

**FACTORS INFLUENCING CHINESE STUDENTS' WILLINGNESS  
TO STAY AND WORK IN THAILAND AFTER GRADUATION**

The seal of Mahidol University is a circular emblem. It features a central blue circle containing a golden Thai-style stupa or chedi. Surrounding this central circle is a white ring with Thai script. The outermost ring is a light blue border, also containing Thai script. The name 'JIMENG YUE' is printed in black capital letters across the center of the seal.

**JIMENG YUE**

**A THEMATIC PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF MANAGEMENT  
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Jimeng Yue

## **FACTORS INFLUENCING CHINESE STUDENTS' WILLINGNESS TO STAY AND WORK IN THAILAND AFTER GRADUATION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the factors influencing Chinese international students' willingness to remain in Thailand for employment after graduation. Adopting a qualitative research methodology, in-depth interviews were conducted with eight Chinese graduates from Thai universities who are either currently employed or actively seeking employment in Thailand. The findings identify five primary factors shaping their intention to stay: career development opportunities, salary expectations, cultural adaptation, governmental policy support, and romantic relationships. The study reveals that Thailand offers a favorable environment for career advancement, particularly in emerging industries and Chinese-funded enterprises. While salary levels may not significantly surpass those in China, the comparatively lower cost of living enhances Thailand's appeal. Cultural integration, including language proficiency and social acceptance, is positively associated with students' desire to remain. Supportive immigration and employment policies further facilitate their decisions. Romantic relationships with local partners also play a role, though this is generally a less significant factor. Moreover, additional motivational factors emerged, such as a better work-life balance, an affordable lifestyle, and reduced academic pressure compared to China. These findings suggest that both economic and non-economic considerations jointly influence students' post-graduation decisions. The study provides policy recommendations for Thai institutions and government bodies to enhance support mechanisms, streamline visa processes, and promote Thailand's lifestyle advantages to attract and retain skilled international graduates.

**KEY WORDS:** CHINESE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, THAILAND, POST-GRADUATION EMPLOYMENT, CAREER DEVELOPMENT, CULTURAL ADAPTATION, IMMIGRATION POLICY, WORK-LIFE BALANCE, QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

22 pages

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

In recent years, the advancement of globalization and the rise of international education have led more and more Chinese students to choose to study abroad. As an important educational destination in Southeast Asia, Thailand has attracted many Chinese students (Choo & Salleh, 2020). With the improvement of Thailand's education system and the continuous enhancement of its international education framework, an increasing number of Chinese students are opting for higher education in Thailand.

Thailand's economy continues to grow, foreign capital is flowing in, and with the promotion of globalization, the demand for foreign talent in the Thai market is also rising. Thailand has gradually developed a need for international and highly skilled professionals, particularly in sectors such as high-tech, finance, engineering, and education (Wang, J. & Chong, 2020). This need has become more pronounced with the continued opening of the economy, as Thailand increasingly seeks professionals with an international outlook and background. With the growing proportion of Chinese students in Thailand's higher education system, the demand for Chinese graduates in Thailand's job market has also shown an upward trend. In recent years, more and more Chinese students have chosen to work in Thailand and settle there long-term, gradually becoming an integral part of Thailand's foreign workforce. According to the Thai World Daily, with the surge in Chinese employees, the Chinese have become Thailand's second-largest group of foreign nationals. At the same time, Thai and international companies have recognized that individuals with international backgrounds and educational experiences can bring greater innovation and competitiveness to businesses, especially in Thailand's economic transformation. This recognition has prompted Thai companies to provide more employment opportunities for international students, particularly for the increasing number of Chinese graduates (Piyaporn, A. & Yuying, 2021).



