibility of the curriculum system in fields such as science, engineering, agriculture and medicine should be continuously improved. A teaching support system tailored to the learning characteristics of international students should be established, encouraging faculty to provide teaching guidance for international students and facilitating peer-to-peer learning between Chinese and international students to promptly identify and intervene in the academic difficulties faced by international students. Support should be provided for various international student education theory research and practical exploration, implementing teaching tasks in a culturally sensitive and responsible manner, and expanding the cultural inclusiveness of the curriculum. The opinions and suggestions of international students on teaching should be actively solicited, and their participation in teaching evaluation should be supported.

4.2 Transforming Management Practices and Building a Management Community

The administration department for international student education at higher education institutions should assume the centralized management responsibility and comprehensively coordinate the management of international student education. The various schools or functional units should actively provide support for the management and services of international students within their respective jurisdictions. Guided by the theory of communicative action, the international student management staff and personnel from the various schools or relevant functional units should establish shared management goals, and on the basis of mutual respect, share experiences, engage in multi-directional communication, and form a management community.

In terms of dining management, consideration could be given to setting up Russian, Turkish, and Southeast Asian cuisine stations in the student cafeterias to provide international students with familiar home-style cuisine as much as possible. In terms of dormitory management, the principles of fairness and prudence should be upheld, professional staff should be hired to provide quality management, and appropriate accommodations should be made for the customs and cultural differences of international students. In terms of information management, an information platform for international students should be developed to enhance the level of informatization. In terms of teaching facilities and resources, it should be ensured that Chinese and international students have equal access to the university's laboratories, libraries, gymnasiums and other facilities and resources in accordance with the same management policies, usage conditions and fee structure. In terms of emergency management, the emergency management system and contingency plans should be adapted to the requirements of public emergencies involving foreign nationals and the development requirements of international student education. In terms of emergency rescue, collaborative contingency plans should be formulated for providing assistance to international students who encounter major illnesses, accidents, or other emergencies within China, and active support should be provided for rescue operations and medical care.

4.3 Establishing a Teaching-Management Collaboration Mechanism to Enhance the Overall Performance of the Education Management Team

A monthly meeting system and specialized discussion mechanism should be established to enable equal dialogue between the international student management staff and the teaching team. Specific educational scenarios, such as declining academic performance, tardiness and absenteeism, and overnight absences of target students, should be rationally discussed by the course instructors and international student management staff to jointly develop countermeasures. Participation in international student activities such as spring and autumn excursions should be encouraged, providing opportunities for extensive exchange and reaching consensus. In terms of dialogue and communication skills, based on the theory of the "ideal speech situation," pre-meeting materials should be provided to ensure thorough understanding of the topics, free and unrestricted discussions should be facilitated, and discussion protocols should be established to create an environment of free discourse. Regular evaluations should be conducted, and continuous improvements should be made to the overall performance of the international student education management team.

4.4 Optimizing Teaching Content and Formats to Create a "Second Classroom" in the Lifeworld

According to Habermas' theory of the Lifeworld, communicative action embedded in the lifeworld is truly vibrant. Therefore, in addition to theoretical knowledge, the learning content should also incorporate considerations of everyday life, as well as cultural, social and individual aspects. For example, in Chinese language instruction, Chinese people's living scenarios should be integrated, oral skills should be learned from everyday life, Chinese characters should be learned from life-oriented teaching materials, and Chinese should be taught as a tool for thinking and communication, rather than merely as a communicative means. Chinese historical stories should be incorporated into the teaching materials to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of China. In the teaching process, the content and difficulty level should be adjusted according to the age, psychology and learning objectives of students from different countries and at different levels.

To help international students integrate into the campus and facilitate exchange between Chinese and international students, based on the opinions of both international and Chinese students, dormitory assignments could be adjusted to provide opportunities for those who are willing to immerse themselves in each other's living environments. Additionally, a "second classroom" in the lifeworld should be actively created, organizing extracurricular activities for international students to experience Chinese national conditions and culture; a management system for international student associations should be established, supporting student unions and student organizations to engage international students, and encouraging international students to participate in various academic, cultural and sports activities such as speech contests and art exhibitions. Furthermore, attention should be paid to public policies and effective practices, and practical platforms should be developed to integrate with international students' career planning, actively seeking cooperation with social organizations and communities to promote positive interactions between international students and society.

4.5 Focusing on the cross-cultural adaptation and psychological difficulties of international students in China

Particular attention should be paid to the issue of cross-cultural adaptation among international students. On the one hand, through organized and planned orientation programs, international students should be helped to familiarize themselves with the curriculum, teaching requirements, and assessment methods, as well as to adapt to the teaching and learning environment. The guiding role of senior students from the same country for new students should also be highlighted. On the other hand, concerns should be expressed for students' psychological difficulties. International students have broken through geographical boundaries, left the protection of their parents, and crossed over their original learning trajectories. They constantly face, both actively and passively, real differences in climate, diet, living environment, interaction patterns and behavioral norms, and engage in deeper-level reflections, such as who I was before, how others perceive me, and what my future will be like. Their physical and mental states inevitably suffer from fatigue, confusion, bewilderment and even fear. Efforts should be made to build a daily life world and public communication space with frequent exchanges, and to regularly visit and comfort international student dormitories. Psychological problems arising from language barriers and academic difficulties should be prevented, and necessary assistance and support should be provided for international students to access social medical and psychological counseling services.

