CHINESE INTERNATIONAL DOCTORAL STUDENTS' CROSS-CULTURAL SOCIALIZATION: LEVERAGING STRENGTHS AND MULTIPLE IDENTITIES

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ABSTRACT

Aim/Purpose	The purpose of this study is to use narrative inquiry to discover and understand how Chinese students leverage their strengths and multiple identities in socializing to American higher education and their profession. Chinese students engage with American academic culture while embracing their multiple identities. I will explore the cultural strengths they use to socialize and develop their personal, social, cultural, and professional identities in their doctoral educational experience.
Background	Chinese international doctoral students encounter a unique socialization experience during their doctoral studies because they lack meaningful cross-cultural support. Likewise, it is problematic that Chinese students are often viewed as a homogeneous group and much prior research has emphasized the traditional deficit perspective in explaining how Chinese students must adjust and assimilate to the university environment.
Methodology	This qualitative research uses narrative inquiry to study Chinese international doctoral students' socialization experiences while retaining their authentic voices. Narrative inquiry allows for a more nuanced understanding of the experiences of Chinese students compared to the perceptions imposed by other stakeholders. The narrative methodology provides diverse ways to understand Chinese student interactions within American culture, place, and context. This study applies the three-dimensional approach to retell participants' stories. The three-dimensional approach is more holistic and provides a broad lens to learn about the interactions, past, present, and future experiences of individuals through time and space.

Contribution	This research shifts the narrative from the deficit view to a strength-based perspective as to how Chinese international doctoral students can rely on their cultural values and multiple identities as strengths to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally.
Findings	Findings related to the literature in two important ways. First, findings support how the six cultural strengths of Yosso's community cultural wealth apply to Chinese international doctoral students. Chinese students' stories align with these strengths and through these strengths, they explore and develop their personal, social, cultural, and professional identity. Second, Chinese students' stories as a counternarrative challenged and contradicted the essentialist view and misconception that Chinese students are a homogenous group personally, socially, culturally, or academically.
Recommendations for Practitioners	The findings from this study offer insight for practitioners into what institutions and departments might do to support Chinese international doctoral students in their socialization journey. It is vital to support the whole student through understanding their multiple identities.
Recommendations for Researchers	Chinese students and other diverse learners may benefit from peer and faculty mentors in different ways. Therefore, understanding the unique cross-cultural socialization needs and strength-based perspective will help tailor social activities and inclusive learning environments.
Impact on Society	The current political, economic, and social relationships between the U.S. and China make it vital for American institutions to consider Chinese international doctoral students' cross-cultural socialization journey.
Future Research	Though it is hoped that this study is transferable, specific issues of how it can be generalized to other Chinese international doctoral students in other areas of the U.S. are beyond the scope of this study. Future research might explore how Chinese International doctoral students' socialization experiences differ depending on where they study in the U.S.
Keywords	doctoral socialization, Chinese international doctoral students, cross-cultural socialization, narrative inquiry, multiple identities, strength-based perspective

INTRODUCTION

The United States (U.S.) has long been the top country for international students, including Chinese international doctoral students. According to the International Education Exchange (IEE, 2020), China is the leading country in sending students to the U.S., with 372,532 in the 2019-2020 school year (before the COVID-19 pandemic), which accounted for 35% of international students and brought over $16 billion. However, there is a significant flattening or even decline in the numbers of Chinese students attending U.S. universities due to the Trump administration's visa restrictions (Voice of America, 2019).

The focus of this research on Chinese international doctoral students' cross-cultural socialization experiences is significant for several reasons. Chinese international doctoral students positively contribute to U.S. higher education through economic revenue, academic prestige, and institutional diversity. First, Chinese international doctoral students are critical to U.S. higher education in terms of benefits. According to the Institute of International Education, international students' tuition and fees contributed over $44.7 billion to the U.S. economy in 2018 (Daiya, 2020). Most international students pay much higher tuition and fees than their local counterparts, and this economic contribution generates high revenues to U.S. local communities and higher education (De Wit, 2002). Second, Chinese

international doctoral students contribute to academic prestige through diverse worldviews and research expertise. Indeed, most international graduate students are elite students in their home countries with high scores for Graduate Record Examinations and Test of English as a Foreign Language (Brazill, 2021). Moreover, these talented graduate students contribute to co-authored publications and federally funded research projects; these are important national contributions as well as vital socialization experiences (Véliz, 2020). Third, Chinese international doctoral students bring cultural diversity as well as engagement in civic participation, which in turn benefits the multiculturalism of universities and the greater community. For example, they may help faculty and peers to cultivate cultural humility, defined as an ongoing process of self-reflection of our experiences and assumptions by facilitating relationships with mutual empowerment, trust, and respect (Brazill, 2020; Foronda et al., 2015). According to Fisher-Borne et al. (2014), cultural humility moves beyond the term of cultural competence by allowing personal accountability in challenging institutional barriers that affect marginalized communities. Finally, the U.S. and China are two of the world's largest economies, and this bicultural exchange has the potential to impact the broader global markets through cultural learning, demystification, and stronger alliances (Y. A. Li et al., 2011).

Graduate education grew to become a major enterprise in American higher education (Golde & Walker, 2006; Walker et al., 2008). For several generations of Chinese families, the U.S. has been the top destination for study among Chinese international doctoral students because of its strong reputation and research innovation. The benefits of American Higher education for Chinese international doctoral students include enriching life experiences, self-cultivation, broadening perspectives in research, improving career prospects, and contributing to life betterment (Yang et al., 2017). Furthermore, international student mobility is an important part of globalization and it feeds the trend among institutions to recruit international graduate students (Ford & McMullin, 2016). International student mobility is molded through a web of intertwining contexts: external factors, institutional features, governmental influence, and individual preferences (Choudaha, 2021). Therefore, institutions must fulfill a dual mission by preparing graduate students for economic and professional success and educating students to participate in the global intellectual community (Nerad, 2010). International student mobility contributes to American universities with students from diverse cultures who learn global perspectives from each other (J. Zhou, 2015). Globalization has influenced U.S. graduate education through changes in the configuration of graduate programs and the development of socialization processes that lead to different outcomes for individual students (National Research Council, 2005). Last but not least, Chinese international doctoral students are an important source of research labor for U.S. research institutions (Brazill, 2021; Gong & Huybers, 2015) and constitute the largest number of international students receiving doctorates over the last decade.

The first opening up of China began in the early 20th century and can be traced back to the establishment of the Republic in 1911 and John Dewey's visit to China in 1919 (Y. S. Li, 2000). This eventually led to many Chinese students coming to Cornell and other American universities for advanced study (O'Mara, 2012). Dewey's significant influence on the modernization of Chinese education and Chinese international students' enrollment in the U.S. all the way to the 21st century should not be underestimated (Bevis, 2013; Fesmire, 2019). Although Dewey's direct influence ended temporarily in 1949 when the Chinese Communist Party took over the country, after the second opening up in the 1970s Dewey again became well known among Chinese scholars and his work is still popularly taught in universities (Su, 1995).

