

# Research Status and Future Prospects of Cultural Communication in Contemporary International Student Education in China

Qiang Bao\*

School of Marxism, Guangxi Normal University, Guilin 541004, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

\*Corresponding author: Qiang Bao, 896802994@qq.com

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**Abstract:** The dissemination of Chinese culture to international students in China encompasses two closely interconnected dimensions: first, the dissemination aimed at international students to cultivate their understanding and recognition of the core values of Chinese culture; second, the dissemination of Chinese culture by international students themselves, which involves creating a diversified platform to effectively communicate China's narratives. From the perspective of external cultural dissemination, this study employs a literature research method combined with CiteSpace knowledge mapping software to analyze and summarize the research network, hotspots, and knowledge structure within the field of international education in China. The exploration of future development directions presents significant practical value and contemporary relevance.

**Keywords:** International students in China; Chinese cultural values; Communicative power; Knowledge graph

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## 1. Introduction

Analyzing and summarizing the basic situation of contemporary international student education in China, particularly focusing on the current state of its international communicative power, is highly beneficial for enhancing the dissemination of Chinese culture in the new era. This approach aids in coordinating future cultural development strategies in China under the context of the "two centenary goals" and supports the globalization of Chinese education, fostering friendship between the Chinese people and foreign nations. It is essential to clarify the current state of research on related themes by employing bibliometric analysis to synthesize and summarize theoretical research findings from previous periods, as well as to project future developments in related research themes. CiteSpace is a visualization software for bibliometric analysis, and the author utilizes this software to analyze literature samples collected from the CNKI database for the benefit of relevant researchers.

## **2. Data source and research methodology**

### **2.1. Data source**

To derive valuable conclusions, a strict selection of sample data is imperative. To ensure the reliability of the research findings, and considering the authority, completeness, and academic impact of the CNKI Chinese journal database, the author employs the CNKI database, using “international students in China” AND “study abroad” AND “dissemination” as search criteria. The sources of literature are limited to “journal articles” and “Chinese literature,” without setting a time span. This search yields literature data ranging from 1991 to 2024. After excluding one irrelevant article, a final selection of 155 articles from 1991 to 2024 is made as the basis for bibliometric analysis, with the search date concluding on October 24, 2024. The aforementioned literature data is imported into CiteSpace software, and the research primarily follows these steps: First, the initial distribution of the literature is analyzed using the analysis software integrated into the CNKI database, which provides analytical charts; second, based on a close reading of the literature data, CiteSpace is used to analyze the data, forming collaboration maps for authors and institutions, co-occurrence maps for keywords, clustering maps for keywords, and temporal co-occurrence maps for keywords, thereby grasping the general outline of the relevant thematic knowledge system; third, the analysis of the relevant thematic research context is conducted through keyword studies focusing on themes, frontiers, and trends, interpreting the content and evaluating the overall dynamics and developmental frontiers of related thematic research, thereby deducing future directions for deepening relevant thematic studies.

### **2.2. Research methodology**

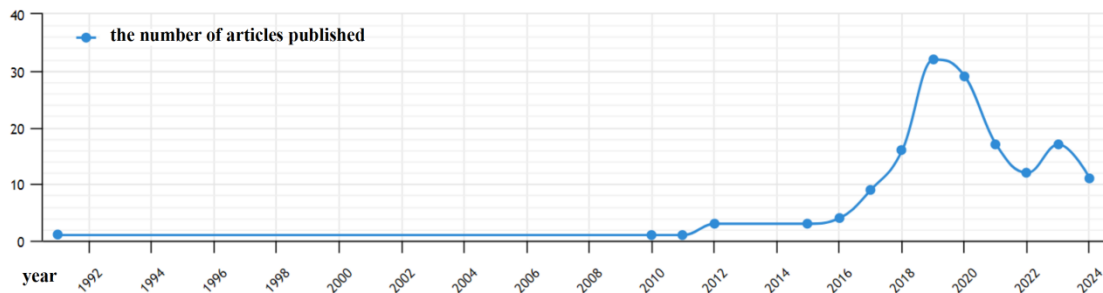
This paper comprehensively employed the analysis software provided by the CNKI database and CiteSpace software to analyze the sample documents. Firstly, using the analysis software provided by the CNKI database, the annual distribution of the sample documents was initially analyzed, and trends in the annual publication were depicted through graphical analysis. Secondly, CiteSpace was utilized to conduct corresponding data mining and quantitative analysis on the sample document data, extracting the knowledge base of research in the field of “Cultural Communication in Contemporary International Student Education in China.” This approach enables capturing the latest developments and cutting-edge topics.

