

Education Management Model to Enhance Cross-Border Employability Skills of Chinese Students in Thailand

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Abstract

This study aims to (1) examine employability skills and educational management components to develop an education management model for Chinese students in Thailand and (2) develop and validate a modular educational management model to improve cross-border employability skills for Chinese students in Thailand. An integrated mixed methods research design was employed. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires administered to 322 fourth-year Chinese undergraduate students from five Thai higher education institutions and analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with 30 Chinese executives and employees from five Thai-Chinese companies, together with 25 university administrators and lecturers, and analyzed using content analysis. The results indicated that the proposed models demonstrated a good fit with the empirical data. The employability skills model, consisting of 10 components, yielded a chi-square statistic of 23.079 ($df=15$, $p=0.0825$, $CFI=0.998$, $TLI=0.993$, $RMSEA=0.012$, $SRMR=0.041$), while the educational management model, comprising 11 components, showed a chi-square value of 28.423 ($df=25$, $p=0.2888$, $CFI=0.999$, $TLI=0.998$, $RMSEA=0.012$, $SRMR=0.021$). Overall goodness-of-fit indices met acceptable criteria and were consistent with the qualitative findings. Following the integration and joint interpretation of quantitative and qualitative results, a preliminary model was developed and subsequently validated by a panel of five experts. The refined model, termed the IDEALIST Model, consists of 20 training modules designed to enhance learners' cross-border employability

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competencies, along with eight integrated educational management strategies. These strategies encompass learning environment design, instructional management, assessment, faculty development, resource allocation, and collaboration with industry.

Keywords

Modular educational management, Cross-border employability skills, IDEALIST Model, Chinese students

Introduction

In the era of globalization, cross-border mobility in education and employment has continued to grow (Knight, 2005, 2-3) This trend is particularly evident in Thailand–China cooperation, where rising Chinese investment has supported the expansion of sectors such as the digital economy, manufacturing, construction, and tourism (Xiao, 2024).

The number of Chinese students studying in higher education in Thailand increased from 4,543 in 2014 to 22,550 in 2024, representing about 46% of all international students in Thailand (Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI, 2022). This growth reflects stronger competition in China, lower education costs in Thailand, and close bilateral ties. Many students are also attracted by opportunities for international experience, cultural exposure, and language development (Nukitragan & Chantrapaha, 2021; Siricharoen, 2023).

However, many Chinese students still face challenges in learning Thai, adapting to local culture, and using academic English effectively (Zheng et al., 2025; Liu, 2024). These difficulties reveal an employability gap, particularly in communication and adaptation to cross-cultural professional environments (Lan et al., 2022). Recent studies confirm that international students continue to encounter barriers in career readiness, workplace integration, and confidence development, highlighting the need for stronger institutional support (Xu et al., 2025, 119-138). In addition, communication competence and the ability to navigate host labor markets remain key factors shaping employability outcomes (Pham, 2021, 733-749). These findings suggest that employability development remains an urgent issue for higher education institutions.

To address these issues, Thai higher education institutions need to place greater emphasis on improving the employability and adaptability of Chinese students in cross-cultural professional settings, as employability has become a key responsibility of universities

(Yorke, 2006). This requires not only skill development, but also educational models that integrate curriculum design, staff capacity building, student engagement, and effective use of institutional resources. In addition, collaboration with industry is essential to strengthen experiential learning and graduate employability (Jackson, 2016, 925-939).

Compared with traditional program-based approaches, a modular educational management framework offers a more effective structure for meeting these needs. It organizes employability competencies into progressive learning units that support cross-cultural communication, adaptability, and workplace readiness. This approach is supported by constructivist learning theory, competency-based education, and adult learning theory (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Mulder, 2014; Knowles et al., 2015).

The literature suggests that although graduate employability has received growing attention in Thai higher education, existing practices remain largely program-based and fragmented, with no clearly defined modular educational management model for the systematic development of cross-border employability skills (Yorke, 2006; Jackson, 2016; OECD, 2020). Recent initiatives such as Cooperative and Work-Integrated Education (CWIE) and micro-credentials show increasing policy interest in skills-based learning, but these efforts have not yet been integrated into a coherent framework for international students in Thailand (MHESI, 2022; British Council, 2022a).

