



Challenges and Opportunities in Cross-Cultural Education: A Comparative Study of Barcelona and Beijing Foreign Studies University

Retos y oportunidades en la educación intercultural: un estudio comparativo entre la Universidad de Estudios Extranjeros de Barcelona y Beijing

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Abstract: This study investigates the intercultural challenges faced by Chinese students in Catalonia's higher education system and evaluates the applicability of Beijing Foreign Studies University's (BFSU) successful intercultural education model to Spanish universities. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research combines thematic analysis of qualitative interviews and quantitative survey data from Chinese students in Barcelona to identify key adaptation challenges, such as language barriers, cultural differences, and limited institutional support. Drawing insights from BFSU's systematic curriculum design, faculty internationalization, and student engagement initiatives, the study provides actionable recommendations to improve cross-cultural education frameworks in Catalonia. The findings contribute to bridging gaps in intercultural education and promoting effective strategies for integrating international students, with implications for global educational policy and Sino-Western collaboration.

Keywords: Intercultural education, Cross-cultural adaptation, Comparative education, Higher education internationalization

Resumen: Este estudio investiga los desafíos interculturales que enfrentan los estudiantes chinos en el sistema de educación superior de Cataluña y evalúa la aplicabilidad del exitoso modelo de educación intercultural de la Universidad de Estudios Extranjeros de Pekín (BFSU) en las universidades españolas. Mediante un enfoque de métodos mixtos, la investigación combina análisis temático de entrevistas cualitativas y datos de encuestas cuantitativas realizadas a estudiantes chinos en Barcelona para identificar los principales desafíos de adaptación, como barreras lingüísticas, diferencias culturales y apoyo institucional limitado. A partir de las prácticas de BFSU en diseño curricular sistemático, internacionalización del profesorado e iniciativas de participación estudiantil, el estudio proporciona recomendaciones prácticas para mejorar los marcos educativos interculturales en Cataluña. Los hallazgos contribuyen a cerrar las brechas en la educación intercultural y a promover estrategias efectivas para la integración de estudiantes internacionales, con implicaciones para la política educativa global y la colaboración chino-española.

Palabras clave: Educación intercultural, Adaptación transcultural, Educación comparada, Internacionalización de la educación superior.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of deepening globalization, higher education has transitioned from a traditionally localized and nation-centric knowledge dissemination model to one characterized by internationalization and cross-cultural integration (De Wit, 2019; Tight, 2021). Universities worldwide are not only tasked with their conventional mission of imparting academic knowledge and skills but are also increasingly responsible for equipping students with the ability to communicate, collaborate, and adapt effectively in multicultural environments (Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021; Žalėnienė & Pereira, 2021). As such, cross-cultural education has become an indispensable component of the internationalization process, holding profound implications for global talent mobility and cross-border academic exchanges (Gopal, 2011).

Within this global trend, the challenges faced by Chinese students pursuing higher education abroad have drawn significant attention from scholars and educational administrators (Cao & Meng, 2019; Henze & Zhu, 2012; Long et al., 2009; Wang, 2018). Taking Barcelona, Spain, as an example, despite its rich academic resources and open educational environment, Chinese students encounter various cross-cultural adaptation issues. These include, but are not limited to, language barriers, cultural differences in values and social norms, and misalignment with local educational systems and teaching methods (Gao, 2019; Li, 2021). Such factors can adversely affect their academic performance and personal experiences, representing latent obstacles to the advancement of higher education internationalization.

Enhancing cross-cultural competence is crucial for addressing these challenges. Cross-cultural competence extends beyond language proficiency to encompass an understanding of diverse cultural value systems, mastery of cross-cultural communication skills, and the ability to adapt one's behavior flexibly in multicultural settings (Chiu et al., 2013; Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013). Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU), as a leading institution in foreign language and cross-cultural education in China and Asia, has amassed substantial experience in fostering cross-cultural competence. Through systematic curriculum design, innovative teaching methodologies, and international exchange programs, BFSU has successfully created a cross-cultural learning environment and enhanced students' intercultural competencies. These achievements offer valuable insights for Spanish universities, particularly those in Barcelona, to improve their cross-cultural education frameworks and address the adaptation challenges faced by Chinese students.