## **3. Statistics and analysis**

### **3.1. Analysis of publication time distribution**

The progress of research in a given field can be reflected in a curve graph showing the changes in the number of published articles over time. A preliminary analysis of the number of articles published between 1991 and 2024 reveals that the relevant theme is increasingly attracting scholarly attention. With China’s rapid development, the external appeal of Chinese culture has significantly increased, making studying in China a natural choice for many foreigners. Consequently, it is crucial to determine whether the dissemination power of Chinese culture has improved alongside the growth of international student education, and how improvements can be made to enhance this communicative power. As a theoretical hotspot across disciplines such as education, anthropology, sociology, management, and philosophy, this relevant theme remains a focal point within educational research. As shown in **Figure 1**, the publication of theoretical articles can be distinctly divided into two phases: the first phase, from 1991 to 2011, includes only one article published in 1991, one in 2010, and one in 2011, with no articles published in other years. The second phase, from 2012 to 2024, shows a clear upward trend in the number of articles published, with considerable fluctuations; the peak publication years are from 2019 to 2021,

indicating a high level of research activity. This suggests that the relevant theme requires sustained attention from both academia and the publishing industry. Ongoing efforts should be made to update the academic theoretical framework in accordance with the demands of contemporary development, focusing on the relevance, theoretical depth, and practical implications of research on the relevant theme, and further developing and refining the theoretical framework of the discipline.



**Figure 1.** Annual trend of publications on research

### 3.2. Analysis of authors, institutions, and collaborative networks in publications

The degree of collaboration among authors in academic research serves as a significant indicator of the progress in disciplinary studies. While the achievements of individual authors reflect their research capabilities, they fail to convey the holistic view of the discipline. Effective research collaboration, encompassing both institutional and authorial partnerships, facilitates the maturation of the disciplinary system. To clearly and concisely identify the academic collaborations and connections among research institutions and authors, the CiteSpace software was employed, selecting “author” + “institution” as the node type. This approach integrates the distribution of institutions and authors, producing a knowledge map of research collaboration on related topics, as illustrated in **Figure 2**. The density and thickness of the lines in the map reflect the closeness of collaboration among institutions and authors. In terms of author collaboration, the research on related topics has formed several groups centered around authors such as Wenbo Kuang, Xiang Xue, and Haiyan Liu. However, there is yet to be an academic community characterized by mutual communication and close ties among these groups.

Regarding author and institutional collaboration, as shown in **Figure 2**, and in conjunction with the clustering analysis from CiteSpace, it was discovered that an academic research group has formed, including authors from the Research Center for Journalism and Social Development at Renmin University of China, the School of Culture and Communication at Beijing International Studies University, the Research Center for Chinese Culture and Digital Communication at Beijing International Studies University, the Department of Basic Sciences at Beijing International Studies University, the School of Journalism at Renmin University of China, and the School of Foreign Languages at Shandong University of Science and Technology, alongside authors such as Wenbo Kuang and Xiang Xue.

According to the software’s computational results, the density value of the research collaboration map on related topics is 0.0083, which is below the normal threshold of 0.1. The number of author and institution nodes is 233, and the number of collaboration links is 225, indicating a relatively sparse and low-density connection. This reflects the loose collaboration ties, as well as the decentralized and independent characteristics of research institutions and authors within the relevant topic studies.



Figure 2. Knowledge graph of research collaboration

### 3.3. Distribution of highly cited literature

In a particular research field, the citation frequency of certain literature serves as a significant indicator of its academic influence. Therefore, the author utilized the CNKI database to analyze highly cited literature, deriving conclusions as illustrated in **Table 1**. Due to space constraints, only the top 12 frequently cited works, which have been cited 20 times or more, are listed. The time span from 1991 to 2024 is considerable, indicating a rich theoretical exploration, interpretation, and elaboration within this field. This reflects a robust academic influence and knowledge foundation on related thematic research, suggesting that prolonged investigation contributes to the establishment of a comprehensive disciplinary system. The most cited literature in this field is “Analysis of WeChat Usage Behavior of International Students in China from a Cross-Cultural Perspective: An Empirical Study Based on Cultural Adaptation Theory,” authored by Wenbo Kuang, Xiaoli Wu, *et al.*, published in 2019, which has been cited 74 times. A close reading of this work reveals that its research theme addresses the increasing internationalization of education in China, which has led to a greater influx of international students. However, Chinese culture presents a certain degree of unfamiliarity for these foreign students, particularly regarding the unique new media tools prevalent in Chinese society. For international students, learning and using WeChat has become a prerequisite for their academic experience in China. Their use of WeChat is influenced by factors such as peer pressure and cultural acceptance. Thus, they must navigate dual adaptations to both the sociocultural and psychological dimensions. With the widespread use of WeChat among international students, there have been noticeable improvements in their sociocultural adaptation, including language proficiency, communication, and academic integration. Psychologically, international students’ learning motivations and expectations, as well as their attitudes toward social membership, have all exhibited positive changes. Enhancing the dissemination of Chinese culture through new media, thus enabling international students to adapt to the needs of cross-cultural communication, serves as a powerful support for the cultural transmission capacity of Chinese education <sup>[1]</sup>.

