

# A study on cross-cultural adaptation of Indian students in Changsha

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**Abstract:** Taking the Indian students in Changsha Medical University as an example, this paper makes a quantitative study on the cross-cultural adaptation of Indian students from four aspects: the basic information of Indian students, the adaptation of Huxiang cultural life, the physical and mental adaptation, and the cultural differences. And then puts forward the corresponding strategies. It is found that the overall level of cross-cultural adaptation of Indian students in Changsha is good, and there is a correlation among Huxiang cultural life adaptation, physical and mental adaptation and cultural differences.

**Keywords:** Indian students; Cross-cultural adaptation

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In recent years, with the increasing international influence of the Hunan region, especially the provincial capital city of Changsha, more and more foreigners have chosen to study in Changsha. As a country along the “the Belt and Road”, India and China have increasingly deepened cultural, economic, academic and other exchanges. Studying the cross-cultural adaptation ability of Indian international students to the culture of Hunan region is of great significance for strengthening the cultural construction of Changsha city, providing management services for studying abroad in universities, and promoting cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries. At present, Chinese scholars have conducted some research on the cross-cultural adaptation of international students studying in China, but few have separately listed Indian students as survey subjects, and there is almost no literature specifically studying the cross-cultural adaptation of Indian students studying in Changsha. This study selected universities with a high concentration of Indian international students for investigation, conducted quantitative analysis, and proposed corresponding suggestions.

## 1. Explanation of investigation situation

### 1.1 Basic information of survey subjects

The survey subjects of this article are 30 Indian international students from grades 1-3 of MBBS major at Changsha Medical College. A questionnaire sampling survey method was adopted, and a total of 20 questionnaires were distributed and 16 questionnaires were collected, with a response rate of 80%. Among them, 9 were male students, accounting for 56%, and 7 were female students, accounting for 44%. In addition, 10 Indian international students were randomly selected for semi-structured interviews to gain a deeper understanding and record their adaptation to learning, life, and culture.

### 1.2 Questionnaire Design

The problem design of this survey research is divided into four parts: first, basic demographic information; The second is a survey on the adaptability of Hunan cultural life, with a total of 25 questions; The third is a personal physical and mental adaptability survey, with a total of 17 questions; The fourth is about the scoring of cultural distance, where the survey subjects compare the cultural expressions in eight aspects with the degree of similarity in their own country. The scale uses the Likert Five Scale to indicate different levels of difficulty.

After the questionnaire was collected, data was entered and analyzed using Excel and SPSS software. Cronbach from the survey questionnaire  $\alpha$  The reliability coefficient value is 0.945, indicating that the reliability quality of the research data is very high.

## **2. Analysis of the Current Situation of Cross Cultural Adaptation among Indian International Students in Changsha**

### **2.1 Adaptation to Hunan Cultural Life**

According to statistics, it reflects the adaptation of Indian students studying abroad in Changsha to Hunan culture and life. The higher the average score, the greater the difficulty level. The average score of the scale is 2.72, indicating that in terms of adapting to Hunan culture and life, Indian international students generally believe that the difficulty level is average, and although there are some problems in social life, they can still adapt. The adaptation level of Indian international students in the three items of “making friends in China”, “being able to express themselves clearly”, and “being able to understand jokes or humorous language” is higher than the average, indicating that they have some difficulties in language communication. In the interview, we learned that Indian international students are able to gradually understand and accept Chinese lifestyle and social culture, and can also view problems better with Chinese thinking and local perspectives. However, there are many difficulties in understanding in deep communication and exchange.

The degree of integration of international students into local culture varies from person to person. The higher the language proficiency of Indian international students, the more they can make full use of their extracurricular time to continuously improve their Chinese listening, speaking, and cross-cultural communication skills. However, students with lower Chinese proficiency often tend to form groups, and due to differences in cultural customs and lifestyle habits, as well as difficulties in language communication, they are more inclined to communicate with their own people, Limit your circle of friends to the circle of international students. In addition, people in the Xiang dialect area have a heavy accent when speaking, and their oral expression and content deviate from standard Mandarin, with obvious regional characteristics. Especially, the use of the erhua sound in spoken language is not common, “l/n” is not distinguished, flat and raised tongue sounds are confused, and the distinction between front and back nasal sounds is unclear. There are differences in language knowledge learned by international students in Chinese classrooms, which is beneficial for Indian students studying Chinese in China, Undoubtedly, it has increased the difficulty.