This study aims to explore the feasibility and pathways for applying BFSU's successful cross-cultural education model to Spanish universities. Specifically, it analyzes BFSU's strategies and practices in curriculum design, teaching methodologies, faculty training, and international collaboration for developing students' cross-cultural competence. Based on these findings, it provides constructive recommendations for improving cross-cultural support systems in Spanish higher education institutions. By integrating Chinese experiences into the Spanish educational ecosystem, this study seeks to offer macro-level insights for the formulation and implementation of international education policies and micro-level strategies to help Chinese students better integrate into local academic and social environments, ultimately achieving a win-win outcome for all stakeholders.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of cross-cultural competence has been extensively explored, with Byram and Zarate's (1996) theoretical framework offering a comprehensive, multidimensional perspective. This framework defines the sociocultural dimensions of cross-cultural competence and emphasizes the integration of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral skills. Recent studies by the European Union reinforce this view, highlighting that cross-cultural competence comprises a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Caena & Punie, 2019). These components include factual knowledge, data, and theories relevant to specific fields, the ability to apply this knowledge to achieve goals, and an openness to ideas, individuals, or contexts. Together, these elements, supported by appropriate social, emotional, and psychological behaviors, enable effective interaction with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and foster self-reflection and learning from others (Castro, 1999; Neubauer, 2022).

In education, cross-cultural competence is a critical objective that can be developed through formal, informal, and non-formal education. Incorporating cross-cultural competence into curricula enhances students' understanding of the values and behaviors of different cultures, fosters effective communication and collaboration in diverse societies, and deepens their appreciation and recognition of their cultural identity through cultural comparisons (Hernández & Valdez, 2010). El papel del profesor en el desarrollo de la competencia intercultural. Algunas propuestas didácticas.).

Alicia and José, through an empirical study involving 110 university students, compared the cross-cultural competence levels of those who received intercultural training and those who did not. Their findings revealed that trained students demonstrated superior critical thinking and communication skills (Alicia & José, 2014). Moreover, as cross-cultural competence is seen as a vital tool for promoting social inclusion and equity in multicultural contexts, it plays a significant role in enhancing diversity and inclusion in education. It helps students find common ground amid cultural differences and teaches them to respect and appreciate other cultures (Irmgard, 2010). Llevot and Garreta similarly validated this perspective, demonstrating that education

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enhances students' communication skills and empathy, reduces cultural misunderstandings and conflicts, and fosters equity and justice in multicultural societies (Llevot & Garreta, 2024).

According to data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2023), a total of 1,052,283 Chinese international students were enrolled in educational institutions worldwide during the 2022-2023 academic year. However, these students face significant challenges, particularly in adapting to new cultural and educational contexts. Li (2021), in her study on Chinese students at the Complutense University of Madrid, highlighted how cultural conflicts negatively impact classroom relationships and teamwork, ultimately hindering academic progress. This research emphasized that successful cultural integration requires not only language acquisition but also the development of intercultural skills to overcome misunderstandings and build positive relationships with peers and professors. For instance, some students interviewed by Li improved their adaptation by participating in extracurricular activities, seeking support from local social networks, and adopting an open attitude toward cultural differences, which helped them overcome initial barriers and strengthen their confidence in academic and social settings. These findings align with previous studies conducted in other countries, such as Gong et al. (2021) in New Zealand, who noted that intercultural competencies like empathy and flexibility enable international students to navigate differences in teaching styles and academic expectations. Similarly, Gu et al. (2010) and Cao and Meng (2022) argued that the cultural adaptation process involves the reconstruction of personal and cultural identities, particularly in contexts where philosophical and educational differences are significant. In Spain, the importance of intercultural competence is especially evident given the country's rich cultural diversity, where the combination of linguistic skills, cultural understanding, and supportive networks enables Chinese students to mitigate the negative effects of cultural conflicts and effectively adapt to academic and social environments, thereby enhancing not only their academic performance but also their personal and professional development in a globalized world.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study employs a comparative research design to analyze the successful cross-cultural education practices of Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU) and the cross-cultural adaptation challenges faced by Chinese students in Barcelona's higher education system. The study integrates comparative case study analysis with mixed-methods data collection. BFSU is selected as a case study for its exemplary practices in fostering cross-cultural competence, while universities in Barcelona represent the context of adaptation challenges. This dual focus enables the identification of key strategies that can bridge gaps in cross-cultural education practices. By drawing insights from BFSU's experiences, this study aims to propose actionable strategies to enhance the support mechanisms for Chinese students in Spanish universities.