The article “Chinese International Education under the ‘Belt and Road’ Initiative: Current Situation, Problems, and Countermeasures,” authored by Yalun An and Shifei Duan in 2018, has been cited 69 times, ranking as the second most cited among the top 12 documents <sup>[2]</sup>. The research theme of this work is as follows: The “Belt and Road” Initiative is a significant strategy proposed by China, characterized by a global strategic vision that aligns with the needs of political and economic development worldwide, promoting balanced and sustainable growth in global political, economic, and cultural spheres. As a result, Chinese international education has been assigned a new mission and has gained substantial developmental space and opportunities.

However, Chinese international education cannot continue to rely solely on traditional models or depend solely on Confucius Institutes to promote Chinese language education. Instead, it should adopt a flexible strategy that integrates both “inviting in” and “going out,” tailored to local contexts. This approach should adhere to international practices and enhance the legislative and institutional frameworks of Confucius Institutes. It must move away from the outdated mindset of being entirely state-led and government-organized, fully recognizing and leveraging the unique roles of nonprofit organizations, universities, think tanks, and enterprises in Chinese international education. Through practical exploration, it is essential to develop a new model of Chinese international education that is unique to China and meets the needs of the host countries <sup>[2]</sup>.

The article “New Opportunities, Challenges, and Actions for the International Dissemination of Chinese Language under the Background of the Belt and Road Initiative,” authored by Baogui Li and Xiaoke Shang has been cited 52 times <sup>[3]</sup>. The research theme of this work is as follows: The construction of the “Belt and Road” Initiative has provided new opportunities for the international dissemination of the Chinese language and has endowed it with a new mission. In the context of the “Belt and Road,” the international education of the Chinese language in the countries along the route has shown positive development trends. This is attributed to the continuous deepening of economic and trade cooperation with these countries, the comprehensive support of national policies in the new era, and the transformative development of Confucius Institutes. However, the international education of the Chinese language also faces numerous challenges, including the ineffective alignment of talent cultivation with the “five connectivity” framework, the need for further optimization of the scale and structure of international students coming to China, the uneven distribution of Confucius Institutes, insufficient teaching resources, and fierce competition from language promotion organizations in various countries. To achieve new development, Chinese international education should focus on the needs of the “five connectivity” framework and optimize the allocation of educational resources for the Chinese language in the countries along the route. Additionally, it is essential to fully leverage the role of diverse stakeholders to establish a multifaceted and layered new pattern for the dissemination of Chinese culture, catering to the diverse needs of audiences and providing talent and intellectual support for the construction of the “Belt and Road.” Furthermore, innovative dissemination methods should be developed, channels broadened, and efforts accelerated to enhance the influence of Chinese cultural dissemination <sup>[3]</sup>.

The article “International Students in China: Storytellers of Chinese Narratives and Promoters of National Image,” authored by Chunyan Ma in 2017 has been cited 35 times <sup>[4]</sup>. The research theme of this work is as follows: Effectively narrating the story of “where we come from and where we are going” can help shape the image of a responsible major power, utilizing the voices and channels of others for dissemination. International students in China, immersed in Chinese culture through in-depth experiences and systematic learning, should communicate the Chinese voice in ways that are easily understood and accepted by foreign audiences, thereby becoming excellent ambassadors for telling Chinese stories. By providing cultural education to international students, particularly opinion leaders, through a combination of classroom discussions and social practices, rich materials can be accumulated to enhance their ability to tell the story of China. Presenting Chinese narratives to overseas audiences from the perspectives and linguistic frameworks of international students is more likely to garner acceptance and recognition among foreign audiences. This approach enables them to play a positive role on international communication platforms, promoting China’s national image and presenting a more comprehensive, authentic, and multidimensional portrayal of China to the world <sup>[4]</sup>.

Overall, based on the titles and research contents of the frequently cited literature in **Table 1**, several key insights emerge: Scholars focus on optimizing the strategies and effectiveness of Chinese cultural

dissemination. International Chinese education serves as a significant means and vehicle for the dissemination of Chinese culture. Chinese culture has garnered considerable attention and appreciation from people around the world. However, there are substantial differences between Chinese and other ethnic languages. The unique characteristics of Chinese social culture pose challenges for international students in adapting both socially and psychologically. Addressing these dual adaptation issues is essential for a human-centered education. Utilizing new media platforms, such as WeChat, to assist international students in acclimating to Chinese social culture is highly effective for enhancing cross-cultural communication. Proactive engagement positions international students as primary agents of Chinese cultural dissemination, rather than merely as one-way recipients of international Chinese education. This approach enables them to serve as a bridge between their own cultures and Chinese culture, representing an innovative method for effectively realizing the international dissemination of Chinese culture. Given the comprehensive deepening and development of the “Belt and Road” initiative, it is imperative to actively utilize the international demand for Chinese language talents arising from participating countries. This initiative aims to showcase the beauty of Chinese culture and reflect the Chinese people’s desire for peace, development, and active integration into global poverty alleviation and developmental efforts. Future international Chinese education should focus on policy communication, infrastructure connectivity, trade facilitation, financial integration, and language interoperability as dictated by the “Belt and Road” framework. By promoting the internationalization of the Chinese language, it can serve as a bridge and link for language interoperability among the countries along the route, optimizing the allocation of international Chinese education resources in these countries. Adhering to a learner-centered approach, demand-oriented strategies, and prioritizing quality, the promotion of international Chinese education standards should be emphasized. This includes developing localized teaching syllabi, educational materials, and teaching tools tailored to local contexts. Innovations in information technology, digitalization, and intelligent construction should be pursued to create a more open, inclusive, and high-quality international Chinese education landscape, better meeting the needs of people from various nations who wish to learn Chinese and accelerating the influence of Chinese cultural dissemination.