Approximately fifty years after Dewey and more than twenty years after the Communist victory, President Richard Nixon visited China in 1972 to meet with Chairman Mao Ze Dong and Premier Zhou En Lai. The goal was to build peaceful relations and to re-establish international relations. He was the first U.S. president to visit the People's Republic of China since it was established in 1949. The two leaders agreed to expand cultural exchanges between their two nations (Y. S. Li, 2000). This was an important historical event because subsequently China's Reform and Opening Up Policy, which be-

gan in 1978 and was implemented by Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping, contributed greatly to international partnerships with U.S. institutions by sending multiple waves of Chinese students known as "sea turtles" to study in the U.S. and then return to China (Y. S. Li, 2000). Afterward, the first Chinese-American academic ties between Johns Hopkins University and Nanjing University were created to ensure strong quality for graduate programs. In addition, Yale and Cornell also collaborated with China to recruit Chinese international graduate students (Altbach, 2013).

Recently, the academic expansion and rise of China's research universities and graduate programs have led to the reduction of Chinese graduate students coming to the U.S. for study. Moreover, more than 800 private higher education institutions in China have enrolled more than 4 million students. The Chinese government-funded initiatives, such as the 985 Project and the 211 Project, provided funding to universities to develop world-class teaching and research by recruiting the best graduate students and scholars (Altbach, 2013). China is taking measures that will profoundly affect U.S. institutions, such as the continued expansion of graduate programs (Deardorff & van Gaalen 2012) and established incentive programs to encourage talented students to return to China from the U.S. (Altbach, 2013).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Chinese international doctoral students encounter a unique socialization experience during their doctoral studies because they often lack meaningful cross-cultural support (W. Li & Collins, 2018; Zhang, 2016). Socialization is defined as a fundamental process by which students learn the values, knowledge, and skills of the profession (Weidman et al., 2014). For Chinese international doctoral students, their experiences often include a cross-cultural component that may rely on a different set of socialization processes (W. Li & Collins, 2018). For example, as Chinese international doctoral students integrate into American higher education, they bring unique qualities to academic culture. This fluid mixing of Chinese and American culture can create a more plural process as students and faculty from multiple groups and identities come together, each contributing to their mutual cross-cultural socialization journey.

Moreover, identities are individually and socially constructed and reconstructed through experiences (Vignoles et al., 2011). As such, identity can positively or negatively impact Chinese international doctoral students' socialization journey and intercultural exchanges. If Chinese international doctoral students understand the salient elements of their multiple identities that contribute to cross-cultural socialization, then they can leverage these identities as strengths in their doctoral journey. However, it is worth noting that the work by Reynolds and Pope (1991) focused on multiple identity oppression from the deficit perspective. My study, on the other hand, challenges this deficit model with a strength-based model to explore the multiple identities that are important for Chinese international doctoral students' socialization journeys.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

I used narrative inquiry to discover and understand how Chinese international doctoral students leverage their identities as strengths in socializing to American higher education and their profession. Chinese students engage with American academic culture while embracing their multiple identities. I explored the cultural strengths they use to socialize and develop their personal, social, cultural, and professional identities in their educational experiences. Qualitative research allowed me to empower and interact with the stories of the students to develop a more complex, holistic, and deeper understanding of the issue within a given context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Specifically, I used narrative inquiry to learn about Chinese international doctoral students' lived experiences and to co-construct meaning with research participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The reflexive process allowed me to appreciate the various perspectives and collect stories shaped by each participant (Corlett & Mavin, 2018).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What do Chinese international doctoral students identify as most salient to who they are throughout their cross-cultural socialization journey?
2. How do Chinese international doctoral students describe the way they leverage their strengths and multiple identities in shaping their cross-cultural socialization journey?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The seminal work on graduate student socialization is the Weidman-Twale-Stein framework (Weidman et al., 2001). Socialization is an ongoing process and graduate student experiences are conceptualized as four stages: anticipatory, formal, informal, and personal (Weidman et al., 2001). Anticipatory socialization refers to expectations of graduate school and is often idealized as what graduate school should be. Formal socialization refers to being at graduate school and learning to become a scholar (involved in the experience of teaching, research, and service). Informal socialization describes how a student's life, campus climate, and peer interactions connect. Personal socialization refers to students forming their scholarly identity and becoming personally involved in their research interests (W. Li & Collins, 2018). At each stage, students engage in the academic culture, develop a professional identity, and commit to the roles and responsibilities associated with the profession (Austin & McDaniels, 2006; Weidman et al., 2020).

Johnson et al. (2017) critiqued the Weidman-Twale-Stein framework and existing literature about doctoral student socialization because the process discounted individual student differences and neglected culturally-diverse students' experiences (Antony, 2002; Gardner, 2007; Matthews, 2021). To address this gap, Johnson et al. (2017) recommended that future research explore empirically how students' multiple identities shape their doctoral socialization journey and how they become experts in their profession (Gardner & Doore, 2020; Gardner & Mendoza, 2010). Therefore, for the purpose of this article, I define cross-cultural socialization as a process whereby students embrace their multiple identities throughout their graduate studies and accrue benefits that help them more fully realize the strengths and potential of their experiences and interactions with peers, faculty/mentors, institutions, and places (Brazill & Munday, 2022; Brazill et al., 2021). This definition of cross-cultural socialization is drawn from scholarly work on multiple identities and a strength-based perspective in response to the limitations of research from a deficit lens, which was problematic.

The multiple dimensions of the identity model (Abes et al., 2007) explained that identity is a fluid social construct and heavily influenced by context. This framework provided an understanding of Chinese international doctoral students' multiple identities and individual experiences. Chinese international doctoral students and their identity formation should not be viewed as homogeneous because they have unique individual experiences, voices, and agency (L. L. Ye, 2018). Further, identity construction is a complex process, during which numerous individual and contextual factors collectively interact (McAlpine, 2012). According to Burke and Stets (2009), the different identities that comprise the self exist in a hierarchy, where those ranked highest are likely to be invoked in situations that involve different aspects of the self. For instance, professional identity or academic identity is described as a person's perception of themselves within the collective identity of the profession. The formation of professional identity is an evolving process shaped by socialization (Henkel, 2009). Furthermore, Oyserman and Destin (2010) originated identity-based motivation theory and believed that identities are dynamically constructed in context. People prefer identity-congruent to identity-incongruent actions and self-concept is a multidimensional cognitive structure consisting of multiple past, present, and future identities (Oyserman & Destin, 2010).