As the proportion of Chinese students in Thailand increases, the demand for talent in the Thai market also grows, especially in high-tech fields and international management. More Chinese students are choosing to work in Thailand, becoming a vital part of the country's foreign workforce.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

Although Thailand has achieved remarkable success in attracting foreign talent, there is still a lack of in-depth research on the motivations of Chinese students to remain in Thailand for employment after graduation. Against the backdrop of steady economic growth and increasing employment opportunities in Thailand, more and more Chinese students are choosing to stay and settle down long-term. However, the specific factors influencing this decision have not been fully explored. This paper analyzes the main factors affecting Chinese students' decision to stay in Thailand for employment, focusing on five key aspects: career development opportunities, salary levels, cultural adaptation, government policies, and the impact of marriage and romantic relationships. These factors are not only directly related to the employment decisions of international students but also offer valuable insights for improving relevant policies in Thailand. Through in-depth interviews and empirical analysis, this study aims to provide a reference for Thailand's policy formulation to attract more high-quality foreign talent and offer a more detailed understanding of the employment decisions of international students.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Factors**

##### **2.1.1 Career Development**

Career planning refers to an individual's career path based on their positioning and goals in pursuing career development (Qiu, 2015). According to career planning theory, the "Protean Career" is a career development model driven by self-orientation and intrinsic values. This theory emphasizes that individuals achieve career success through three key processes: identity awareness (clarifying career positioning), adaptability (coping with environmental changes), and initiative (actively creating opportunities) (Hall, Yip, & Doiron, 2018). Studies have shown that international students with this career concept are more likely to create a career path in Thailand through self-motivation (Kanokwalee & Athapol, 2014).

##### **2.1.2 Salary Package**

Salary benefits are a crucial factor in determining personal migration decisions (Kennan & Walker, 2011), and individual migration choices are often influenced by expected income. When people can meet their income expectations after migration, they are more likely to choose to remain in the host country, especially when salary levels are advantageous. International students, in particular, are highly concerned about future salary levels and career opportunities, which motivates them to stay in the host country for better economic returns.

The influx of foreign labor has not only driven up wage levels in the Thai labor market but also contributed to the overall growth of its economy (Saksiriruthai, 2015). This wage competitiveness provides more career opportunities for foreigners and positions Thailand favorably in the international talent competition.

### **2.1.3 Acculturation**

Acculturation refers to the process of interaction and integration between an individual and the local culture after moving to a foreign country (Berry, 1997). Studies have shown that the degree of adaptation of international students to life and research is one of the key factors determining whether they intend to stay in the host country (Kruanak & Ruangkanjanases, 2014).

Chinese students who adapt well to Thai culture are more likely to choose to stay in Thailand to work after graduation. Cultural adaptation typically involves improving language skills, understanding Thai culture, and establishing positive social relationships with local people. The combined effect of these factors provides international students with more opportunities for long-term development in Thailand (Saksiriruthai, 2015).

### **2.1.4 Policy Support**

In recent years, the Thai government has implemented a series of favorable policies to attract and retain international talent, aiming to promote the employment and long-term development of foreigners in Thailand (Areesophonpichet et al., 2024). The government has optimized the employment visa policy and provided career planning and employment support for international students through collaboration with domestic and foreign companies, helping them smoothly integrate into the Thai labor market (Kruanak & Ruangkanjanases, 2014). These policy measures not only enhance employment opportunities for international students but also offer a clear path for their career development in Thailand. Therefore, policy support has become a critical factor for Chinese students in deciding whether to stay in Thailand after graduation.

### **2.1.5 Romantic Relationships**

Many international students develop deep romantic relationships with locals during their study abroad, and these relationships play a crucial role in their immigration decisions (Popadiuk & Arthur, 2014). For those international students who marry Thais or establish long-term relationships with local partners, these emotional ties not only enhance their sense of belonging to Thai society but also significantly increase their willingness to remain in Thailand long-term (Lin & Kingminghae, 2017).

The stability of the romantic relationship and the partner's support in career development are often key factors in the decision to stay in Thailand. Therefore, romantic relationships have, to some extent, influenced international students' career path planning and ultimately affected their final decision to remain in the country (Popadiuk, 2014).