**Table 1.** List of the top 12 most cited research papers

No.	Title	Authors	Journal	Publication date	Citation count
1	Analysis of WeChat Usage Behavior of International Students in China from a Cross-Cultural Perspective: An Empirical Study Based on Cultural Adaptation Theory	Kuang Wenbo; Wu Xiaoli	Journal of Wuhan University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)	05-05-2019	74
2	Chinese International Education under the “Belt and Road” Initiative: Current Situation, Problems, and Countermeasures	An Yalun; Duan Shifei	Journal of Educational Science, Hunan Normal University	12-12-2018	69
3	The Dissemination and Influence of Modern Western Educational Theory in China	Zhou Guping	Journal of East China Normal University (Education Science Edition)	09-20-1991	64
4	New Opportunities, Challenges, and Actions for the International Dissemination of Chinese Language under the Background of the “Belt and Road” Initiative	Li Baogui; Shang Xiaoke	Journal of Liaoning University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)	03-15-2018	52

**Table 1 (Continued)**

No.	Title	Authors	Journal	Publication date	Citation count
5	Ideological and Political Education for International Students in the New Era: Significance, Characteristics, Content, and Pathways	Li Baogui; Li Bowen	Journal of Liaoning Normal University (Social Sciences Edition)	04-02-2018	38
6	Issues and Countermeasures in the Ideological Education of International Students in China under Convergent Management	He Zhengying	School Party Building and Ideological Education	07-18-2018	37
7	International Students in China: Storytellers of Chinese Narratives and Promoters of National Image	Ma Chunyan	Social Sciences Forum	12-10-2017	35
8	The History, Pathways, and Overseas Development of Traditional Chinese Medicine since the Establishment of New China	Zhu Jianping	Chinese Medicine and Culture	06-15-2019	24
9	Research on the Cultural Literacy and Cultural Identity of International Students in China: A Survey and Insights from Jiangxi Province	Xu Xiaoqiu; He Xin	Vocational Education Forum	12-15-2017	23
10	Reform of Martial Arts Education for International Students in Chinese Universities under the Background of “Going Out” of Chinese Culture	Gong Maofu	Journal of Beijing Sport University	10-15-2016	23
11	Cultural Communication and Education of International Students in Universities	Guan Chunfang	Chinese Higher Education	04-03-2012	23
12	Research on the Perception of China’s Image by International Students from Countries along the “Belt and Road” Initiative: An Analysis Based on Material Culture	Ha Jiaying; Shang Xiaoyan	External Communication	07-22-2017	20

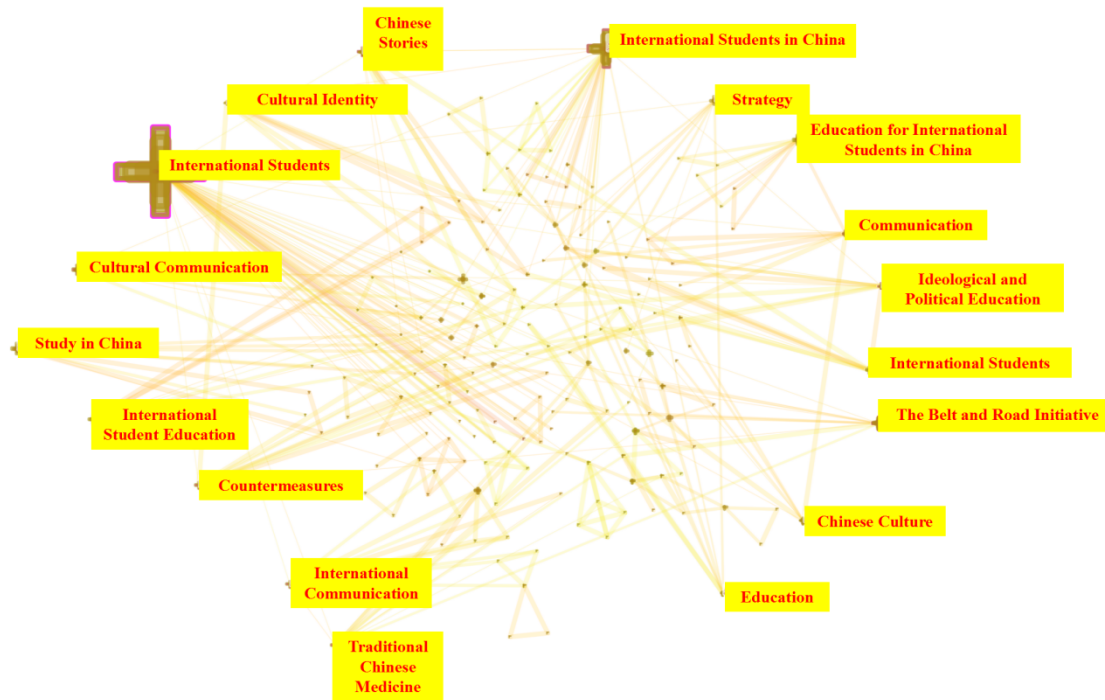
### 3.4. Keyword knowledge graph analysis