Gardner's (2009) doctoral student identity development model focused on professional development and provides the context in which students move through a series of non-linear phases as they navigate their doctoral education. Doctoral students develop identity in a three-phase continuum, including entry, integration, and candidacy (Gardner, 2009). These phases are not clearly defined stages and

can overlap, with the university environment intertwined throughout all three phases. Phase 1, Entry, is from before admission to when coursework begins. Support needed in this phase includes orientation and initial relationships with peers and faculty. Phase 2, Integration, includes completing coursework to develop knowledge and skills required for the comprehensive exam. Peer and advisor relationships are fundamental in this phase (Golde, 2005). Phase 3, Candidacy, is when doctoral students continue to develop their scholarly identities as independent researchers and career trajectories. Support for international doctoral students can include writing groups and research mentoring to reduce students' isolation (Ku et al., 2008). In sum, these theoretical perspectives are complementary for understanding Chinese international doctoral students' cross-cultural experiences in terms of their multiple identities. The research was delimited to Chinese international doctoral students' experiences during their three phases – Entry, Integration, and Candidacy. These students enter American higher education (phase 1) with various connections to their cultural identities. Further, students have personal, professional, cultural, and social identities, which they also leverage in their doctoral journey. Unique to my study is how Chinese international doctoral students use their multiple identities as strengths in this cross-cultural socialization process.

STRENGTH-BASED PERSPECTIVE FOR CROSS-CULTURAL SOCIALIZATION: DISMANTLE THE DEFICIT MINDSET

The potential economic, academic, social, and institutional benefits make it critical to understand the cultural and supportive experiences Chinese international doctoral students have within American higher education. Most of the literature theorizes Chinese international doctoral students from a deficit paradigm, which has been pervasive in educational sociology for over a century, meaning "differences in academic achievement by different groups of students are due to deficiencies within students, their families, and/or their culture" (Hogg & Volman, 2020, p. 863). For example, existing research (Lee & Rice, 2007; L. Ye & Edwards, 2017) suggested that international students, including Chinese international doctoral students, have felt unwelcome at American institutions due to language deficiency, writing, or communication barriers. All these together have reinforced deficit stereotypes toward Chinese international doctoral students.

In contrast, a strength-based perspective is a holistic view of student qualities and strengths regarding their aspirations, including the knowledge, talents, skills, capacities, cultural resources, and relationships (Fenton, 2008; Saleebey, 2006). There is limited research using a strength-based approach and this constitutes a gap in the current literature (Heng, 2018; Heng, 2020; Xiang; 2015). To address this gap, I draw on Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth from a strength-based perspective and investigate how these theoretical concepts can be applied to empower Chinese international doctoral students during their graduate school journey. This is especially important because, to date, there is evidence that Chinese international doctoral students have historically been unempowered and excluded by American higher education mainly due to the model minority stereotype (Ruble & Zhang, 2013; Yu, 2006).

YOSSO'S COMMUNITY CULTURAL WEALTH: VALIDATE CHINESE INTERNATIONAL DOCTORAL STUDENTS' STRENGTHS

Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth provided a strength-based perspective on how Chinese international doctoral students experience American higher education. Most studies (Yan & Berliner, 2013; Y. Zhou et al., 2008) on Chinese international doctoral students' cross-cultural socialization experiences adopt a deficiency narrative based on poor language and communication skills. The connection between identity and this deficiency narrative is that the dominant culture labels individuals as one single group without considering the within-group diversity and the individuals' unique experiences. I used Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth theory to challenge this dominant narrative and advocate for a strength-based approach to empower and validate international graduate students by strengthening their cultural assets.

Due to the dominance of the deficiency viewpoint in the current literature on international graduate students of color, I proposed using Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth theory to honor Chinese international doctoral students' cross-cultural socialization experiences for two reasons. First, although this theory was originally developed to study Chicana and Latina/o undergraduate students, one theoretical implication is to recognize how it also applies to Chinese international doctoral students, and how they can rely on Yosso's six strengths to be successful. In fact, many scholars (Burt & Johnson, 2018; Espino, 2014; Garcia et al., 2020; Huber, 2009) applied this theoretical model to study racial-ethnic identity groups, low socioeconomic status students, and students with other diverse identities. The empirical findings of these studies are that individuals are more successful in their cross-cultural socialization journey when they feel empowered, and their identities are validated as strengths instead of deficits. However, the application of this theory to Chinese international doctoral students has been underexplored. Second, and very importantly, this theory addresses a current gap in the literature by shifting the research lens away from a deficit standpoint to a strength-based perspective, focusing on students' experiential knowledge. Experiential knowledge is defined as the knowledge that people of color possess based on their personal lived experiences, storytelling, and individual and composite narratives (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). Chinese international doctoral students bring cross-cultural knowledge, diverse content, and multiple perspectives to their socialization journey.

From a strength-based perspective, Yosso's (2005) theory explores six forms of cultural capital (linguistic, aspirational, familial, social, navigational, and resistance) that students of color bring to their cross-cultural socialization experiences. Like other culturally minoritized groups in higher education, Chinese international doctoral students can use their cultural capital as a form of strength to navigate their doctoral journey. It is important to recognize that students bring unique cultural assets from their personal, social, and professional backgrounds, which enables them to thrive despite the challenges (i.e., stereotypes, racism, and discrimination) they face studying and living in the U.S.

Throughout this paper, I use the term "strength" instead of "capital" as it is more culturally attuned to Chinese cultural values because "strength" in Chinese culture signifies spiritual and cultural synergy whereas "capital" was adapted from a sense of monetary or economic advantage (Glaeser et al., 2002). Thinking about social capital as a strength is a more robust metaphor that incorporates the social network, the psychodynamics of an individual's efforts to achieve their goals and individual social skills that can be developed and improved (Baron & Markman, 2000; Western et al., 2005). The six cultural strengths and Chinese international doctoral students' multiple identities intertwine with each other, meaning they are not isolated. Together, the strengths shed light on understanding the inherent values that Chinese international doctoral students and the experiential knowledge that they bring with them or develop in their socialization journey. Below I share how each of these six strengths is vital for Chinese international doctoral students' cross-cultural socialization experiences.

Linguistic strengths

According to Yosso (2005), linguistic strengths refer to the intellectual, cognitive, communication, and social skills developed through different languages and the traditions that underlie language, such as storytelling and cultural narratives. In essence, bi/multilingualism is a fund of experiential knowledge because it is integral to cultural identity and bi/multilingualism enhances cross-cultural socialization (Jandt, 2017). Studies (Anandavalli, 2019; L. Ye & Edwards, 2017) found that Chinese international doctoral students are more comfortable seeking out peers and mentors from their home countries for support because they share a common language, culture, and similar communication style. In this way, speaking their native language is also a strength and a way of socially bonding in challenging times such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Rashid & McGrath, 2020).

Aspirational strengths

In their theory, Yosso (2005) defines aspirational strengths as students' deep desire to maintain hopes and dreams despite the systematic barriers that they encounter in American education. Despite the current COVID-19 pandemic and the visa requirements set by the former Trump administration to reduce the flow of international students to the U.S. (Dennis, 2017), Chinese international doctoral students have been found to use their aspirational strengths with strong motivation, commitment, and support to persist in graduate school and to flourish during challenging times (Anandavalli, 2019).