3.2. Data Sources and Sampling

The research involves two primary sources of data:

1. **Institutional Analysis:** Policies, curriculum frameworks, and cross-cultural initiatives of BFSU and universities in Barcelona are systematically examined.
2. **Participant Sampling:** Semi-structured interviews and surveys were conducted with the following participants:
 - **BFSU stakeholders:** Faculty members, program coordinators, and students involved in cross-cultural initiatives.
 - **Chinese students in Barcelona:** Participants from various universities representing diverse academic disciplines and cultural backgrounds.

Purposive sampling was employed to ensure the inclusion of individuals with direct experience and insights relevant to cross-cultural education.

3.3. Data Collection Methods

The study utilizes a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods:

Document Analysis: Institutional policies, program reports, and related academic literature were reviewed to understand BFSU's practices and existing frameworks in Barcelona.

Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 participants, including educators and students, to gather in-depth insights into their experiences and perceptions.

Surveys: A questionnaire targeting 100 Chinese students in Barcelona was administered to assess their cross-cultural adaptation challenges and the effectiveness of current support systems.

3.4. Data Analysis

Qualitative Analysis: Thematic analysis was employed to interpret interview transcripts and document content, identifying recurring patterns and themes related to cross-cultural education and adaptation.

Quantitative Analysis: Survey responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation tests to quantify the relationships between support measures and adaptation outcomes.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical research guidelines by obtaining informed consent from all participants and ensuring the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review boards prior to data collection.

4. THE INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION MODEL AT BEIJING FOREIGN STUDIES UNIVERSITY

Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU), one of China's leading higher education institutions specializing in foreign languages, is renowned for its exceptional intercultural education model. Through well-structured curricula, diverse international practices, a robust faculty, and extensive academic expertise, BFSU has achieved remarkable progress in the field of intercultural education, serving as a key reference point for global research in this area.

4.1. Curriculum Design and Educational System

BFSU's intercultural education is built upon a comprehensive and systematic curriculum, comprising 12 core intercultural courses, such as Intercultural Communication, Intercultural Collaboration, Cultural Diversity and Education, and Cultural Psychology (see Table 1). These courses not only cover theoretical research but also incorporate case studies and cultural comparisons to enhance students' intercultural communication skills. Additionally, BFSU has implemented a "7+1" educational model, where students spend seven semesters studying domestically and one semester participating in overseas exchange programs. According to university statistics, 90% of undergraduates benefit from at least one overseas study experience through this program. This initiative allows students to directly engage with diverse cultures, significantly improving their language proficiency and cultural adaptability.

Table 1. Selected Intercultural Courses at BFSU

Week	Content
1	Course introduction; project team setup
2	Origins and development of intercultural communication; topic selection
3	Cultural differences: Hofstede's cultural dimensions; drafting research plans
8	Adaptation and intercultural communication: theories of cultural adaptation
9	Theories of cultural integration
10	Verbal and non-verbal communication in intercultural contexts
11	Identity and cultural adaptation in migration
16	Academic presentation preparation and reflection

Source: Authors' elaboration.

4.2. Faculty and International Environment

BFSU is distinguished by its internationally diverse faculty and campus environment. As of 2015, the university employed 88 foreign instructors from 48 countries and hosted over 1,300 international students, accounting for 20% of the total student population—an unparalleled proportion among Chinese universities (Jia, 2015). Foreign faculty not only deliver language instruction but also facilitate cultural exchange, fostering a deeper understanding of diverse cultures among students. BFSU has established partnerships with over 400 universities across 70 countries and regions, offering students extensive opportunities for international learning and exchange.