## **2.2 Framework Development**

The push-pull framework is a useful tool commonly used to explain people's motivations to migrate or relocate. In this section, based on the push-pull model, we will present a framework for understanding the factors that influence Chinese students' willingness to stay in Thailand after graduation. It includes five variables that are assumed to impact international students' willingness, which is the dependent variable.

### **2.2.1 Hypothesis 1**

Chinese students who embrace the concept of a Protean Career (Hall et al., 2018) tend to have a significantly stronger willingness to explore overseas career opportunities due to their self-directed and adaptable characteristics. They are more likely to choose a location that offers continuous growth opportunities, such as Thailand, for their career development.

The self-directed career concept is positively correlated with Chinese students' willingness to stay in Thailand after graduation.

### **2.2.2 Hypothesis 2**

Based on the rational choice theory of economics, when individuals expect higher or ideal salary levels in Thailand, their motivation to return home or move to other countries decreases, and they are more likely to stay in Thailand instead.

Positive expectations of future salary or higher salary levels are positively correlated with Chinese students' willingness to stay in Thailand after graduation.

### **2.2.3 Hypothesis 3**

According to the cultural adaptation process proposed by (Berry ,1997), if international students are more adaptable in terms of language, social networks, and understanding of local cultural norms, the obstacles to living in a foreign country will be reduced. The higher the degree of cultural integration, the more likely they are to settle in the local area long-term.

The greater the degree of adaptation of international students to Thai culture, the stronger their willingness to stay in Thailand for work after graduation.

### **2.2.4 Hypothesis 4**

Government policies regarding visas, work permits, employment counseling, and corporate cooperation help reduce the institutional barriers that international students face when seeking employment in foreign countries. According to the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), the policy environment influences individuals' perceived behavioral control, thereby affecting their behavioral intentions.

### **2.2.5 Hypothesis 5**

If individuals establish a deep or marital relationship with local people during their study abroad, it can significantly enhance their sense of belonging, social support, and life satisfaction in the local area, thereby promoting their decision to stay.

International students who have a stable relationship or marriage with local Thais are more likely to choose to stay in Thailand than those without a relationship with locals.

From the perspective of push-pull theory, most of these factors are considered pull factors, such as career opportunities, salary and benefits, cultural adaptation, policy support, and romantic relationships, all of which can actively attract international students to stay in Thailand.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Methodology**

##### **3.1.1 Research Design**

This study adopts a qualitative research approach, aiming to explore the key factors influencing Chinese international students' decisions to stay in Thailand for employment after graduation. The focus is on Chinese students' subjective experiences and decision-making processes, which makes qualitative research particularly suitable for exploratory and explanatory purposes. Given the lack of in-depth analysis in existing literature on the employment decision-making process of this group—particularly how multi-dimensional factors such as career development, salary and benefits, cultural adaptation, policy support, and emotional relationships interact—qualitative research allows for a deeper exploration of the authentic thoughts and personal experiences of international students.

Through in-depth interviews with the participants, I capture their emotional experiences, values, and subjective understanding of the external environment in their decision-making process, offering a richer and more nuanced perspective. Additionally, the flexibility of qualitative methods enables the discovery and explanation of new influencing factors, such as work-life balance, cost of living, and policy convenience, within the framework of established theories. These factors have a significant and far-reaching impact on the employment intentions of international students. This approach allows me to comprehensively uncover the key driving forces affecting Chinese students' employment in Thailand and to provide more specific, practical recommendations for policymakers and relevant institutions, thereby enhancing the research's practical significance and application value.

### **3.1.2 Research subjects**

The interviewees in this study are Chinese students who have completed their studies (both experienced and non-experienced) at Thai universities and are currently working in Thailand or seeking employment opportunities there.

In line with the research objectives, respondents who are highly relevant to the research questions are selected first. This includes students who have employment experience in Thailand, have obtained work visas, or are currently in the job search process.

Considering potential differences due to factors such as academic major, career stage, and marital status, this study will aim to ensure diversity and representativeness when recruiting respondents.