Familial strengths

According to Yosso (2005), students draw strength from their community and family (immediate, extended, and chosen). Most importantly, familial goals strongly influence Chinese international doctoral students' educational trajectory in the U.S. (Crehan, 2017). Chinese international doctoral students have been found to use familial support as a form of strength to cope with acculturative stress and depression (Hahn, 2010). In other words, even though most Chinese international doctoral students come to the host country without their family, their familial strengths support their well-being and ability to succeed. For instance, in a recent study, He and Hutson (2018) found that Chinese international doctoral students leverage their family strengths through drawing support from the unconditional commitment, including financial and emotional support their family provides them to study in the U.S. Unlike their American peers, a graduate degree for Chinese international doctoral students represents their responsibility to their community and generations of elders who sacrificed for their education (Anandavalli, 2019). In this way, connecting with friends and family from their home countries regardless of the physical distances provides Chinese international doctoral students with familial strengths.

Social strengths

Similar to familial strength, social strengths can be defined as the social networks within international graduate students' communities, friendships, interactions, and cultural ties that help them to navigate difficult situations and hardships. In their study, Anandavalli (2019) found that international students support one another in the face of barriers by sharing resources such as food, transportation, and guidance to support each other's well-being. Chinese international doctoral students share needs such as social connections with other international students and cross-cultural friendships with their American peers. Likewise, Chinese international doctoral students learn about academic expectations and independent researcher roles from their faculty mentors. For example, faculty are influential in guiding graduate international students, including sharing professional networks during conference presentations (W. Li & Collins, 2018). In this way, international students from diverse cultures can rely on their social strengths to connect with a broader social and professional network that goes beyond their American peers and faculty. This line of inquiry is consistent with literature that shows having multiple mentoring relationships with different perspectives and insights leads to the successful socialization of graduate students of color (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2020).

Navigational strengths

Building on Yosso's (2005) theory, navigational strengths can be defined as the cultural strengths that help international graduate students to successfully navigate social disadvantages. Compared to their White counterparts, Chinese international doctoral students must rely on their navigational strengths to navigate social and academic disadvantages such as mistreatment, racism, and discrimination (Bista & Foster, 2011; Lee & Rice, 2007). Chinese international doctoral students currently enrolled in the U.S. have been able to navigate and overcome challenges so that they can persist in American institutions. An important reason is that their navigational strengths help them overcome challenges in

reaching their professional goals and intrinsic motivations (Griner & Sobol, 2014). Therefore, by embracing the strengths that students bring and develop throughout their graduate school socialization process, institutions can create a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment, ultimately empowering international students to be successful.

Resistance strengths

From the strength-based perspective, resistance strengths refer to challenging the status quo, inequality, and systemic barriers through effective coping mechanisms (knowledge and skills) that minimize emotional distractions (Yosso, 2005). For instance, recent news reported that a Duke University professor demanded that Chinese international students stop speaking Chinese on campus and threatened them with the loss of future internship opportunities (Mervosh, 2019; Wang, 2019). This is an unfortunate example of international graduate students' experience; however, the silver lining is that several students relied on their peer network and resistance strengths to hold Duke University accountable for discriminatory practices. Though Duke University apologized, and the faculty member stepped down from her director role of graduate students, that alone did not make the problem go away. This and many other incidents are specific examples of a more widespread problem that includes many acts of xenophobia, hate crimes, violence, and racism against Chinese international doctoral students, that altogether have revealed deeply engrained structural racism and created a national urgency.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology section includes the narrative inquiry approach to this study, positionality, population, sample and sampling procedures, data collection, analytical strategies, as well as ways to ensure authenticity, trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

NARRATIVE INQUIRY APPROACH TO THIS STUDY

Major and Savin-Baden (2013) argued that key characteristics of narrative inquiry include: (1) focus on individual experiences (whose voices might not otherwise be heard); (2) collect individual stories (context, characters, plot, place, turning points, and resolutions); and (3) retell the individual's story in chronological order.

Moreover, narratives are about people who act in space, time, and across a sequence of events (Major & Savin-Baden, 2013). Narrative inquiry uses three commonplaces – temporality, sociality, and place (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). As shown in Figure 1, temporality refers to past, present, and future experiences. Sociality refers to the personal conditions and social conditions/milieu (cultural, social, institutional, and linguistic narratives). Place refers to the geographical context or sense of place. In terms of temporality, Chinese international doctoral students experienced the COVID-19 pandemic and an anti-Chinese American administration. What does it mean, then, for Chinese international doctoral students to study in America at a time when leading politicians disparaged China and blamed China for the coronavirus? In terms of sociality, what does it mean to be so far away from their families and friends, able to interact only with a few other Chinese? In terms of place, what does it mean to be in a relatively small and isolated city in a rural U.S. state, so different from relatively crowded Chinese cities? Also, this space might be especially challenging for students who are not outdoors-oriented people, since so much of the local relationship to space is equated with outdoor recreation.
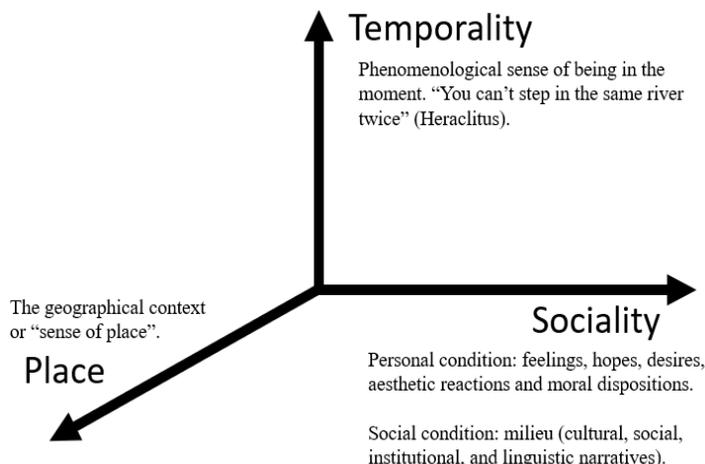
Figure 1. Narrative inquiry commonplaces

I used narrative inquiry to study Chinese international doctoral students' socialization experiences while retaining their authentic voices. Narrative inquiry allows for a more nuanced understanding of the experiences of Chinese international doctoral students compared to perceptions imposed by other stakeholders (L. Ye & Edwards, 2017). I applied the three-dimensional approach (Clandinin & Huber, 2010) to retell participants' stories throughout their doctorate journey. The three-dimensional approach is more holistic and provides a broad lens to learn about the interactions, past, present, and future experiences of individuals through time and space (Munday, 2019; Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002).

The appendix includes the interview protocol in both English and Mandarin Chinese. In other words, the interview questions in Chinese were translated from English. Moreover, I assigned aliases to the participants to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. I organized the findings into vignettes developed from the narratives. These narratives were collected from conversational interviews in Mandarin Chinese with the three individuals. After each interview, I translated the Chinese interview data into English.