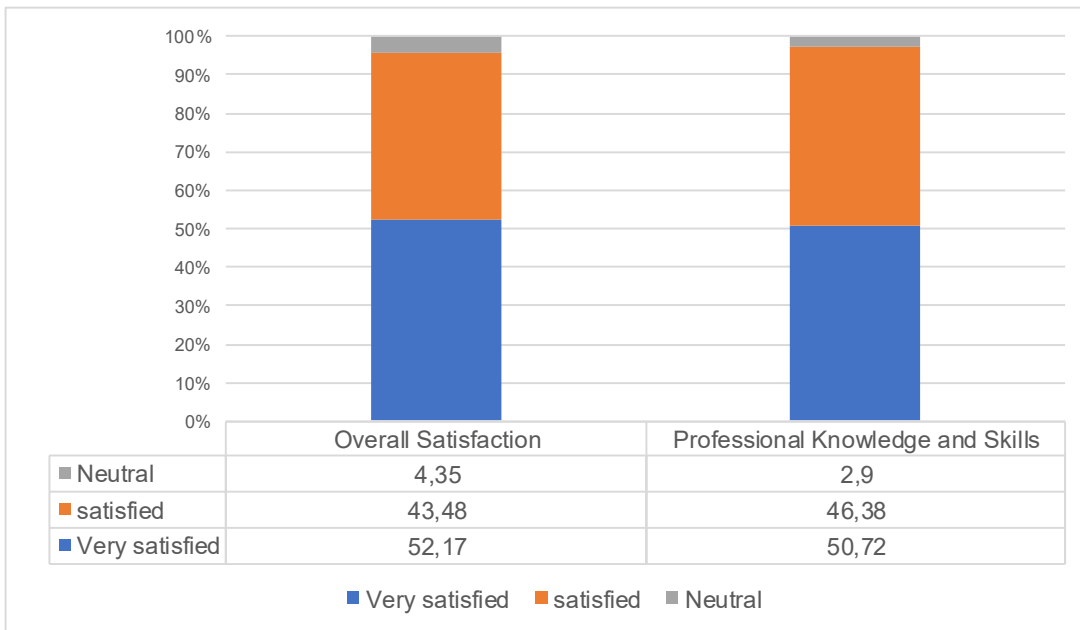
4.3. Intercultural Research and Academic Contributions

In 2008, BFSU founded the Center for Intercultural Studies, which provides crucial theoretical support for intercultural education. The center focuses on advancing theoretical innovation in intercultural education, covering topics such as migration and identity, and comparative studies of Eastern and Western civilizations. It has published the *Intercultural Studies Series* and regularly organizes international academic conferences. For instance, the university hosted the *Global Intercultural Education Forum* in 2021, which attracted experts from over 30 countries. These academic activities and research outputs have further solidified BFSU's leadership in this field.

4.4. Student Achievements and Societal Impact

BFSU students are widely recognized for their exceptional language proficiency and intercultural competence both domestically and internationally. According to the 2022 Employment Quality Report, BFSU graduates typically achieve B2-C1 levels in language proficiency, with over 54% pursuing further education. Among these, 24% of undergraduate graduates enroll in degree programs abroad. Notably, 60 BFSU alumni have joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reinforcing BFSU's reputation as the "Cradle of Chinese Diplomats." Additionally, BFSU graduates are well-represented in international organizations, multinational corporations, and foreign embassies in China, earning high satisfaction ratings from employers (Figure 1).

Graphic 1. Employer Satisfaction Ratings of BFSU Graduates



Source: Data extracted from *Informe sobre la calidad del empleo de la Universidad de Estudios Extranjeros de Pekín 2022*

4.5. Success of the Educational Model

The success of BFSU's intercultural education model lies in its multidimensional approach to teaching design and implementation. From language acquisition to cultural understanding, and from classroom instruction to international exchange, BFSU has achieved a deep integration of language and cultural education, providing students with opportunities for holistic development. This educational model not only enhances students' intercultural communication skills but also nurtures a group of outstanding talents equipped with a global perspective and practical competencies for the international community.