## **3.2 Data collection**

This study adopts a qualitative research method to explore the career choices of Chinese students after graduation in Thailand through in-depth interviews. Using a purposive sampling strategy, eight respondents who have completed higher education in Thailand and are either employed or seeking employment were selected. The sample covers different industries, including finance, education, catering management, and real estate, and reflects differences in career stages, ranging from fresh graduates to professionals with five years of experience. Marital status, such as being single or in a relationship, was also considered.

The sample selection focuses on individuals participating in local employment or actively seeking work in Thailand, ensuring the authenticity and dynamism of their career decision-making experiences. By analyzing individual narratives from different professional backgrounds and career stages, the study aims to reveal how self-oriented career concepts interact with salary expectations, cultural adaptation, and the policy environment, while also observing the inclusive characteristics of Thailand's workplace ecology for international talent.

The diverse sample design not only captures the "adaptive reconstruction" process during career transitions but also verifies information saturation through pre-interviews to ensure a comprehensive presentation of core research variables (such as



career development opportunities, cost of living advantages, and work culture differences). This approach enables a systematic analysis of the internal motivations and external driving factors for the long-term development of Chinese students in Thailand.



## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Interviewees Demographics

##### 4.1.1 Experienced

**Table 4.1 Interviewees Demographics Experienced**

Name	Gender	University	Position	Work year
Ella	female	Kasetsart University	Business development	5 Month
An	male	University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce	Real Estate Sales Manager	10 years
Alex	male	Bangkok University	Catering	3years
Ava	male	Dhurakij Pundit University	Event organizers and translators	2 years

##### 4.1.2 Non-experienced

**Table 4.2 Interviewees Demographics Non- experienced**

Name	Gender	University	Position	Work year
Mila	female	Burapha University	Business Development	2years
Tyler	male	Bangkok University	Operation Tiktok (in practice)	5 years
Angel	female	Rangsit University	We Media	2 years
Penny	female	Mahidol University	foreign trade salesman	2years

## 4.2 Data analysis

The study aims to explore the key factors influencing Chinese students' decisions to work in Thailand. It combines existing literature with five previously proposed hypotheses—career, salary, cultural adaptation, policy support, and marriage and romantic relationships—and conducts a thematic analysis of in-depth interview data from eight participants. The study evaluates the role of these factors in the interviewees' decisions to remain in Thailand for employment.

### 4.2.1 Career Development

Career is often closely linked to personal growth needs and employment opportunities (Qiu Guan-chang, 2015). In this study, almost all respondents considered "whether they can obtain career development opportunities in Thailand" as one of the primary factors when deciding to stay in the country.

Ella: "I can earn a relatively high salary through overseas assignments, and the work is multinational, which meets my expectations for career development. I can secure a good job faster in Thailand, so why should I return to China to compete again?"

An: "I believe there is still investment potential in the Thai real estate market, and many Chinese are now coming to Thailand to invest. I currently speak Chinese, Thai, and English, which is very beneficial for my development. In the future, I want to develop towards an executive role or entrepreneurship."

Ava: "I don't have a fixed career plan yet, but Thailand offers an international and multicultural environment, and many new fields have not yet developed into complete markets. There are great prospects for growth. I can try different fields and improve my overall personal skills."

Mila: "I am currently job hunting and hope to make achievements in the field of business development. I see Thailand as a relatively emerging market. The competition is not as fierce as in China, and it is easier to accumulate resources."

### 4.2.2 Salary Package

Salary level is a crucial factor affecting individual migration decisions (John & James, 2011; Saksiriruthai, 2015). International students are more likely to stay if they receive better or more expected income in the host country. Most interviewees regard salary as a basic threshold.

An: "A monthly salary of 90,000 to 110,000 baht, plus performance-based incentives. I think it can cover basic living expenses and part of my investments, so I am willing to stay in Thailand long-term."

Alex: "Although 60,000 baht is not exceptionally high, it is better than the same position in China. I can also gain catering management experience in Thailand. As long as I can cover my daily expenses and save moderately, it's enough for me. Returning to China might not necessarily earn me more than I make here. Moreover, the cost of living in many places in China is very high, which makes it difficult to meet my daily expenses."