Despite these positive developments, a significant gap remains. Studies in Thailand have mainly focused on general employability, internships, language skills, or curriculum improvement. Limited attention has been given to the systematic development of cross-border employability skills among international students, especially Chinese students, the largest international student group in Thailand. Moreover, an empirically grounded modular educational management model is still lacking.

In response to this gap, the present study develops a modular educational management model to enhance the cross-border employability of Chinese students in Thailand. The model is intended to improve student readiness while providing Thai-Chinese enterprises with a practical framework for recruitment and staff development.

Objectives

This research aims to:

1. To examine employability skills and educational management components to develop education management model for Chinese students in Thailand.
2. To develop and validate a modular educational management model to improve cross-border employability skills for Chinese students in Thailand.

Literature Review

1. Cross-Border

Knight (2005, 2-3) defined cross-border as activities involving the movement of people, programs, and services across national boundaries. Prior research has associated the concept of cross-border with areas such as international trade, e-commerce, logistics, and other forms of transnational cooperation. In the present study, the term is applied to employment contexts, particularly Thai-Chinese organizations that require interaction and collaboration among individuals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Accordingly, cross-border employability refers to the interpersonal, communication, adaptive, and professional skills that enable graduates to obtain and perform work effectively in such environments (Gundling, 2007, 29-42).

Research on cross-border work in Southeast Asia shows that it involves more than labor mobility, with language, cultural norms, and workplace practices playing key roles. ASEAN evidence suggests that mobility experiences can improve graduates' adaptability, intercultural communication, and job opportunities (Lim et al., 2022). Studies also show that differences in communication styles, hierarchy, and cultural expectations between Chinese and Thai employees may affect workplace interaction and integration (Hofstede, 2011; Peltokorpi & Froese, 2014). Language barriers and adaptation to local workplace culture are also common challenges (Selmer & Luring, 2015; Liu & Almor, 2016).

2. Employability Skills

Hillage and Pollard (1998) conceptualize employability as an integrated construct that enables individuals to obtain, retain, and move across labor markets. This frames employability as a continuous form of competitiveness throughout career development (Bao & Wan, 2025). Agrawal and Dasgupta (2018, 85-90) further argue that employability includes professional

knowledge, technical expertise, and soft skills that support both job entry and workplace performance, especially in contexts requiring transferable and adaptable skills.

Based on this literature, the present study identifies ten core competencies for professional practice and cross-border employability: management and leadership skills, language and communication abilities, technological skills, adaptability, critical and cognitive thinking, sales skills, operational skills, collaboration skills, global outlook, and emotional regulation. Together, these competencies form the multidimensional profile required for success in international and cross-cultural labor markets (HREX.asia, 2022; UMASS Amherst College of Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2024; Reynolds, 2017; Gundling, 2007; Zhang, 2016).

The literature also shows that digital transformation and the COVID-19 pandemic have reshaped labor market skill demands. Recent ASEAN studies continue to report employability gaps related to digital readiness, communication skills, and industry alignment. Evidence from Southeast Asian higher education institutions indicates that stronger university–industry collaboration and internationalization are positively associated with graduate employability outcomes (Aviso et al., 2021; Cheng et al., 2022). Existing studies increasingly emphasize that employability extends beyond disciplinary knowledge to include digital competence, adaptability, cross-cultural communication, and the ability to work effectively in diverse and cross-border environments (Yorke, 2006; Jackson, 2016; OECD, 2020a). In multicultural and international work settings, transferable and intercultural skills are increasingly important for graduate employability and sustainable career development (Holmes, 2013; Selmer & Lauring, 2015).

3. Education Management

Education management is commonly understood as a systematic process comprising four main functions: planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling. Planning involves setting objectives, allocating resources, and developing implementation strategies. Organizing focuses on effective structures, clear responsibilities, and balanced resource allocation. Motivation refers to guiding individuals and groups toward educational goals. Controlling involves monitoring performance, conducting evaluations, and using feedback to improve educational quality and efficiency (Nurhikmah, 2024, 82-91).