### **2.2 Physical and mental adaptation**

We have evaluated the physical and mental adaptation of Indian students studying in China, and the higher the score, the higher the frequency. Table 1 shows a positive overall average score of 1.42, indicating that Indian international students have better physical and mental adaptation. The score for the item “I eat as much as I used to” is relatively low. In in-depth interviews, we found that Indian international students who have just arrived in China may experience a phenomenon of “not adapting to the local conditions”, but over time, there is a gradual improvement trend. For example, in terms of diet, Indian cuisine is completely different from Chinese cuisine. Indian cuisine has rich seasonings and is accustomed to the “hand grabbed rice” eating style, while Hunan cuisine is oily, spicy, and has a strong taste. Indian students who believe in Hinduism or Islam find it difficult to adapt to the common Chinese way of eating beef and pork, so the vast majority of Indian international students choose to cook in their dormitories and occasionally go to school cafeterias for meals during busy classes.

Most Indian international students are satisfied with the cultural life in Hunan, and their overall mentality is healthy and positive. Occasionally, they may have emotional and psychological problems, but they can self guide and resolve them through sharing with friends and family. In the interview, it was found that some Indian international students with low Chinese language proficiency have some problems in terms of physical and mental adaptation. They have no learning goals, a single lifestyle, and are in a state of confusion about the future. They also have some discomfort adapting to living in Changsha.

### **2.3 Related analysis**

Through the investigation of the adaptability of Indian international students to Hunan cultural life, physical and mental adaptation, and the correlation analysis with cultural distance (Table 2), it can be seen that the correlation coefficient between cultural distance and socio-cultural adaptation is 0.566, and it shows a significant positive correlation at the 0.05 level, indicating a significant positive correlation between cultural distance and socio-cultural adaptation; The correlation coefficient between cultural distance and physical and mental adaptation is

0.654, and it shows a significant positive correlation at the 0.01 level, indicating a significant positive correlation between cultural distance and physical and mental adaptation.

### 3. Inspiration and suggestions

The survey results show that the overall cross-cultural adaptation of Indian international students in Changsha is good. In response to some of the issues raised in the survey, we can adopt proactive strategies to better enhance the cross-cultural adaptation ability of Indian international students in Changsha.

(1) Chinese language teaching should attach importance to the charm of regional culture and achieve the connotative development of Chinese cultural curriculum. To optimize the cultural promotion content of education for international students studying in China, Mr. Zhao Jinming once proposed to develop “local Chinese language textbooks with regional characteristics”. Therefore, we should moderately increase the content and dissemination of Hunan culture, fully demonstrate the distinctive Hunan cultural connotations, inherit and promote excellent traditional Chinese culture, and enable international students to fully integrate into local culture and enhance their cross-cultural communication abilities. In addition, we should improve the practicality and fun of Chinese classroom teaching. Teachers can appropriately demonstrate the similarities and differences between Hunan dialect and Mandarin in teaching, so that international students can feel the language connotations, expression styles, and cultural characteristics of different places, and improve their language proficiency in practical life.

(2) Promote the construction of a community of Chinese and foreign students, and form an integrated management and service system. Expanding the social circle of international students, eliminating barriers between Chinese and foreign students, breaking down institutional barriers, it is recommended to implement integrated management for Chinese and foreign students, avoid differential treatment, actively build international student associations, and give international students more rights and opportunities to fully participate in school construction. Actively carry out various cultural and sports activities and social practices that involve both Chinese and foreign students. Specifically, universities can organize volunteer service activities such as “going to the countryside” and “teaching support” to cultivate the practical ability, teamwork spirit, and communication and exchange abilities of international students; Organize cultural salons, Chinese and English speech competitions, recitation of classic poems, Chinese corners, and other activities to enhance students’ cross-cultural communication skills; Strengthen the intensity and connotation of Chinese cultural practice inspection activities, attract international students to have a deeper understanding of Chinese culture, and cultivate their Chinese sentiment; Encourage international students to actively participate in cultural performances, sports events, marathons, basketball, football and other major competitions, enhance friendship between Chinese and foreign students, and promote cultural integration.

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