POSITIONALITY: FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Positionality is defined as how our worldviews, identities, and philosophical assumptions interact with our research agenda and the broader social and political context (Holmes, 2020; Major & Savin-Baden, 2013). According to Mertens and Wilson (2019), our philosophical assumptions include axiology (ethics), ontology (reality), epistemology (knowledge), and methodology (systematic inquiry). I relied on a constructivist (social constructionism) paradigm to frame my research on the construction of a shared meaning-making process between me (the researcher) and participants. Social constructionism is an interpretive paradigm that emphasizes that reality is created collectively and knowledge is co-constructed through multiple values and perspectives (Given, 2008).

Moreover, positionality represents a space where objectivism and subjectivism meet (Bourke, 2014). On the one hand, as a Chinese cultural insider, my values bring certain strengths to the study and provide a unique perspective. For instance, there are advantages to my inherent experiences that provide greater insight into the phenomenon, such as my deep understanding of the Chinese language and culture. On the other hand, as an immigrant in American culture, I strive to balance the cross-cultural differences by creating a new sense of identity as a Chinese American woman. Throughout the research process, I am aware that my positionality will not only reflect how I engage with participants, but also guide my decisions for my research approach, data collection, and data analysis techniques.

POPULATION, SAMPLE, AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

First, I selected participants from Mainland China who met the selection criteria. The selection criteria excluded international exchange students, postdoctoral scholars, or exchange scholars who are not obtaining a PhD degree. Second, I conducted conversational in-depth interviews with Chinese international doctoral students. The land grant university, located in a rural area in the northwest U.S., had only four Chinese international doctoral students as of Fall 2019. Participants were mainland Chinese students who are pursuing a doctoral degree in various disciplines. The lack of Chinese peers may make it especially important to understand their strengths in a context with limited cultural support. A university with limited Chinese peers, faculty, and community support creates navigational challenges for Chinese international doctoral students. This experience is quite different from Chinese international doctoral students at Cornell University or U.C. Berkeley or other urban institutions with a large Chinese international doctoral student community. This study did not include the one Taiwanese doctoral student due to political, cultural, and language differences. Third, I selected the research site because of the university's land-grant mission to support students from diverse populations.

I recruited participants using a combination of sampling techniques: convenience, purposive, and snowball sampling. Convenience sampling was used because of the ease of access to participants (Vanderstoep & Johnson, 2008). A purposive sampling strategy was used because this study only included Chinese international students who are obtaining a doctoral degree and they experience the three phases as described in Gardner's (2009) doctoral student identity development framework. Also, I used the snowball technique because participants are recruited through referrals by people who have access to potential participants or by participants who are already taking part in the research (Whitley & Kite, 2012). Table 1 shows the sociodemographic characteristics of the study sample. The sample included one female Chinese international doctoral student (Yang) from the education discipline, and two students, one male (Huang) and one female (Zhou), from the engineering discipline. Participants chose Chinese last names as their aliases for anonymity in the study.

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of the study sample

NO.	PARTICIPANT PSEUDONYMS	SEX	PHASE OF DOCTORAL STUDY	PROJECTED GRADUATION	DISCIPLINE
1	Yang	F	Entry (first semester during doctoral program)	2023	Education
2	Huang	M	Candidacy (completed comprehensive exam and working on dissertation)	2022	Engineering
3	Zhou	F	Integration (completed coursework but not yet taken the comprehensive exam)	2022	Engineering

Qualitative research investigates phenomena in the context of individuals or groups (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). An important strength is that it allows me to focus on the specific group of doctoral students, considering the goal of understanding Chinese international doctoral students' experience.

DATA COLLECTION

Following Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, I conducted in-depth interviews during the Fall 2019 semester and follow-up interviews at the beginning of COVID-19 during the Spring 2020 semester with three Chinese international doctoral students to understand their doctoral socialization

experiences. The appendix details the interview protocol and table of specifications aligning my interview questions with each research question. The protocol was developed and informed by the literature, narrative approach, and positionality in three important ways. One, the protocol was organized into sections based on the goal of the questions. For example, the first set of questions established rapport and context about Chinese international doctoral students' journeys, both of which aligned with my positionality and narrative approach. The second set of questions explored how Chinese international doctoral students identify salient features of identity throughout their cross-cultural socialization journey. The third set of questions explored how Chinese international doctoral students leverage strengths and multiple identities that shape their cross-cultural socialization journey. The third set of questions also aimed to understand how students viewed their strengths in the cross-cultural socialization process. Then, I pilot tested the interview protocol with four Chinese students who were not included in this study. The pilot test determined whether the interview questions were comprehensible and able to be completed within the given timeframe (Brazill, 2016).

I provided the participants with a choice of which language to conduct the interview, and they all chose to converse in their native language - Mandarin Chinese. As a native Chinese speaker, I am also aware of the importance of building a trusting relationship with the participants and listening to their stories fully (L. L. Ye, 2018). Table 2 shows that each interview lasted approximately 2.5-3.0 hours. Follow-up interview conversations were necessary due to the narrative inquiry nature of collecting in-depth data to further understand the rich narratives (Brazill, 2021; Major & Savin-Baden, 2013). Each follow-up interview lasted 2.0-2.5 hours. The total time for these conversational interviews was approximately 15 hours. The interviews took place at the researcher's office or the participants' homes. Interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' permission.

Table 2. Narrative conversational interview

NO.	PARTICIPANT PSEUDONYMS	ORIGINAL INTERVIEW	FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW	TOTAL INTERVIEW HOURS
1	Yang	2.5	2.5	5.0
2	Huang	2.5	2	4.5
3	Zhou	3	2.5	5.5

ANALYTICAL STRATEGIES

My study relied on Nasheeda et al.'s (2019) restorying framework to transform transcripts into representations of stories for each participant. Nasheeda et al. (2019) developed a step-by-step progression for their restorying framework, which includes: (1) choosing interview participants, (2) transcribing and translating interviews, (3) familiarizing with the transcript, (4) chronologically plotting (elements of the story), (5) using follow-up interviews to collaborate with participants, and (6) developing the story through the three-dimensional narrative inquiry approach.

As a professional Chinese-English translator, I transcribed and translated the interviews from Chinese to English. Then, I identified how the rich interview excerpts/quotations reflected their multiple identities and supported individual vignettes to represent each participant's story. Each vignette emphasized how Chinese international doctoral students rely on their strengths to be successful. In methodological terms, when retelling the individual's story, I balanced these subjective and individual elements with more objective layers of abstraction and analysis drawn from the socialization literature.

AUTHENTICITY, TRUSTWORTHINESS, CREDIBILITY, TRANSFERABILITY, DEPENDABILITY, AND CONFIRMABILITY

I ensured validity and authenticity through communicating my research purpose, paradigmatic assumptions, and positionality. To improve internal and external validity, I established trustworthiness criteria (credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability) through several steps.