Tharasisuthi and Towanabut (1999) further emphasized that education management should support students in developing skills, knowledge, attitudes, morals, and behaviors

aligned with social needs. They identified four key management resources, commonly known as the 4Ms: Man, Money, Materials, and Management.

The design of employability-oriented curricula has also been linked to learning theories that emphasize active and student-centered learning. Constructivist learning theory highlights learners' active role in building knowledge through experience, while experiential learning theory stresses real-world engagement and reflective practice as important mechanisms for developing professional and employability-related skills (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Kolb, 1984). In addition, recent educational management literature highlights the use of digital technologies and flexible learning approaches to support modular, personalized, and lifelong learning pathways that respond to changing student and labor market needs (OECD, 2020b; Bates, 2019).

4. Training Module Development

According to Mulder (2012), training modules should be designed to develop specific competencies aligned with expected standards. Effective module design requires clear learning outcomes, appropriate resources, teaching strategies, and suitable assessment methods that respond to learner needs and changing contexts (Donnelly & Fitzmaurice, 2005).

The development of training modules generally involves several stages, including identifying skill gaps, defining learning outcomes, selecting suitable formats, conducting expert review, pilot testing, revising the module, and finalizing it for implementation (Colman, 2024).

The literature on modular training emphasizes flexible, competency-based learning units that support progressive skill development and responsiveness to labor market needs. In higher education, modular approaches have been associated with learner flexibility, skills-oriented curricula, and lifelong learning pathways. In Thailand, recent initiatives such as Cooperative and Work-Integrated Education (CWIE), micro-credentials, and credit accumulation systems reflect growing interest in modular learning structures (OECD, 2020; MHESI, 2022; British Council, 2022a). Similar developments are also evident across ASEAN universities (British Council, 2022b; UNESCO, 2023).

Despite growing attention to employability, student mobility, and flexible learning, these issues have often been studied separately. Limited research has integrated cross-border employability skills, educational management, and modular learning design for Chinese students in Thailand. Moreover, no empirically validated model has clearly linked curriculum

design, institutional support, industry collaboration, and progressive skill development within one framework. This study addresses that gap.

Research Methodology

Population and Sample Group

The population comprised four groups: (1) Chinese executives and employees working in Thai–Chinese companies, (2) Thai university executives and lecturers responsible for Chinese students, (3) fourth-year Chinese undergraduate students enrolled in Thai higher education institutions, and (4) experts in educational management and cross-border employability in Thailand.

A purposive multi-stage sampling approach was used to recruit participants directly involved in cross-border education or employment contexts. In the first stage, Thai–Chinese companies and Thai higher education institutions were selected based on active cross-border engagement and high Chinese student enrollment. In the second stage, eligible participants were identified and invited to participate.

For the enterprise group, 15 Chinese executives and 15 Chinese employees were selected from five Thai–Chinese companies in Bangkok and Rayong ($n = 30$). For the higher education group, 10 university executives and 15 lecturers were selected from five Thai higher education institutions with the highest Chinese student enrollment in 2022. In addition, 322 fourth-year Chinese undergraduate students were surveyed, with valid responses retained for analysis. The student sample size exceeded recommended thresholds for confirmatory factor analysis (Hair et al., 2019).

For model validation, five experts were purposively selected, including two specialists in higher education management in Thailand and three specialists in cross-border employability in the Thai context.

Research Instruments

Multiple instruments were used, including semi-structured interview forms, a structured questionnaire, and expert assessment forms. All instruments were developed from the literature and study framework, and content validity was confirmed by experts through acceptable Item–Objective Congruence (IOC) values.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Chinese executives and employees in Thai–Chinese companies, as well as Thai university executives and lecturers responsible for

Chinese students, focusing on employability skills, workplace requirements, curriculum relevance, and educational management practices.

A structured questionnaire was administered to fourth-year Chinese undergraduate students in Thai higher education institutions. It covered demographic information, employability skills, and perceptions of educational management practices using a five-point Likert scale. Pilot testing showed acceptable reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.70$), and construct validity was examined through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

Expert assessment forms were used for model validation, with specialists evaluating the proposed model in terms of appropriateness, clarity, feasibility, and applicability.

Data Collection

Data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Prior to data collection, relevant literature and curricula from five selected Thai universities were reviewed to support the development of the questionnaire and interview protocols.