4.6 Helping international students overcome language barriers and solve difficulties in social integration

Effective language training support should be provided, including Chinese language courses, language exchange clubs, and language partner programs. Regular Chinese language teaching courses should be organized to help international

students improve their language proficiency. In addition, language exchange activities should be organized, allowing international students to practice the language together with local students or other international students. This can take the form of language corners, language exchange groups, or debate clubs. Through communication with native Chinese-speaking students, international students can improve their oral expression skills and build their confidence. Cross-cultural social activities should be organized to promote exchanges between international students and local students and other international students. This can include tours, cultural exchange activities, club or society participation and so on. Through such activities, international students can make new friends, expand their social circles, and improve their social skills. Cultural sensitivity training should be provided for local students and faculty to help them better understand and accept international students in China. This will help create an inclusive and friendly social environment and promote cross-cultural exchange and integration. A friendly, inclusive, and diverse environment should be fostered to make international students feel welcome and accepted. Internationalization of education should be strengthened, raising the cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity of faculty and students, and encouraging all students to respect and appreciate peers from different cultural backgrounds.

4.7 Cultivating a team of international student teaching and management personnel to become qualified multicultural education practitioners

Different from general higher education practitioners, the team of international student teaching and management personnel is endowed with a higher mission. Schools can adopt more "in-situ internationalization" approaches, inviting foreign or experienced experts to the campus, providing cross-national experiences for the teaching and management team, and awakening their multicultural awareness and cultural responsibility.

The international student teaching and management team must fully recognize that international students have varying degrees and depths of life and cultural experiences, unique values and beliefs, and that multiculturalism will have significant impact on their learning. In order to educate international students, the teaching and management personnel must first examine their own culture and traditional teaching models, preventing the loss of objective judgment due to familiarity with their own culture. On this basis, they should further understand the value of various differences between themselves and their teaching objects, and implement the understanding and tolerance of differences in practice.

Secondly, the international student teaching and management team must possess "knowledge" of multiculturalism, that is, a sound knowledge system about the progress of human civilization and the dynamics of world development. In order to better engage international students in learning, teachers need to understand the background and perspectives of students, and then integrate them with teaching strategies and content, getting closer to students' lives and facilitating their understanding.

Thirdly, the international student teaching and management team must possess the "skills" to cope with multiculturalism and diverse learning habits, including identifying cultural differences and affirming such differences through teaching content and processes, and guiding students to see differences as advantages rather than deficiencies. Diversity should also be emphasized in teaching methods. Students from different backgrounds have diverse learning habits, and students with different habits can achieve good learning outcomes under certain specific teaching models, so diversified teaching methods should be adopted.

4.8 Establishing a collaborative platform for international student participation and strengthening effective interaction between teachers and students

A dedicated online communication platform, such as forums and social media groups, should be created for international students, teachers, Chinese students and international student management personnel to communicate and interact. This platform can provide functions such as Q&A sessions, discussion topics, and resource sharing to facilitate effective communication among them. A mentorship system should be established, with each international student assigned a faculty mentor responsible for providing academic and life support. Mentors can meet with international students regularly, establish close connections, provide personalized guidance, and help international students better integrate into the academic and social environment. Teachers and international students should be encouraged to collaborate on academic research or participate in practical projects, with the establishment of a cooperation incentive fund and the provision of collaborative research resources. Such collaborative projects can promote close interaction between the two parties, provide opportunities for solving practical problems, and strengthen the cooperative relationship between teachers and students. A feedback mechanism should be established to encourage international students and teachers to provide opinions and suggestions on the platform and interactions, with the aim of continuously improving the platform's functions to meet the needs and expectations of teachers and students.

5. Conclusion

The internationalization of higher education has become an overarching trend, and China has now become the top destination for international students in Asia and the second largest globally. There is an urgent need to promote the high-quality, connotative development of China's international student programs, and to build the "Study in China" brand, in order to ensure China's enduring and core competitiveness on the international higher education stage. The country invests heavily in this endeavor each year, standing from the perspective of the country's long-term interests and national strategic landscape to disseminate Chinese culture and enhance the international influence of China's higher education. However, the prerequisite for all this is to ensure the quality of education for international students in China.

Drawing on Habermas' theory of communicative action, this paper proposes abandoning the instrumental rationality and utilitarianism in educational management, breaking away from the single-subject teaching model and single-culture management model, and preventing the colonization of the lifeworld. On this basis, it suggests constructing teaching and management communities comprising teachers, students, and international student affairs personnel, improving the overall performance of the education and management team, providing student-centric learning environments, attending to cross-cultural adaptation and psychological difficulties, helping international students overcome language barriers, building a dedicated international student education and management team committed to multicultural education, and establishing platforms for collaborative participation by international students. This provides an innovative analytical framework for connecting theory to problem-solving.

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