#### 3.4.1. Co-occurrence network of keywords

Keywords are core elements of research literature. When a particular keyword appears with high frequency, it indicates a heightened research interest and a substantial volume of research output surrounding that keyword. Analyzing the frequency and distribution of keyword occurrences allows for the identification of relevant hotspots within the field. The author employs “keyword” as a node type and utilizes the “pathfinder and pruning sliced networks” algorithm, using CiteSpace software to create a co-occurrence knowledge map of relevant research themes, as illustrated in **Figure 3**. The number of keyword nodes is 219, with 365 collaboration connections, indicating a high connection density and relatively long connections. Furthermore, the density value of the keyword co-occurrence knowledge map is 0.0153, which is below the normal level of 0.1, suggesting that the research requires further deepening and that relevant researchers should continuously enhance academic exchanges and collaborative efforts.

In **Figure 3**, the larger the cross-shaped graphic of a keyword node, the higher its frequency of occurrence in related thematic research, reflecting a more profound impact of the research results formed around it. The connections between keywords illustrate the logical relationships among relevant nodes in the context of related thematic research. As shown in **Figure 3**, the most significant keyword nodes in the related thematic

research include Confucius Institute, Cultural Communication, Chinese Language Teaching, Intercultural Communication, Martial Arts, Soft Power, Belt and Road, Sustainable Development, Chinese Culture, and “Belt and Road.” These keywords are centrally positioned within the entire map and occupy the largest area, indicating their highest research interest within the relevant thematic research domain. These keywords point to relatively macro-level aspects, forming the semantic foundation of the entire related thematic research, which has prompted the expansion of research into the associated middle- and micro-level domains.



**Figure 3.** Co-occurrence knowledge graph of keywords

The following analysis employs the word frequency statistics feature of CiteSpace to identify the top 20 keywords related to the research themes, as illustrated in **Table 2**. In addition to the aforementioned macro keyword nodes, significant keywords in the relevant thematic studies also include International Communication, Chinese Culture, Communication, Africa, Cultural Exchange, Public Diplomacy, Cultural Soft Power, Countermeasures, Traditional Chinese Medicine, and Current Situation. These keywords progressively point to middle and micro levels in terms of semantic content, and they are connected to the macro keywords, serving as a refinement of the macro keyword content. The content of the middle and micro keywords reflects the academic inclination toward specific topics within the relevant research, embodying the era’s value, theoretical significance, and practical relevance of the studies.

**Table 2.** Ranking of high-frequency and high-centrality keywords

No.	Frequency	Earliest appearance	Keywords	No.	Frequency	Earliest appearance	Keywords
1	787	2009	Confucius Institute	11	23	2010	International Communication
2	60	2009	Cultural Communication	12	21	2012	Chinese Culture

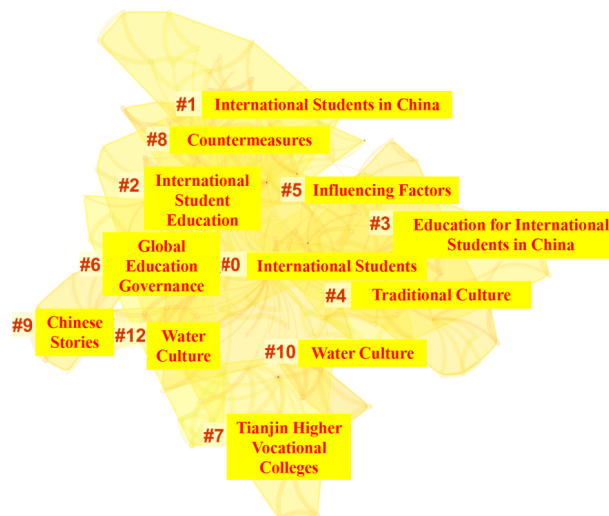


**Table 2 (Continued)**

No.	Frequency	Earliest appearance	Keywords	No.	Frequency	Earliest appearance	Keywords
3	42	2009	Chinese Language Teaching	13	18	2009	Communication
4	35	2011	Intercultural Communication	14	18	2011	Africa
5	34	2011	Martial Arts	15	17	2009	Cultural Exchange
6	33	2009	Soft Power	16	17	2011	Public Diplomacy
7	32	2016	Belt and Road	17	17	2010	Cultural Soft Power
8	31	2009	Sustainable Development	18	16	2012	Countermeasures
9	26	2009	Chinese Culture	19	16	2011	Traditional Chinese Medicine
10	26	2015	“Belt and Road”	20	13	2011	Current Situation