Quantitative data were gathered through an online questionnaire administered to fourth-year Chinese undergraduate students from the five participating institutions. Distributed via Google Forms and Sojump during the second semester, the survey yielded 322 valid responses from 350 distributed questionnaires.

Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with Chinese executives and employees from five Thai-Chinese companies, as well as university administrators and lecturers from the participating universities. The interviews explored employability skill requirements and educational management practices. Each interview lasted approximately 45–60 minutes and was conducted over a three-month period.

Data Analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed in line with the research objectives.

Qualitative data from documents and interview transcripts were analyzed using content analysis. A systematic coding process was used to identify meaningful units, develop thematic categories, and generate higher-order themes related to cross-border employability skills and educational management strategies. To enhance trustworthiness, coding and thematic interpretations were reviewed by experts.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics summarized respondent characteristics, while independent samples t-tests, F-tests,

and one-way ANOVA were used to examine group differences in employability skills and educational management components.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to validate the measurement model of educational management components. Model fit was assessed using multiple indices, including χ^2 , CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR, based on commonly accepted criteria.

Ethical Considerations

This study received ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee of Chulalongkorn University (Approval No. 371/67). All participants were recruited voluntarily. Prior to data collection, they were informed of the objectives of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before questionnaire completion or interviews. All responses were treated confidentially and anonymized for research purposes.

Research Results

To improve clarity and conciseness, the results are reported at the construct level, focusing on findings that inform the proposed educational management model. Item-level statistics were examined during confirmatory factor analysis but are not presented in the main text due to space constraints. The Results section presents qualitative findings, quantitative results, and their integration to support model development.

1. Qualitative Findings on Cross-Border Employability and Educational Management

A total of 55 participants were involved in the qualitative interviews, drawn from four stakeholder groups. These included 15 senior managers from five Thai-Chinese cooperative companies in Bangkok and Rayong, each with at least three years of managerial experience; 15 Chinese employees from the same companies with a minimum of one year of work experience; 10 university-level administrators (at institutional, faculty, or departmental levels) from five higher education institutions with large Chinese student populations, each having at least three years of experience managing Chinese students; and 15 university lecturers who teach Chinese students, each with at least three years of teaching experience. This multi-stakeholder composition ensured diverse and balanced perspectives on cross-border employability skills development.

1.1 Employer Perspectives on Cross-Border Employability Skills

Qualitative findings from interviews with Chinese executives and employees in Thai-Chinese companies indicate that cross-border employability requires a multidimensional combination of linguistic, professional, cognitive, and personal competencies. Key employability themes identified include language and cross-cultural communication skills, industry-specific and professional knowledge (e.g., BOI-related and market-oriented skills), cross-cultural adaptability, analytical and problem-solving abilities, management and teamwork skills, digital and sales-related competencies, and a global mindset supported by strong personal and social attributes. In the terms of educational management perspective, executives and employees also highlighted the need for curriculum approaches that integrate theory with practice, advocating for increased enterprise-based learning opportunities and systematic capacity building for teaching staff, in order to better align instructional delivery with labor market expectations.

1.2 Institutional Perspectives on Educational Management for Cross-Border Employability

Interviews with university executives and lecturers reveal structural challenges in educational management, including curriculum–labor market misalignment, insufficient language preparation and cultural integration, and limitations in teaching capacity and assessment practices.

To address these challenges, participants outlined a clear educational management pathway emphasizing the realignment of curriculum design with cross-border labor market needs, the integration of experiential and work-based learning through industry–university collaboration, and the enhancement of faculty capacity through flexible and technology-enhanced teaching approaches. Participants further highlighted the role of systematic institutional support mechanisms in sustaining employability development beyond the classroom.

2. Quantitative Findings on Employability Skills and Educational Management Components

2.1 Respondent Profile

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1. A total of 322 fourth-year Chinese undergraduate students participated in the survey. Most respondents were male (63.0%), and the largest proportion came from A University (43.5%),

followed by B University (23.6%) and C University (18.3%). Nearly half of the students were enrolled in Chinese language programs (49.1%), while most respondents were from business and accounting disciplines (63.7%).