5. THE CROSS-CULTURAL EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF CHINESE STUDENTS IN BARCELONA

5.1. Manifestations and Impacts of Culture Shock

The survey results indicate that the vast majority of students experience varying degrees of culture shock in both academic and daily life. These cultural challenges are mainly concentrated in the following areas:

- **Dietary Culture:** Chinese students often struggle to adapt to local dining habits. For instance, the Mediterranean diet significantly differs from traditional Chinese cuisine, particularly in its limited use of spicy flavors and seasonings. Additionally, the local practice of dining late in the evening poses further challenges for adaptation.
- **Daily Life:** Students face numerous inconveniences in their daily routines, including unfamiliarity with Barcelona's transportation system, differences in shopping habits, potential cultural misunderstandings during the housing rental process, and the local work schedule, which often deviates from their expectations.
- **Campus Life:** Spanish universities exhibit distinct differences in teaching and campus management compared to their Chinese counterparts. For example, while Chinese universities commonly rely on organized class groups and social networks for information dissemination, Spanish institutions expect students to actively retrieve information via email. Furthermore, Chinese classrooms typically emphasize textbook knowledge and mastery, whereas Spanish classrooms prioritize interactive learning and flexible application of knowledge.
- **Interpersonal Communication:** Language barriers stand out as the most significant issue. Although many students possess a basic level of Spanish proficiency, they often struggle with real-life communication. Differences in local linguistic habits and expressions frequently lead to frustration, discouraging students from engaging in cross-cultural interactions. Additionally, cultural differences in interpersonal distance and intimacy between locals and Chinese students can contribute to feelings of isolation.

- **Religious and Cultural Values:** Differences in religious beliefs and cultural values can also result in discomfort. For instance, some students lack familiarity with religious festivals and related practices, which complicates their cultural adaptation.

The study found that culture shock is particularly intense during the first three months after students arrive in Barcelona, with 86% reporting significant discomfort during this period. This adaptation challenge manifests in both daily life and academic settings. However, most students noted that such challenges do not severely hinder their academic performance.

Table 2. Interculture shock time

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	First month	58	49.2	49.2	49.2
	Month 1 to 3	36	30.5	30.5	79.7
	Month 3 to 6	9	7.6	7.6	87.3
	Month 6 to 12	7	5.9	5.9	93.2
	Not felt yet	8	6.8	6.8	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	

Source: Authors' elaboration.

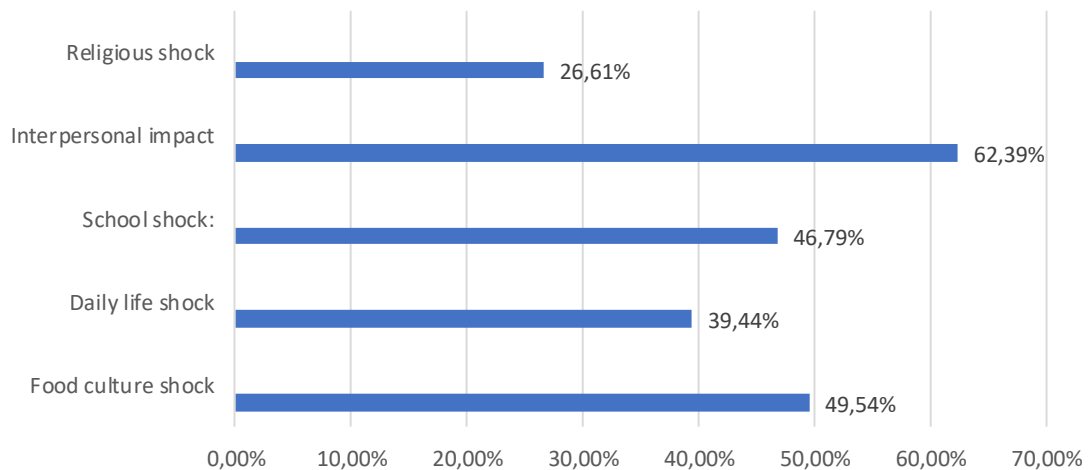
Table 3. The Proportion of intercultural shock

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very strong, even difficult to adapt	4	3.7	3.7	3.7
	Obviously	36	33.0	33.0	36.7
	Yes, but it doesn't affect my studies or life much	54	49.5	49.5	86.2
	Not obvious, i can hardly feel it	10	9.2	9.2	95.4
	I don't feel any culture shock	5	4.6	4.6	100.0
	Total	109	100.0	100.0	

Source: Authors' elaboration.

According to the results of the questionnaire analysis, interpersonal impact, school shock and food culture are the main areas of cultural shock, among which interpersonal impact issues have the greatest impact, accounting for 62.39%.