First, I memoed by keeping a reflexive journal and jotting reflective notes during the data collection and analysis stages. Second, to enhance credibility and internal validity, I conducted peer debriefing by inviting Chinese and American qualitative scholars to review my transcripts and codebook. Also, I triangulated data by using different data sources (multiple interviews). Additionally, I invited participants to validate the raw data and conduct member checks by providing interview transcriptions to participants for checking accuracy. I ensured prolonged engagement through building trust and investing time with participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Third, to enhance transferability and external validity, participants reviewed the accuracy of my translation from Chinese to English. Though I did not utilize a formal process of validation or inter-rater reliability, I did invite another Chinese-English translator to review my translations. Fourth, participants also confirmed my interpretation and thick descriptions of the stories validated the authenticity of the narratives (Azzahrawi, 2021). Finally, I integrated participants' feedback into the individual vignettes to make sure the narrative stories accurately represented them. Though it is hoped that this study is generalizable, specific issues of how it can be generalized to other Chinese international doctoral students in other regions of the U.S. are beyond the scope of this study.

FINDINGS

Chase (2005) provided five different approaches to analyze living stories, which include psychosocial development, identity (how people construct themselves within institutional, cultural, and discursive contexts), sociological (focus on specific aspects of people's lives), narrative ethnography (stories that define group culture), and autoethnography (self-reflection to explore personal experiences).

In my findings, I applied Chase's (2005) second approach of identity to deconstruct how participants' made sense of their stories, multiple identities, and strengths to facilitate their doctoral journey. I studied Chinese international doctoral students using narrative inquiry to focus on their unique socialization experiences and authentic voices. The participants expressed their cultural strengths and strong personal attachments to aspects of their identities and what inspired them to pursue their doctoral programs. I organized the findings as vignettes to capture Chinese international doctoral students' cross-cultural socialization journey.

YANG'S VIGNETTE

As a unifying approach, narrative methodology provided ways to understand Chinese international doctoral students' interactions with American culture, place, and context. The three-dimensional approach (Clandinin & Huber, 2010) was used to retell Yang's story as shown in Table 3. Thus, the retelling of the story was a re-representation of Yang.

Yang's narrative indicated that her multiple identities are bi-directional and interactive. For example, her personal identity interacted with the strengths that she brought on her cross-cultural socialization journey. Also, her cultural identity as a Northern Chinese interacted with her linguistic and familial strengths. These strengths (aspirational, familial, linguistic, social, navigational, and resistance) helped her cultivate a stronger social and professional identity. As Yang expressed this:

> My personal identity has changed as I have become more outgoing. Living in the U.S. and having experienced the doctoral journey in the U.S., I will interact with various people and things with more understanding and tolerance after returning home. My cultural background on the other hand is stronger because I understand both Chinese and American cultures. My

social identity will also change since I will be more open-minded, including politically, economically, and culturally. I see the world with more perspectives. The biggest change will be my professional identity because I will become an expert in my field through my PhD study.

Table 3. Retelling Yang's story: three-dimensional space (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002)

INTERACTION		CONTINUITY			SITUATION
PERSONAL/ INWARD	SOCIAL/ OUTWARD	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE	PLACE
Introverted, but occasionally did something unexpected such as being a tour guide in China. She was the person she hoped to be. She continued to reflect on her life and progress.	Her personality became more introverted or more extroverted depending on specific activities and environment. She often got together with other parents' who had young children similar to her son's age.	Her personality and family background were suitable for being a teacher, so she decided to pursue a PhD degree in education. Her mom was an educator and many relatives in her family were teachers.	She and her husband live apart as he worked in China and supported her study in the U.S. The English language was a daily hindrance to her PhD study and life in the U.S.	When she returns to China, she will have an advantage in terms of social and linguistic strengths over other Chinese peers who have not studied in the U.S.	Studying in the U.S., a small town in the Rockies, at a land grant university. Far away from family and friends in China. "Sociality" was limited since she was not able to interact with other Chinese students over tea or dinner, especially living in a place with few Chinese people and during the start of COVID 19.

During the conversational interviews, I invited Yang to describe each strength from "what was most important" to "what was least important" to her core identity and how they interact with her professional, personal, social, and cultural identities. After Yang described the importance of each of the six strengths, she shared stories behind why she ordered the strengths the way she did. These strengths symbolized what Yang perceived to help her successfully navigate her doctoral socialization journey. There are three notable and consistent strengths that remained salient throughout her educational journey, including the importance of family, personal resistance, and cultural linguistics, with family being the most central core strength for her identity. In Yang's words:

> My familial strength remains to be the most important strength before my doctoral study, during the doctoral process and will continue to be after my graduation. The main reason that I decided to study in the U.S. is because of my family and their support.

Yang's narrative revealed how the different strengths that she cultivated under different contexts were unique and added to her story as a Chinese international doctoral student.

HUANG'S VIGNETTE

I used the three-dimensional approach to retell Huang's story as shown in Table 4. This approach captured the interactions, past, present, and future experiences of individuals through time and space (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). Thus, the retelling of the story was a re-representation of Huang.

Table 4. Retelling Huang's story: three-dimensional space (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002)

INTERACTION		CONTINUITY			SITUATION
PERSONAL/ INWARD	SOCIAL/ OUTWARD	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE	PLACE
Huang described himself as an introvert, gentle, and not irritable. He was the person he wanted to be, and his PhD journey was on the right track.	His personality was shaped by growing up in Hubei, a region that tends to be laid back and accepting of diversity, given the people of different dialects and social backgrounds that settled the Yangtze River flood plain. His family also shaped his personality.	He wanted to study in the U.S. since high school. The main reason he came to the U.S. was because of his family. His family gave him the choice to study in China or abroad, and he chose the U.S.	He kept in touch with his family and friends in China through WeChat video calls. They talked a lot about his daughter since his parents do not understand his research and PhD study.	When he returns to China, he will become more independent and will bring his knowledge back to China. He will have a stronger professional identity after returning to China because of his training gained in the U.S.	Huang shared that there were only a few Chinese international students here. Also, the space of being in a relatively small and isolated town in a remote U.S. state. The space was especially limiting since he was not an outdoors-oriented person and much of the social space is equated with nature.

Huang's personal and cultural identities interacted with the kinds of strengths that he brought on his cross-cultural socialization journey. For example, his personal identity was shaped by growing up in Hubei:

> Hubei people tend to be more laid back and understanding of people who have different dialects, due to the Yangtze River flooding and migration. During ancient times flooding created fertile farmlands which attracted people from surrounding areas to grow food, although many people would perish. Migration, catastrophic disasters, and the natural barrier of the river resulted in many dialects and social identities.

Huang's familial strength enabled the development of his professional identity to grow into an expert scientist. Huang explained that:

> The main reason I came to the U.S. was because of my family. My family provided me the choice to study in China or abroad, I chose the U.S. The most important factor is my family. I came here to start my undergraduate study. Without the support of my

family, I wouldn't be able to pay for tuition. Only when my family gave me the option could I choose to study in the U.S.