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Chinese Student Respondents (n = 322)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	203	63.0
	Female	119	37.0
Institution	A University	140	43.5
	B University	76	23.6
	C University	59	18.3
	D University	36	11.2
	E University	11	3.4
Program Type	Thai Language Program	11	3.4
	Chinese Language Program	158	49.1
	International Program	81	25.2
	Chinese–English Bilingual Program	72	22.4
Field of Study	Business and Accounting	205	63.7
	Humanities	41	12.7
	Liberal Arts	35	10.9
	Education	16	5.0
	Science and Technology	25	7.8

2.2 Group Differences in Employability Skills and Educational Management

Differences across respondent groups are summarized in Table 2. Independent samples t-tests showed significant gender differences in both overall cross-border employability skills and perceptions of educational management components, with female students reporting higher mean scores than male students. However, one-way ANOVA results indicated no statistically significant differences across fields of study.

Table 2 Independent Samples t-test by Gender on Cross-Border Employability Skills

Variable	Group Comparison	Mean 1	Mean 2	Test Value	p
Employability Skills	Male vs Female	3.90	4.10	t=-2.345	.020*
	Field of Study	-	-	F=0.874	.480
Educational Management	Male vs Female	3.87	4.08	t=-2.592	.010*
	Field of Study	-	-	F=1.155	.331

Note: *p<.05

2.3 Descriptive Statistics and Construct Validity of Cross-Border Employability Skills

Descriptive statistics and confirmatory factor analysis results for cross-border employability skills are presented in Table 3. All skill dimensions were rated at a high level. In addition, all standardized factor loadings exceeded recommended thresholds, indicating satisfactory construct validity.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics and Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Cross-Border Employability Skills

Skill Dimension	Mean	SD	Std. Loading	R ²
Communication Skills	3.94	0.83	0.794	0.630
Management & Leadership	3.94	0.82	0.933	0.871
Adaptability	4.02	0.83	0.872	0.761
Technological Skills	3.96	0.91	0.830	0.689
Critical Thinking	3.99	0.87	0.884	0.782
Sales Skills	3.96	1.04	0.753	0.567
Collaboration Skills	4.01	0.88	0.881	0.777
Practical Skills	3.95	0.81	0.942	0.888
Emotional Regulation	4.00	0.98	0.705	0.497
Global Outlook	3.96	0.88	0.884	0.781

2.4 Descriptive Statistics and Construct Validity of Educational Management Components

Descriptive statistics and CFA results for educational management components are shown in Table 4. All components were evaluated positively, and strong standardized factor loadings supported the validity of the measurement model

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics and Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Educational Management Components

Management Component	Mean	SD	Std. Loading (β)	R ²
Program Objectives	3.96	1.04	0.647	0.418
Curriculum Structure	3.88	1.06	0.694	0.481
Course Design	3.93	0.96	0.639	0.409
Teaching & Learning	3.96	0.76	0.924	0.854
Co-curricular Activities	3.91	0.76	0.935	0.874
Facilities & Infrastructure	3.97	0.84	0.880	0.774
Student Management	3.88	0.87	0.843	0.711
Faculty	4.00	0.73	0.874	0.764
Industry-related Personnel	4.03	0.78	0.838	0.703
Budget Management	3.97	0.78	0.879	0.773
Evaluation & Assessment	3.95	0.79	0.895	0.801

2.5 Model Fit of the Measurement Models

The model fit indices for both measurement models are presented in Table 5. The results showed that both the Cross-Border Employability Skills (CES) model and the Educational Management Framework (EMF) model demonstrated satisfactory fit with the data, as all indices met recommended criteria.

Table 5 Model Fit Indices for the Measurement Models

Fit Index	Recommended Criteria	CES Model	EMF Model
p-value	> 0.05	0.082	0.289
χ^2 / df	< 2.00	1.538	1.137
CFI	> 0.95	0.998	0.999
TLI	> 0.95	0.993	0.998
SRMR	< 0.05	0.012	0.012
RMSEA	< 0.05	0.041	0.021

Note. CES = Cross-Border Employability Skills; EMF = Educational Management Framework.

3. Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative Findings for Model Development

Drawing on qualitative interviews and quantitative survey findings, this study integrated both data sources to develop a modular educational management model for cross-border employability. For clarity, results are reported at the construct level, while item-level statistics were examined during confirmatory factor analysis but are omitted due to space limitations.

Qualitative interviews with Chinese executives, employees, and university staff identified key workplace expectations and institutional factors shaping employability development. These findings were triangulated with survey results from Chinese students, showing strong convergence across employer, institutional, and student perspectives.

The integration process identified fourteen core cross-border employability skill domains: language and communication, specialized skills, cross-cultural adaptability, social and personal skills, management and leadership, cognitive skills, operational skills, problem-solving, technological application, collaboration, integrative skills, sales, entrepreneurship, and global perspective. Ten domains were strongly supported by the quantitative factor structure, while four domains specialized skills, integrative skills, problem-solving, and entrepreneurship emerged more strongly from the qualitative findings and were retained because of their practical importance in Thai–Chinese organizational contexts. These fourteen domains were subsequently translated into twenty structured training modules, with some domains divided into multiple course units, while an additional finance-related module was added following expert review.

Findings related to educational management were further consolidated into eight integrated management strategies covering curriculum design, teaching implementation, industry engagement, experiential learning, technology-enhanced learning, and institutional support. Together, these findings formed the foundation of the proposed IDEALIST Model.

4. Development and Validation of the Modular Educational Management Model

The proposed educational management model was designed to enhance the cross-border employability of Chinese students in Thailand. It was refined through expert review involving five specialists in employability, international student management, human resource management, and higher education. Content validity was confirmed with an overall Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) score of 0.92. Revisions were then made based on expert recommendations.

Developed in response to growing Thailand–China economic cooperation and increasing demand for cross-border talent, the model aims to strengthen fourteen identified employability skill domains among Chinese students in Thai higher education institutions.

The final model, named the IDEALIST Model, consists of nine integrated components: one core component comprising twenty employability training modules, and eight supporting educational management strategies represented by the acronym IDEALIST. The training modules define the skill content, while the eight strategies provide the framework for implementation and institutional support. The nine components are described as follows.

Part 1: Employability Skills Training Modules for Chinese Students Studying in Thailand

This dimension focuses on 20 training modules designed to enhance skills for cross-border employability across fourteen categories. These modules are designed to equip Chinese students, with the ability to enter labor markets with the right skills, The modules are summarized in Table 6 as follows.

Table 6 Overview of Employability Skills Training Modules

Module No.	Module Title	Skill Category Developed	Key Learning Focus	Learning Hour
Module 1	Thai Language for Communication in Industry and Business Contexts	Language and Communication Skills	1. Specialized vocabulary 2. Thai communication in various workplace situations 3. Thai–Chinese translation in industry and business	18 hours of coursework + 24 hours of practice
Module 2	English Language for Workplace Communication	Language and Communication Skills	1. Effective Business Email Writing in English 2. Practical English Report Writing Skills 3. Cross-Cultural Communication with International Clients 4. Professional Presentation Skills in English 5. English for Workplace Coordination and Progress Reporting	12 hours of coursework + 24 hours of practice
Module 3	Native Language Review:	Language and Communication Skills	1. Professional Business Email Writing 2. Effective Meeting Presentation Techniques	12 hours of coursework

Table 6 Overview of Employability Skills Training Modules (Continue)

	Professional Chinese Communication for the Workplace		3. Project and Action Plan Writing Techniques 4. Performance Review and Evaluation Report Writing 5. Negotiation Skills 6. Marketing Communication Skills 7. Knowledge Transfer and Instructional Techniques	+ 12 hours of practice
Module 4	Go-To-Market Strategy Planning	Specialized Skills	1. Introduction to GTM's Work Structure 2. Market/Target Group Analysis 3. Marketing strategy planning for channels and sales 4. Sales analysis and proposing solutions 5. Understanding of the PSI system and inventory management	10 hours of coursework + 20 hours of practice
Module 5	Thailand Board of Investment Policies and Investment Practices for Foreign Enterprises	Specialized Skills	1. Roles and rules of Thailand's BOI, 2. Conditions, industries, and the BOI's investment promotion policies. 3. Establishing, applying, and coordinating taxation with BOI advantages for companies. 4. Case studies on foreign company investments in Thailand	12 hours of coursework + 16 hours of practice
Module 6	E-Commerce Business Operations	Specialized Skills	1. Overview of Thailand's E-Commerce Market Structure and Major Platforms (e.g., Lazada, Shopee, TikTok Shop) 2. Store Setup, Operational Processes, and Practical Online Marketing Skills 3. E-Commerce Marketing and Traffic Generation Strategies	12 hours of coursework + 16 hours of practice
Module 7	Fundamental Accounting Practices in	Specialized Skills	1. Fundamental Financial Concepts 2. Financial Statements and Reporting in Organizations	16 hours of coursework