Ava: "Only 30,000 baht. It's enough to support myself, but it's not easy to develop. I can't establish my hobbies, and if I want to travel, it's also tight. I think freedom and personal interests are important too."

### 4.2.3 Acculturation

As shown in the Berry model (Berry, 1997), if international students cannot overcome language barriers or cross-cultural communication differences, they may feel "excluded," which can reduce their willingness to stay in Thailand. However, overall, most respondents in this study adapted smoothly and experienced a positive atmosphere, supporting the conclusion in Hypothesis 3 that "the higher the degree of adaptation, the stronger the willingness to stay in Thailand."

Alex: "In the catering industry, Thai colleagues are enthusiastic about teaching me Thai and taking me to the Songkran Festival and Loy Krathong Festival. I believe I am someone who adapts easily to new environments. In a high-quality language environment, I can learn Thai quickly, which allows me to adapt faster."

Ava: "I actively learn Thai. Although I often make mistakes, locals usually encourage me, and I gradually adapt to the language. I can slowly integrate into the work circle. I'm not shy about speaking Thai with unfamiliar people, and I'm steadily improving."

Penny: "My colleagues are accustomed to communicating in Thai. I am often ignored and occasionally feel marginalized. However, I understand that this is more of a language issue than discrimination. It hasn't caused me problems or neglect in other areas. The environment I work in is still relatively friendly, and I can adapt to the surroundings in most cases."

#### **4.2.4 Policy Support**

Both Hypothesis 4 and the theoretical framework suggest that simplifying visa procedures and providing employment security can enhance the "sense of control" among international students, thereby increasing their willingness to stay in Thailand (Ajzen, 1991). This study found that factors such as visa procedures, work permit convenience, and tax incentives have a direct impact on international students' decisions to stay in Thailand.

An: "I have a five-year work visa, and the company helps me apply for it, saving me a lot of time and money. Moreover, Thailand is relatively relaxed about foreign real estate investment. I can directly buy an apartment in Thailand, making it easier for me to settle here long-term. Being able to buy a house in Thailand has had a significant impact on me because long-term residence has led me to decide to buy property. Compared with China, housing prices in Bangkok are much more affordable, and the infrastructure is also better. I am more inclined to buy a house in Thailand."

Ava: "I encountered a mistake at the immigration bureau. The staff forgot to stamp my return visa, and I was fined 2,000 baht. Although this caused some negative feelings, it wasn't enough to make me return to China."

Mila: "Although the work visa application process is a bit cumbersome, it's still within an acceptable range. However, if the policy threshold is significantly raised in the future, I will reconsider."

Shuxian Deng: "I am dissatisfied with the complicated procedures and the 90-day reporting system at the Thai Immigration Bureau. However, I can still accept it for now because the 90-day reporting is free and can be done online, which doesn't cause me much trouble, although I often forget to report it."

#### 4.2.5 Romantic relationship

In a cross-cultural context, having a local spouse or a stable relationship can enhance the sense of belonging for international students. Most of the eight respondents in this study have not yet entered into marriage or a long-term relationship, so the influence of marriage and romantic factors is limited. However, these factors do show a significant effect in individual cases.

Ella: "I have been in a relationship with a Thai man for a year but have not yet reached the stage of marriage. It's not enough to decide whether to stay or leave as long as it remains an ordinary relationship."

An: "I am in a stable relationship with a Thai, and we will get married soon. My partner has greatly helped me with my life and cultural integration, strengthening my determination to stay in Thailand."

Ava: "If I meet an ideal partner in the future and the relationship becomes stable, we can discuss marriage, which may increase my motivation to stay. For now, I still focus on career development, but I will also look for someone who lives in Thailand."

The other six interviewees have not disclosed being married or in a deep emotional relationship. Most of them believe that an "ideal partner" could increase their willingness to stay in Thailand, but it is not their primary consideration.