Familial strength was represented by the financial support from his family in China and the U.S. Along the same lines, Huang's social strength helped him cultivate a stronger social identity. For example, Huang's advice for new Chinese international doctoral students was to be "self-motivated learners, communicate regularly with their advisors, and try to find housing as soon as possible due to the shortage". Huang's suggestions aligned well with the practical aspects of his personal identity.

Huang's strengths (aspirational, familial, linguistic, social, navigational, and resistance) intersected with his personal, social, cultural, and professional identities before, during, and after the PhD. During our conversation, Huang described the strengths that he brought with him and cultivated during the PhD as well as the strengths he would value after the PhD. These strengths symbolized the assets that Huang identified as most salient for him to successfully navigate his cross-cultural socialization journey in three ways.

First, reflecting on the time before the PhD, Huang's aspirational and navigational strengths were vital and drove him to his pursuit of a doctoral degree in the U.S. In terms of linguistic strengths, he strived to improve his English skills, which he relied on to be successful in his career as a scientist. Moreover, Huang drew social strength from his interactions with friends in China. Although Huang's Chinese friends were now far away, he stayed connected socially by communicating through different spaces, time zones, and such social distances. As Huang said, "the Chinese social media app (WeChat) has made it possible for me to communicate with all my friends in China through video calls, voice memos, and instant messages."

Second, during the PhD process, Huang indicated that his familial strength became more salient because he became a parent of a little girl. His resistance strength also became more prevalent. As Huang described it, "I cultivated resistance strength throughout my PhD journey due to the psychological pressures and struggles navigating multiple identities."

Third, picturing Huang's life after his PhD, he thought his familial strength would continue to be the most important strength because of the time spent with his family and priority as a father. Huang explained, "I prioritize my family and want to be present for them because of my cultural identity as a Chinese person."

ZHOU'S VIGNETTE

I used the three-dimensional approach (Clandinin & Huber, 2010), as shown in Table 5, to retell Zhou's story. This approach was more holistic and provided a broad lens to learn about the interactions, past, present, and future experiences of individuals through time and space (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). Thus, the retelling of the story was a re-representation of Zhou.

During the conversational interviews, Zhou identified each cultural strength in what was least to most important to her core identity and how they interact with her professional, personal, social, and cultural identities. The rank of each strength before, during, and after her PhD was suitable to retell Zhou's journey through her engineering studies.

Zhou's aspirational and navigational strengths that she brought with her and developed on her cross-cultural socialization journey interacted with her personal and cultural identities and were most important to her core. For example, she had a sense of fate "yuán fèn 缘分" and she long aspired to weave Chinese and Western cultures and education systems together. She explained that:

My experience in the U.S. may broaden my life orientation and dreams. For example, I often take a broad view of Europe and America in my future study and life, not just China and the U.S. I have the capability to communicate with people from all over the world.

Table 5. Retelling Zhou's story: three-dimensional space (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002)

INTERACTION		CONTINUITY			SITUATION
PERSONAL/ INWARD	SOCIAL/ OUTWARD	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE	PLACE
Her best friend passed away in middle school (she cries while telling this) which made her an independent person and more introverted due to this experience. Her dad worked in a different city and left her home alone with her mom.	In the lab, she worked with two other Chinese friends who are now postdoctoral scholars at the same institution where she is pursuing her doctoral degree.	After her undergraduate education in China, she came to study in the U.S. because as a Lab Technician she got to know her PhD advisor in China. She wanted to study in the U.S. because of academic freedom.	She chose to continue her PhD in the U.S. because of her desire to be a U.S. trained scientist upon returning to China. To achieve her dreams, she worked very hard in her academic research and PhD coursework.	U.S. science education is highly regarded and respected in China, which will provide Zhou an advantage in her career in China. After her PhD, she would like to do a postdoc, become a professor, or be a researcher/scientist.	She enjoyed hiking on "The M" mountain, skiing, and attending rodeos with her American friends. These outdoor activities created a sense of belonging to the place, especially given the high value placed on outdoor recreation.

Regarding her navigational strengths, Zhou shared concerns about the high cost of living in the U.S., including parking permits, housing, insurance, and food. Money was a huge concern since she depended upon her meager GRA salary. Despite these challenges, her navigational strength helped her successfully navigate the process. Zhou's advice for new Chinese international doctoral students was to "develop their research interests, learn how to navigate the new culture and environment, and never give up".

In terms of her social and professional identities, Zhou wished there was more gender diversity in her lab and indicated that writing, reading, and mentoring support are vital in her doctoral journey. Worth noting is that Zhou's strong professional identity as an engineer interacted with her aspirational, resistance, and linguistic strengths. As Zhou expressed it, "my social identity intersects with my linguistic strength as mastering English has helped me cultivate social relationships with my American peers and professors".

DISCUSSION

My purpose in this narrative inquiry was to learn how Chinese international doctoral students leverage their identities as strengths in their cross-cultural socialization journey. The findings answered the research questions twofold. First, Chinese international doctoral students described the way their multiple identities – including personal, social, cultural, and professional identities – shape their social interactions with peers, faculty, and the institution. Second, the common themes that emerged from the findings highlight how Chinese international doctoral students express their strengths in their

cross-cultural socialization experiences. For instance, the three Chinese international doctoral students all found that their aspirational strength was vital for their cross-cultural socialization journey. In addition, familial strengths (family members) served as supporters and mentors for Chinese international doctoral students because of the deep connection and trust built through shared experiences. Moreover, social strengths were reflected in Chinese international doctoral students' interactions with both white and non-white faculty, peers, and friends.

Notably, the findings suggested that linguistic strengths were an important way for fostering Chinese international doctoral students' multiple identities and to empower their strengths in American higher education. Thus, students should be encouraged to communicate in their own language while also practicing and using English. One specific recommendation is for mentors to understand how being bilingual or multilingual can be an asset to other students and the field.

Potential xenophobia, hostilities because of American trade policies, Presidential remarks, and the COVID-19 pandemic have contributed to prejudice and racism against Chinese international students (Brownell, 2020; Xu et al., 2021). Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, former President Trump accused Chinese students in the U.S. of being spies (Redden, 2018) and his administration accused Chinese students of stealing U.S. intellectual property (Voice of America, 2019). Culturally attuned language choice is vital to support Chinese international doctoral students (Brazill, 2021). Likewise, it is problematic that Asian students are often viewed as a homogeneous group, and much prior research has emphasized the traditional deficit perspective in explaining how Chinese students must adjust and assimilate to the university environment (Minero, 2020). Findings from this study shift the narrative from the deficit view to a strength-based perspective as to how Chinese international doctoral students can rely on their cultural values and identities as strengths to be successful academically, socially, and emotionally (Brazill, 2021).