Graphic 2. The form of effects of the intercultural shock

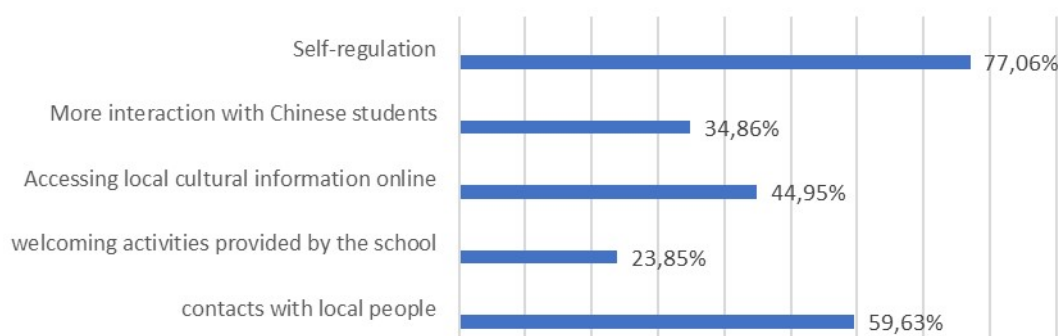


Source: Authors' elaboration.

5.2. Current Deficiencies in Support Systems

Despite efforts by universities in Barcelona to accommodate international students in recent years, such as increasing orientation activities and cultural exchange opportunities, research indicates that these measures have had limited effectiveness in helping Chinese students adapt to culture shock.

As shown in the data, self-psychological regulation and building relationships with locals were the most widely recognized strategies for adaptation. Notably, 77% of participants reported relying on self-psychological adjustment when dealing with culture shock. In contrast, only 23.85% opted to adapt through the welcome activities organized by their universities, highlighting the limited impact of institutional support initiatives.

Graphic 3. Intercultural Adaptation Strategies

Source: Authors' elaboration.

6. INSIGHTS FROM BEIJING FOREIGN STUDIES UNIVERSITY FOR UNIVERSITIES IN BARCELONA

The successful practices of Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU) in the field of intercultural education provide valuable insights for universities in Barcelona aiming to enhance their support systems for international students. As a leading institution in intercultural education in China, BFSU has developed a comprehensive educational model through systematic curriculum design, internationalized faculty development, and diverse cultural activities. This model is dedicated to fostering students' intercultural communication and cultural adaptation skills.

BFSU's curriculum includes core courses such as "Intercultural Communication" and "Cultural Diversity and Education," complemented by teaching methods like case analysis and cultural comparison. These approaches help students cultivate sensitivity and understanding toward different cultures. Notably, BFSU's "7+1" educational model, in which seven semesters are completed domestically and one semester is spent abroad through international exchange programs, significantly enhances students' language proficiency and adaptability to diverse cultures. Such educational strategies provide a framework that universities in Barcelona could adopt to improve international students' adjustment experiences.

Furthermore, BFSU's exploration of faculty internationalization is of great significance. By recruiting faculty members from various countries, the university creates a multicultural learning environment. These faculty members, while teaching language courses, impart diverse cultural knowledge systems and ways of thinking, enriching students' cultural understanding during language acquisition. Additionally, BFSU's partnerships with over 400 universities worldwide offer students extensive opportunities for international exchange. These multi-tiered internationalization practices not only provide students with authentic intercultural experiences but also enable faculty to enhance their cross-cultural competencies through collaborative research and exchange activities.

In comparison, while universities in Barcelona have made progress in internationalization, there remains room for improvement in faculty development and cultural sensitivity training. Enhancing faculty cross-cultural training, particularly in understanding Chinese cultural and educational contexts, could effectively address gaps in cultural comprehension during the teaching process.

BFSU's establishment of an intercultural research center demonstrates the integration of practical and theoretical aspects of intercultural education. The center conducts extensive research in areas such as migration, identity, and Sino-Western cultural comparisons, laying a solid theoretical foundation for the advancement of intercultural education. These research findings provide scientific guidance for students' cultural adaptation and offer practical insights for formulating targeted support policies. Drawing on this experience, universities in Barcelona could strengthen research on the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students, particularly in areas such as language integration, cultural shock mitigation, and social inclusion.