Table 6 Overview of Employability Skills Training Modules (Continue)

	Thai-Chinese Enterprises		3.Basic Corporate Taxation in Thai-Chinese Companies 4.Fundamentals of Cost and Budget Management	+ 12 hours of practice
Module 8	Basic Legal Knowledge for Business and International Trade	Specialized Skills	1.Basic legal knowledge of the Civil and Commercial Code 2.Basic legal knowledge of the Foreign Business Act 3. Basic legal knowledge of legal instruments for international trade 4. Basic legal knowledge of business contracts	20 hours of coursework + 12 hours of practice
Module 9	Cross-Cultural Communication and Adaptability	Cross-Cultural Adaptability Skills	1. Cultural theories 2. Cultural differences 3. Communication techniques with people from different cultures 4. Thai social etiquette, business etiquette, and workplace etiquette	10 hours of coursework + 6 hours of practice
Module 10	Personal Skill Development for Career Success	Personal and Social Skills	1.Development of responsibility and self-management skills 2.Development of interpersonal relationship-building skills 3.Development of time management skills 4.Development of emotional intelligence skills 5.Development of stress management and coping skills	10 hours of coursework + 6 hours of practice
Module 11	Management and Leadership Skill Development	Management and Leadership	1.Theories of organizational management and corporate operational processes 2. Development of cross-cultural management skills 3. Development of training and human resource development skills	10 hours of coursework + 10 hours of practice

Table 6 Overview of Employability Skills Training Modules (Continue)

			4. Development of the ability to cope with challenges 5. Development of strategic planning skills	
Module 12	Practical Workplace Skill Development	Operational Skills	1. Time management 2. Assigned task management 3. Providing professional feedback 4. Receiving feedback with an open mindset 5. Structure and logic of reporting 6. Training structure and the design of training documents and materials 7. Work review and quality checking techniques 8. Systematic data collection and record-keeping	4 hours of coursework + 16 hours of practice
Module 13	Critical Thinking and Effective Problem-Solving Skills	Cognitive Skills & Problem-Solving Skills	1. Fundamentals of deductive and inductive reasoning 2. Logical structure and analytical reasoning 3. Critical questioning techniques 4. Creative thinking techniques 5. Problem identification and analysis 6. Decision-making and problem-solving processes	8 hours of coursework + 16 hours of practice
Module 14	Digital Skills Development: Workplace Software and Artificial Intelligence Tools	Software and Technology Application Skills	1. Techniques for using Microsoft Excel (Pivot Tables / VLOOKUP) 2. Techniques for using Microsoft Word for document formatting 3. Use of Microsoft PowerPoint for structured slide design aligned with presentation content 4. Techniques for using AI tools to enhance work efficiency (e.g., ChatGPT, DeepSeek, and other platforms)	12 hours of coursework + 16 hours of practice

Table 6 Overview of Employability Skills Training Modules (Continue)