Since the completion of this study, the linguistic issues and related issues of racism and prejudice were exacerbated by former President Trump's rhetoric about COVID-19 as the "Chinese Virus" (Chiu, 2020), and executive leadership actions may have increased anti-Asian hate crimes (Gover et al., 2020). To address this and similar challenges, another important aspect of my study was Chinese international doctoral students' navigational and resistance strengths. On the one hand, Chinese students could rely on their strengths to navigate current affairs and lived experiences, such as the post-study issues related to the COVID19 pandemic and increased prejudice and racism. On the other hand, faculty and peer mentors can also support Chinese international doctoral students' navigational and resistance strengths by having meaningful culturally attuned conversations. These conversations could include: (1) how will Chinese international doctoral students use their degrees back in their home country? (2) what will it mean for Chinese international doctoral students returning to homeland China? and (3) what opportunities or challenges do Chinese international doctoral students foresee and how can they address them now?

Findings related to the literature in two important ways. First, the findings supported how the six cultural strengths (aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistance) of Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth apply to Chinese international doctoral students. Chinese students' stories aligned with these strengths and through these strengths they explore and develop their personal, social, cultural, and professional identities. Second, Chinese students' stories as a counternarrative challenged and contradicted the essentialist view and misconception that Chinese students are a homogenous group personally, socially, culturally, or academically. The narrative retellings were unique for each individual, further emphasizing that Chinese international doctoral students are not a homogenous group. No two individual Chinese students are the same, and the monolithic and deficit approach to view all Chinese students as one single narrative is no longer acceptable.

Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth aligned with my analysis of Chinese international doctoral students in terms of the importance of looking at these individuals' six cultural strengths and the

positive interaction with their multiple identities. However, one limitation in this framework for understanding Chinese international doctoral students is that there may be an additional strength (perhaps "transitional strength") needed for Chinese international doctoral students before, during, and after the PhD programs.

LIMITATIONS

Some limitations of the study are that it was conducted by a single researcher, the sample size was small, and the sample came from a single university. However, narrative inquiry is typically used for small groups and even for a single participant (Chan, 2009; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell & Poth, 2018). A related limitation is that, like any narrowly focused qualitative study, it can have low generalizability.

FUTURE RESEARCH

For future research, the generalizability should be tested against larger sample sizes at more American universities. Additionally, gender and other demographic variables could be explored. Also, it would be important to address specific issues in my findings regarding the identities of Chinese international doctoral students. These identity issues might include the relative ranking of the doctoral students' Chinese undergraduate universities, the geographical location of those universities within the large and regionally complex nation that is China, and the affiliation of students with any of China's 55 officially recognized ethnic minorities.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, this study explored a strength-based socialization perspective for how Chinese international doctoral students engage in cross-cultural socialization. The strength-based perspective included constructs such as multiple identities and strengths of Chinese international doctoral students' cross-cultural experience.

This narrative inquiry contributes to the field of international doctoral students in three unique ways. First, it explores a strength-based understanding for how Chinese international doctoral students use their cultural strengths and how these strengths intersect with their multiple identities. Second, linguistic strengths are particularly important for Chinese international doctoral students' success in their cross-cultural socialization journey. Therefore, students should be encouraged to communicate in their own language while also practicing and using English in developing their professional identity. Furthermore, a vital recommendation is for mentors or faculty to understand how being bilingual or multilingual can be an asset to other students and the field. For example, the Chinese language is a strength that supports Chinese students' personal, social, cultural, and professional identity development in the cross-socialization process. These bilingual students can access resources such as Chinese literature that provide them with broader content and multi-cultural perspectives. Third, navigational strength also fosters Chinese international students' cross-cultural socialization. Faculty and administrators are especially important agents to support students' navigation before, during, and after their doctoral journey. This navigational support could result in significant gains for retention, the social well-being of Chinese international doctoral students, and future recruitment.

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APPENDIX: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (访谈问题大纲**)**

Rapport Building with Chinese International Doctoral Students	Interview Question Part I
	• Questions about family and social background.
	询问关于参与者的家庭和社会背景信息。
	• Questions about choice of doctoral degree in the U.S. and general experience.
	询问关于参与者在美国攻读博士学位的基本情况和历程。
Research Question 1 What do Chinese international doctoral students identify as most salient to who they are throughout their cross-cultural socialization journey?	**Interview Question Part II** • **Personal Identity:** Can you share stories of how you grew up and formed your personal identity (e.g., stories about childhood, schooling, or things you remember, etc.)? 能否分享一下有关你个人成长和对你性格形成有影响的故事？（例如，童年、上学或你记忆深刻的事情） • **Personal Identity:** Please describe yourself. Who are you as a person now? How do you think you became who you are now? Are you the person you want to be? 请描述一下你自己。你认为你现在成为了什么样的人？你是如何成为现在的你的？现在的你是你所期望成为的样子吗？ • **Professional Identity:** Can you please share the most important reason that you wanted to do your PhD in the U.S.? Why not China or another country? When did you first begin thinking about studying in the U.S.? 能否阐述一下你选择在美国攻读博士学位的最重要原因？为什么不选择在中国或其他国家就读？你最开始是什么时候打算来美国学习的？ • **Professional Identity:** Have you completed your doctoral courses, comprehensive exam, or dissertation? 你是否完成了博士课程、或者综合考试或者论文？ • **Professional Identity:** What are your career plans for after your PhD? 博士毕业后你的职业规划是什么？ • **Cultural Identity:** What role does Chinese culture play in your doctoral experience? 中国文化在你的博士攻读经历中起到什么作用？ • **Social Identity:** How is your relationship with your family and friends in China during your PhD in the U.S.? Do you keep in touch with them often? Have you noticed any changes in your Chinese relationships? If so, tell me more about that. 在美国攻读博士学位期间，你与中国的家人和朋友之间的关系保持得如何？经常与他们联系吗？来美国以后，你与

	中国的家人或朋友的关系发生了什么变化吗？如果发生了变化，请说明。
Research Question 2 How do Chinese international doctoral students describe the way they leverage their strengths and multiple identities in shaping their cross-cultural socialization journey?	**Interview Question Part III** • What or who motivates you to pursue your doctoral program? 什么原因或者是谁促使你攻读博士学位？ • How much do your faculty and peers know about Chinese culture and language? 你的教授和同学对中国文化和语言了解多少？ • Can you describe each strength (linguistic, aspirational, familial, social, navigational, and resistance) from "what was most important" to "what was least important" to your core identity and how they interact with your personal, social, cultural, and professional identities? 请描述以下文化因素对你在美国读博士的有利程度，从最重要到最不重要？（你能掌握不同语言、你的抱负、你的家庭关系、你的社会关系、你的人生导向、以及你克服困难的斗志）？这些因素如何与你的个人身份、社会身份、文化身份以及博士身份相互影响？ • What do you think you will bring back to China from your American experiences? Do you feel as if your American experience might have changed you in any way? What might be different for you in China when you go back? 回到中国时，你认为你在美国的就读经历能给你带来什么？是否觉得在美国的经历在某些方面可能改变了自己？回到中国后你可能会产生哪些不同之处？ **Closing Remarks** • What advice would you give to a new Chinese international doctoral student? 你会给新来的中国博士留学生什么建议？ • Is there anything else related to your doctoral experience that you would like to tell me about? 关于你的博士经历，你还有什么要补充的吗？

AUTHOR

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