### 3.4.2. Cluster analysis of keywords

By extracting the clustering labels of keywords related to thematic research, one can determine the frontiers of research within these themes. Utilizing the clustering algorithm of CiteSpace software, a keyword clustering map of the relevant thematic studies has been generated (see **Figure 4**), resulting in **Table 3**. Based on the structural characteristics of the clusters in **Figure 4**, along with the noun labels and their connections, further analysis can be conducted. As shown in **Table 3**, the relevant thematic research has primarily formed 11 significant clusters: #0 International Students, #1 Students Studying in China, #2 Education for International Students, #3 Education for Studying Abroad in China, #4 Traditional Culture, #5 Influencing Factors, #6 Global Education Governance, #7 Tianjin Vocational Colleges, #8 Countermeasures, #9 Chinese Stories, #10 Water Culture, and #11 Water Culture. By employing the keyword clustering information summary feature of CiteSpace, representative keywords under the aforementioned clustering labels have been organized. Understanding these keywords aids in comprehending the main research contents of each cluster, thereby grasping the frontiers of the relevant thematic research.



**Figure 4.** Cluster graph of keywords

**Table 3.** Clustering names and keyword distribution

Clustering ID	Clustering name	Keyword clustering (Partial)
#0	International Students	International students, cultural adaptation, WeChat, Chinese culture, regional culture, Northeast universities, China-Ryukyu relations, actor networks, interpersonal communication, ACGN, social media, calligraphy techniques, psychology, cross-cultural communication, collaborative production, Chinese talents, digital imaging, clinical medicine, enhancing identity, SWOT analysis, medical education, constraining factors, subculture, Chinese medicine, experiential practice, Chinese ethnic traditional sports, Chinese impressions, micro-communication
#1	International Students in China	International students in China, strategies, education, identity, international education, Sino-foreign cultural exchange, ideological education, Guizhou, traditional Chinese medicine education, Xi Jinping, overseas dissemination of Chinese culture, student video blogs, exploration and practice, international cooperation and exchange, international education industry in China, culture, scaling up, enrollment publicity, values, framework theory, content analysis, dissemination of Chinese culture, international dissemination of Chinese culture, inheritance
#2	International Student Education	Chinese stories, international students, international student education, ideological and political education, education on national conditions, significance, opinion leaders, community of shared future for mankind, training system, content, sustainable development, teaching quality, national common language, excellent traditional Chinese culture, practical paths, national image, cultural education, Donghua University, implementation strategies
#3	Education for International Students in China	Education for international students in China, Chinese culture, dissemination, pathways of dissemination, water culture, acquisition, traditional Chinese medicine major, penetration of regional culture, internationalization, traditional festival culture, driving role, double high (high-level universities and high-level programs), universities in Shandong Province, international campus, symbols of Chinese culture, local culture, Qilu culture
#4	Traditional Culture	“Belt and Road” Initiative, higher vocational colleges, Southeast Asian international students, Confucius Institutes, Chinese image, traditional culture, ideological and political education, cultural dimensions, guqin (Chinese zither), teaching practices, improving quality and efficiency, “Study in China” brand, education in excellent traditional Chinese culture, Sino-foreign study
#5	Influencing Factors	“Belt and Road,” traditional Chinese medicine, traditional Chinese medicine institutions, training models, influencing factors, Shanxi traditional Chinese medicine culture, integration of three courses, quantitative research, China, online ideological and political education, cultural identity in traditional Chinese medicine, promotion models, double first-class (“Double First-Class” universities), “cultural discount”
#6	Global Education Governance	Cultural dissemination, cross-cultural adaptation, cultural exchange, international Chinese education, Chinese cultural identity, new era, experiential teaching, digitalization of education, media literacy, language governance, discourse system, global education governance, building a strong educational nation
#7	Tianjin Higher Vocational Colleges	Belt and Road, international dissemination, city image, cultural teaching, training of international students in China, Jiaxing, media, “intangible cultural heritage,” cities, “A Century of Traditional Chinese Medicine,” interactive platforms, “the Other,” Tianjin higher vocational colleges
#8	Countermeasures	Countermeasures, cultural identity, openness of education, dissemination of Chinese language, challenges, red culture, soft power, 10th anniversary of the “Belt and Road,” nation, contemporary China, achievements, predicaments, cultural quality
#9	Chinese Stories	Studying in China, interpersonal communication, study abroad education, studying abroad, bilateral trade, post-pandemic era, Sino-foreign population flow, telling good Chinese stories, cultural soft power
#10	Water Culture	Brand dissemination, Beijing time-honored brands, two-tier dissemination theory, niche marketing theory, food, brand strategies
#12	Water Culture	Traditional Chinese medicine, inspiration, weak networks, strong networks, international education of traditional Chinese medicine