Overall, the five core factors (career, salary, cultural adaptation, policy support, and marriage and romantic relationships) are supported by empirical evidence from the interviewees, which aligns with the research hypothesis proposed earlier.

Additionally, emerging factors such as "lifestyle/work-life balance" and "language fit" were frequently mentioned by many interviewees, highlighting that work pressure, personal interests, and the work environment also play a significant role in the career decisions of modern international students.



## 4.3 Potential other factors

### 4.3.1 Life-work balance

Tyler: "I once interned at a company in China and had to work nearly ten hours a day, with almost no weekends. At that time, I felt that while I wasn't old, my hair was graying first. After coming to Thailand, I found that my colleagues almost always left on time after work and rarely worked overtime on weekends. My boss wouldn't suddenly add work during my break time, and there were no emails or meetings on weekends, which felt like Chinese New Year to me."

Ava: "When I was interning in China, I had to be on call all the time, receiving messages from my supervisor at eleven or twelve o'clock in the evening. After coming to Thailand, my colleagues respect my private time after work, and no one pressures me to make reports or plans on weekends."

These responses show that "work-life balance" is more apparent in the workplace environment in Thailand, offering respondents psychological relaxation and satisfaction. The relatively free and relaxed working atmosphere in Thailand makes them more inclined to choose to work there.

In terms of lifestyle, the overall social rhythm in Thailand is relatively mild, giving them more time to pursue personal interests, socialize, or rest.

### 4.3.2 Low cost of living

Alex: "I rented an apartment in Bangkok for about 12,000 baht a month, which comes with a swimming pool and a gym. The same apartment in Shanghai would cost several times more. Here, I can also learn to swim and exercise. If I were in China, I could only rent an old apartment on the seventh floor of a residential complex without an elevator."

Mila: "I usually like to visit night markets, where I can enjoy various street foods at relatively low prices. Sometimes, a full meal costs only 50-60 baht, and I can still eat well. The first time I went to a roadside stall with my Thai colleagues after work, I spent less than 100 baht and had a lot of dishes. The food was cheaper and tastier than what I would find in restaurants in China."



The low cost of living is a major attraction for many international students. They can enjoy relatively good living conditions and food in Bangkok without the high rent and meal costs typical of first-tier cities in China. The rent and living expenses in large cities in China are often high, forcing some individuals to opt for more economical towns or countries.

#### **4.3.3 Exam pressure**

Ava: I failed the postgraduate entrance examination in China, and I felt that it was too stressful to continue preparing for it. The competition for the postgraduate entrance examination in China was also very fierce. At that time, I was giving it a try. I didn't expect to apply for a master's degree in the first year. After graduation, I found a job in the local area. I am delighted with this path now.

Angel: I felt that my classmates were frantically preparing for the postgraduate entrance examination in China, and the atmosphere was depressing, so I chose a more flexible overseas study plan without competing for a place. After arriving in Thailand, I found that many Chinese classmates in the class had similar experiences of escaping the anxiety of the postgraduate entrance examination in China but found a more relaxed way to study abroad in Thailand.

For many students, the difficulty of the postgraduate entrance examination in China is getting higher and higher, or the competition for university places is exceptionally fierce, which has become a "pushing" force. Thai universities are relatively more flexible in admissions and have a diverse teaching model, which attracts some people to study abroad.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Conclusions**

This study explored five core factors (career, salary, cultural adaptation, policy support, and marriage and romantic relationships), as well as additional factors such as "lifestyle and work environment, low cost of living, and the pressure of studying for the postgraduate entrance examination in China" that emerged during the interviews. The study found that the motivation for Chinese students to stay in Thailand and work includes not only the salary and policies emphasized in traditional literature but also personal career development needs, cross-cultural adaptation, and a preference for a comfortable lifestyle.

Specifically, career factors exhibit a significant "acceleration channel" feature, particularly in emerging industries or Chinese-funded expatriate positions. These positions allow respondents to accumulate international experience and build connections in a relatively short time. Salary and benefits serve as basic thresholds; if they meet the "psychological line," they become key considerations along with the work atmosphere and personal interests. However, if these factors cannot improve over time, their motivation to stay in Thailand diminishes.