Finally, BFSU's educational practices underscore the importance of community engagement in enhancing cultural adaptation. By encouraging students to participate in volunteer programs and cultural festivals, BFSU facilitates deeper integration into local communities. Through interactions

with local residents, students develop a stronger sense of identity and understanding of the target culture. This experience highlights that language and cultural adaptation cannot be achieved solely through classroom teaching; they require multi-channel and multidimensional practical support. For universities in Barcelona, introducing similar community-based initiatives could alleviate the sense of isolation experienced by Chinese international students due to cultural differences and provide opportunities for improving their intercultural communication skills.

7. DISCUSSION

This study examines the adaptation challenges faced by Chinese students in Barcelona's higher education system and evaluates the applicability of Beijing Foreign Studies University's (BFSU) successful intercultural education model in this context. Findings indicate that Chinese students primarily struggle with language barriers, cultural differences, mismatched teaching methodologies, and insufficient institutional support. These results align with Li's (2021) and other study, suggesting that such challenges are prevalent across Spanish higher education (Qiu, García & Isusi, 2024; Cai, Weise & Álvarez, 2024). Despite Barcelona's leadership in internationalization, existing adaptation programs and cultural exchange activities remain limited in both scope and effectiveness, failing to fully meet Chinese students' needs (Bermúdez et al., 2018; Álvarez, 2013).

BFSU's structured approach to intercultural education offers valuable insights for Spanish universities. It integrates courses such as Intercultural Communication and Cultural Diversity and Education, combining theory with practical training. While some Barcelona-based institutions have introduced internationalization initiatives, they still lack dedicated intercultural adaptation courses. Wei et al. (2021) demonstrated that a ten-week intercultural psychology program significantly enhanced students' intercultural competence, particularly for those with limited prior exposure. Adopting BFSU's model by incorporating similar courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels could facilitate Chinese students' adaptation. Faculty internationalization is another key area for improvement (Yin, Niu & Pan, 2025).
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2024). BFSU recruits diverse faculty members and promotes international exchange, fostering an inclusive learning environment. In contrast, many faculty members in Barcelona lack familiarity with Chinese students' learning styles, creating communication barriers. Enhancing intercultural training for educators or hiring faculty with cross-cultural teaching experience could help bridge this gap and improve teaching effectiveness (Aidarkhanova, Tuyakbayeva & Beisembayeva, 2024; Khudaverdiieva, 2022).

While this study provides insights into intercultural adaptation, it has limitations. The case-study approach may not fully capture institutional diversity, and future research should incorporate large-scale quantitative analyses. Additionally, exploring causal relationships between intercultural competence, academic performance, and social integration would offer empirical evidence for more targeted policy interventions.

8. CONCLUSION

This study investigates the adaptation challenges of Chinese students in Barcelona's higher education system and draws on BFSU's successful intercultural education model to propose strategies for improvement. Findings highlight that language barriers, cultural differences, and inadequate institutional support significantly impact students' adaptation. Meanwhile, BFSU's structured curriculum, faculty internationalization, and intercultural engagement programs effectively enhance international students' adaptability, offering a valuable reference for Spanish universities.

A key contribution of this study is its comparative framework, situating intercultural education practices from different national contexts within a unified analytical model. Unlike previous studies focused on single-country perspectives, this research systematically contrasts BFSU and Barcelona's universities, revealing both shared challenges and distinct strategies in fostering international students' adaptation. BFSU's model, characterized by structured curriculum design and comprehensive student support, enhances students' cultural communication skills, equipping them for global environments.

From a practical perspective, the findings offer actionable recommendations. First, Barcelona's universities could introduce structured intercultural education courses modeled after BFSU to better prepare international students. Second, faculty development should emphasize intercultural teaching training and promote greater cultural awareness. Third, institutions should establish long-term adaptation initiatives, including cultural exchange activities, peer mentoring, and psychological support services, to enhance international students' social integration. These measures not only benefit Chinese students but also contribute to improving educational quality and global competitiveness within Spain's higher education sector.

Future research should expand beyond Chinese students to examine broader intercultural adaptation patterns among diverse student populations. Additionally, longitudinal studies could offer deeper insights into adaptation processes over time. By providing a comparative lens on intercultural education, this study addresses gaps in the literature and offers strategic guidance for optimizing international education policies. As higher education continues to globalize, enhancing intercultural education is crucial for fostering institutional competitiveness and advancing cross-cultural understanding worldwide.

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