The first frontier of research pertains to the construction of the international student education system in China and its strategies, as well as global education governance. This includes a series of keywords such as: international students, cultural adaptation, WeChat, Chinese culture, regional culture, Northeast universities, China-Ryukyu relations, actor-network theory, interpersonal communication, social media, calligraphy techniques, psychology, digital imagery, clinical medicine, enhancing identity, SWOT analysis, medical education, constraining factors, traditional Chinese medicine, experiential practice, traditional Chinese sports, impressions of China, countermeasures, discourse system, global education governance, the construction of a strong educational nation, the opening up of education to the outside world, and micro-communication <sup>[5,6]</sup>. However, it must be acknowledged that the international student education system in China is relatively weaker compared to that of developed Western countries. In 2018, the proportion of international students in China among the total number of students in higher education institutions was 1.3%. In contrast, data from the same period for major educationally developed countries indicates that Australia had a proportion as high as 26.5%, New Zealand reached 19.68%, the United Kingdom stood at 18.2%, and Germany recorded 9.97% <sup>[7]</sup>. China's economic scale has now ranked as the second largest in the world; however, the scale of its international student education remains significantly behind the level of its economic development. Compared to China's international standing in politics, culture, and education, there is still a considerable gap. This necessitates planning from the strategic perspective of constructing the international student education system in China and its strategies, as well as global education governance, to steadily promote the high-quality and sustainable development of international student education in China.

The second frontier of research concerns the enhancement of the appeal and attractiveness of Chinese culture in the international arena. This includes a series of keywords such as bilateral trade, post-pandemic era, population mobility between China and foreign countries, effectively communicating the Chinese narrative, cultural soft power, time-honored brands in Beijing, two-step flow theory, niche communication theory, red culture, food, brand strategy, traditional Chinese medicine, insights, weak networks, strong networks, intercultural communication, collaborative production, Chinese talents, subculture, cultural identity, the dissemination of the Chinese language, challenges, and soft power. The survival and development of a nation are intrinsically linked to its culture, which serves as an indispensable force. A nation devoid of culture is a nation lacking a soul. The reason the Chinese nation has thrived and prospered for thousands of years lies not in external expansion but in the formidable appeal and attractiveness of Chinese culture. Chinese culture transcends time and space, possessing an eternal charm and representing a valuable asset for all humanity. In terms of disseminating the values of Chinese culture internationally, establishing the principal role of the international student community in China and actively promoting the spread of Chinese culture holds unique value and significance that cannot be replicated by other cultural dissemination channels <sup>[8-10]</sup>. By enhancing the cultural values and literacy of international students studying in China, we aimed to establish a general education curriculum system that integrates the core values of Chinese culture. Additionally, we will develop a corresponding series of multilingual teaching materials <sup>[11]</sup>. Exploring educational and teaching methods suitable for the dissemination of values is an important pathway to enhance international students' understanding of the core values of Chinese culture and to update and reshape their self-value recognition <sup>[12]</sup>. On this basis, it is essential to proactively establish cultural experience platforms and external communication channels for international students studying in China, in order to convey an authentic voice of China to the world and contribute unique Chinese wisdom.

## **4. Conclusion and prospects**

### **4.1. Research conclusion**

#### **4.1.1. Adhering to systematic thinking in international education and continuously enhancing the ability for cultural exchange**

In today's world, despite the undercurrents of de-globalization, the mainstream of human development, which is characterized by mutual integration, continuous progress, seeking common ground while reserving differences, and joint development remains unshakable. The Chinese government and relevant educational institutions have consistently adhered to the educational development strategy of "going out and bringing in." They actively engage in mutual learning, integration, and communication with countries around the world. Building a community with a shared future for mankind is the unremitting pursuit of the Chinese people. International education in China is essential for cultivating more individuals who understand and are friendly towards China, thereby fostering friendly exchanges between the Chinese people and people from around the world. This is the necessary path to better promote the integration and development of Chinese and foreign cultures. Only through sufficient cultural exchange can we transcend the barriers of civilization and replace the conflicts of civilization<sup>[13]</sup>. Moreover, international education in China assumes such an important mission and responsibility. This education has contributed to the cultivation of a substantial number of overseas students. According to incomplete statistics, as of 2021, among those who have studied in China, over 40 individuals hold positions at the level of deputy minister or above in their home countries, nearly 20 have served as ambassadors to China, and approximately 60 serve as counselors in embassies in China, thereby becoming significant forces in Sino-foreign exchanges.

#### **4.1.2. Promoting high-quality development and strengthening the "study in China" brand**

Quality is the lifeline of international education in China. Shaping the "Study in China" brand is not only an important goal of this educational initiative but also a concrete manifestation of achieving high-quality development in international education. In 2010, the Ministry of Education of China issued the "Study in China Plan," explicitly proposing to "build an international brand for Chinese education," after which the construction of the "Study in China" brand became a widely shared consensus. The "China Education Modernization 2035" plan advocates for establishing an international study center to comprehensively enhance the quality of international education in China and develop the "Study in China" brand. The "Opinions on Accelerating and Expanding Educational Opening-up in the New Era" issued by the Ministry of Education and eight other departments further emphasize the importance of strengthening the "Study in China" brand. Strengthening this brand directly relates to whether China can establish a foothold in the international educational competition landscape and is a necessary pathway to enhance competitiveness against traditional study destination powerhouses.