Cultural adaptability and social networks play a critical role in the psychological security of international students. Those who learn Thai or actively integrate into the local culture are more likely to stay long-term. The convenience of visas, work permits, and foreign talent policies shape the employment opportunities and feasibility of international students at an institutional level. Marriage and romantic relationships can significantly enhance the family foundation and commitment of international students to stay in Thailand. However, their impact is limited for most students who are still in ordinary relationships or are single.

Additionally, many international students interviewed highly praised Thailand's relaxed and friendly work environment. The low cost of living and the

country's geographical location were also regarded as important and practical attractions. Meanwhile, the high intensity of domestic postgraduate entrance exams and the competitive job market for fresh graduates are often seen as a "push" factor, prompting some students to seek more flexible study and employment opportunities in Thailand.

## 5.2 Limitations

At the sample level, although in-depth interviews revealed the underlying motivations of Chinese students to stay in Thailand, only 7 respondents were selected. These respondents primarily represent the newly employed group with a strong willingness to stay in Thailand, which limits the representativeness of the conclusions. The study fails to compare and analyze the decision-making differences between groups who choose to return to China or move to a third country for development. Such groups may be influenced by factors such as the domestic job market, cultural belonging, or family considerations. Their absence limits the completeness of the analysis of decision-making pathways.

Additionally, the career stage of the young respondents restricts the study's ability to observe dynamic changes in the career trajectories and willingness of long-term residents to stay in Thailand.

In terms of policy, while the study captures the impact of factors such as visa systems and talent policies on employment decisions, it mainly relies on the subjective perceptions of respondents. It does not incorporate a quantitative analysis of policy texts or verification using corporate recruitment data, which may weaken the objective evaluation of policy effectiveness.

Regarding cultural adaptation, current research focuses on the direct impact of language ability and social networks. However, it does not fully explore the long-term correlation between improving cross-cultural competence and professional competitiveness. For example, it does not address how bilingual advantages are transformed into career advancement opportunities or the role of cross-cultural communication in the adaptability of those in management positions.

### 5.3 Future Research

Future research should expand the sample to include different career stages and returnees, constructing a multi-group comparison framework. It should also establish a mechanism for verifying subjective and objective indicators by linking the policy database with employment market data. Additionally, longitudinal tracking should be conducted to dynamically observe the interactive process between cultural adaptation strategies and career development, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the career choice logic of Chinese students studying in Southeast Asia.

### 5.4 Recommendation

First, Thai universities and relevant institutions can offer more comprehensive career development support. Thai language courses, internship programs, vocational training, and cross-cultural adaptation programs should be introduced for international students to help them better integrate into the Thai workplace. Particularly in high-skilled industries and emerging market sectors, establishing specialized recruitment channels for international talent can improve employment opportunities and enhance students' confidence in their career development.

In addition, the Thai government and businesses can further optimize immigration policies for foreign talent, simplify the visa process, improve work permit convenience, and offer more attractive salaries and benefits to increase Thailand's competitiveness in the global talent market. Specifically, to attract high-end talent, the government can learn from other countries' practices, such as introducing long-term visa programs or permanent residence policies, to encourage international students to stay in Thailand long-term. Employers can also enhance the welfare benefits for foreign employees, including medical insurance and housing subsidies, to improve the stability of Chinese students' employment in Thailand.

Considering the attractiveness of Thailand's lifestyle, low living costs, and working environment, the Thai government and relevant institutions can further promote these advantages to make Thailand more appealing in the international talent market. For example, strengthening Thailand's image as an international city, optimizing public service facilities, and providing enhanced policy support for foreigners can increase

its appeal as a career destination. Additionally, alumni networks, social platforms, or official agencies can establish more effective information-sharing mechanisms to help Chinese students access transparent and comprehensive employment and policy information, enabling them to make informed and self-sufficient career decisions.



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