The brand of international education in China can be categorized into two levels: the national brand and the institutional brand. At the national brand level, educational administrative departments and other governmental institutions should aim to establish China as a major global study center and a desirable destination for outstanding young people worldwide. This involves designing top-level strategies for international education in China, further strengthening supportive educational policies, social policies, and legal regulations that foster high-quality development in international education. Platforms should be constructed from various aspects, including recruitment, programs, majors and courses, and management teams, to reinforce the quality assurance system, promote the establishment of a specialized social support system, and continuously improve the overall framework of international education in China, thereby enhancing its competitiveness and establishing the "Study

in China” brand.

In terms of institutional brand development, schools should firmly establish a quality awareness and brand consciousness regarding the development of international education. They need to clarify their educational philosophy for international education, establish a working system and mechanism suitable for their actual circumstances, and incorporate international education into the overall development of the institution. It is essential to maintain strict standards for recruitment, control the quality of incoming students, create branded programs and courses to ensure quality training, and construct a high-level, comprehensive international education system. This will shape the institutional brand of international education in China and enhance its competitiveness and vitality <sup>[14]</sup>. It is imperative not to lower the admission standards for international students in pursuit of quantity over quality. In the long run, if an institution expands its international student enrollment indiscriminately without regard for quality, the drawbacks will outweigh the benefits, resulting in damage to its reputation and negatively impacting the institution as well as the entire educational sector.

#### **4.1.3. Strengthening capacity building and improving the international education system in China**

The ability of international education in China to fulfill its mission hinges on whether it possesses the capability for high-quality development. Based on global trends in international education and the current state of international education in China, optimizing capacity building in this area primarily encompasses five aspects:

##### (1) Capacity for top-level design

The development of international education in China is a multifaceted endeavor that cannot be accomplished solely by the educational sector. Therefore, it is essential to adopt a systematic approach, achieving coordination across multiple departments and sectors. This involves accurately understanding the transitional characteristics and requirements for high-quality development during this phase of international education’s evolution in China. It is crucial to dismantle institutional and structural barriers, expedite the resolution of existing shortcomings, and establish clear institutional arrangements and top-level designs to address the current challenges hindering the development of international education in China. Such measures will further invigorate the international education initiative and significantly promote the intrinsic, high-quality development of international education in China <sup>[15,16]</sup>.

##### (2) Capacity for expanding student sources

The quality of student sources is the primary threshold for the education of international students in China. The capacity for expanding sources of international students should be constructed with authoritative recommendations provided by the government, the active role of higher education institutions, and normative support from specialized social organizations. This approach aims to attract a youth group that meets academic qualifications, has diverse national origins, and possesses a well-structured hierarchy to study in China <sup>[17]</sup>.

##### (3) Cultivation capacity

As the primary entity responsible for the education of international students in China, higher education institutions should reinforce both teaching cultivation and normative management. They should innovate the concepts of educating international students, strengthen the construction of branded courses and majors, and integrate the education of international students into the overall talent cultivation system of the university, guided by a converging philosophy. Actively engaging in pedagogical research, they should promote the transformation of educational concepts and model innovations in international education under modern educational technology conditions, steadily enhancing the quality of education for international students in

China.

#### (4) Management capacity

The management capacity for international students in China encompasses both specific university management capabilities and macro governance abilities. To enhance this management capacity, it is essential to comprehensively strengthen aspects such as policy supply, institutional mechanisms, system construction, social management, rights protection, and management team development, thereby achieving scientific, normative, and effective management of international education in China.

#### (5) Support capacity

The support capacity for international education in China primarily refers to the learning support, environmental support, living support, and social support provided to international students during their studies in China. These elements are closely related to the experiences of international students while studying in China and exhibit strong marginal effects, potentially influencing their attitudes toward China<sup>[18]</sup>.

## 4.2. Research prospects

### 4.2.1. Promoting empirical research on related themes

While there is a substantial amount of theoretical research on related themes, much of it has been conducted from the perspectives of concepts, connotations, policies, and planning. Consequently, empirical research still requires further development. Currently, various modern technological methods, exemplified by information technology, are widely applied in the field of social science research. The study of the cultural dissemination capacity of international education in China also necessitates ongoing expansion and deepening of empirical and quantitative research. Through the processing, handling, and inference of extensive data and research materials, it is possible to significantly enhance the problem-oriented focus, theoretical completeness, and practical applicability of the research.

### 4.2.2. Strengthening interdisciplinary communication and collaborative research

The research on the cultural dissemination capacity of international education in China possesses interdisciplinary attributes. Future research should, on one hand, continue to expand multiple disciplinary perspectives to prevent the research content from becoming closed under a singular disciplinary theoretical framework. On the other hand, it should attract researchers and research institutions from different fields to collaboratively deepen the multidisciplinary research content, promote cooperative empirical investigations, share research resources and information, inherit research methodologies, and unify theoretical discourse systems.

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The author declares no conflict of interest.

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