Module 15	Teamwork and Collaborative Skill Development	Personal and Social Skills	1.Conflict management and decision-making in teams 2. Techniques for effective teamwork 3. Team communication techniques	6 hours of coursework + 6 hours of practice
Module 16	Integrated Skill Development for Workplace Success	Integrative Skills	1. Industry trends and foundational knowledge across sectors 2. Fundamental knowledge of human resource management 3. Knowledge of procurement and purchasing processes 4. Fundamental knowledge of marketing	24 hours of coursework + 8 hours of practice
Module 17	Online and Offline Sales Skill Development	Sales Skills	1. Differences in local markets and consumer behavior across business sectors in Thailand and China 2. Development of on-site sales skills, including sales scripts and persuasive selling techniques 3. Development of online sales skills, including live-streaming sales strategies and online customer service on Shopee, Lazada, and TikTok	10 hours of coursework + 26 hours of practice
Module 18	Entrepreneurial Skill Development	Intrapreneurial Skills	1. Innovative thinking and opportunity identification 2. User research and market analysis 3. Product and business model design 4.Fundamentals of marketing and online community strategies	12 hours of coursework + 24 hours of practice
Module 19	Global Perspective Development	Global Perspective Skills	1. Context and trends of globalization 2. Cultural differences and value-based conflicts 3. Contemporary international issues 4. Thailand's economy, politics, and culture	12 hours of coursework + 4 hours of practice

Table 6 Overview of Employability Skills Training Modules (Continue)

Module 20	Job Application and Career Preparation Skills (Supporting Module, not Included in the 14 Employability Skill Dimensions)	Supporting / Enabling Skills	1. Writing a curriculum vitae (CV) or résumé for job applications 2. Practicing interview skills and professional interview etiquette 3. Career planning strategies 4. Guidance on job search information and resources	8 hours of coursework + 4 hours of practice
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The researchers present examples of Two training modules, selected from a total of twenty, that were considered to be most critical for employability skill development by both executives and employees during interviews. Details for these two modules are below (Tables 7-8).

Table 7 Example Module 1: Thai Language for Communication in Industry and Business

Module 1	Thai Language for Communication in Industry and Business
Skill Category Developed	Language and Communication Skills
Objective	To enable students to learn specialized vocabulary in various industries and business sectors, and to develop the ability to communicate in Thai with Thai people.
Main Content	1) Specialized vocabulary 2) Thai communication in various workplace situations 3) Thai–Chinese translation in industry and business as follows - Manufacturing industry/factories - New energy industry - E-commerce and digital technology industry - Logistics and supply chain industry - Medical industry - Legal services industry - International business sector
Teaching and Learning Management	1) Content-based training focuses on learning the language while also acquiring information in the industry and business areas.

Table 7 Example Module 1: Thai Language for Communication in Industry and Business (Continue)

Module 1	Thai Language for Communication in Industry and Business
	2) Participatory learning involves using role-playing to establish workplace conversations, simulate meetings, practice customer contacts, and train in presentation abilities. 3) Experiential learning involves bringing students to Chinese companies to develop their speaking and translation skills.
Instructor	1) Native Thai instructors in the Thai language field. 2) Experts in translation and interpretation, with professional experience in industry or business sectors.
Assessment	Testing translation skills and communication skills in actual workplace settings
Learning Hours	18 hours of coursework + 24 hours of practice

Table 8 Example Module 4: Go-To-Market (GTM) Strategy Planning

Module 4	Go-To-Market (GTM) Strategy Planning
Skill Category Developed	Specialized Skills
Objectives	1) To enable students to learn how to analyze market data, sales data, and target group information. 2) To enable students to build skills in writing techniques for marketing and sales channels. 3) To enable students to learn how to manage purchasing, sales, and inventory (PSI: Purchase + Sales + Inventory).
Main Content	1) Introduction to GTM's Work Structure 2) Market/Target Group Analysis 3) Marketing strategy planning for channels and sales 4) Sales analysis and proposing solutions 5) Understanding of the PSI system and inventory management
Teaching and Learning Management	1) Case-based learning leveraging corporations' strategic plans for releasing new items into the market. 2) Project-based learning by producing GTM plans. 3) In experiential learning, students analyze company sales data and propose solutions.
Instructor	GTM managers or product managers from top organizations with more than five years of professional experience in the role

Table 8 Example Module 4: Go-To-Market (GTM) Strategy Planning(Continue)

Module 4	Go-To-Market (GTM) Strategy Planning
Assessment	Practical evaluation through analytical reports, preparation of strategic plans, and inventory management tasks.
Learning Hours	10 hours of coursework + 20 hours of practice

Part 2: International Learning Environment (I)

This component emphasizes an inclusive learning environment that supports Chinese students' academic and social adjustment. Key practices may include bilingual services, orientation programs, advising, and interaction between local and international students.

Part 3: Diverse Instructional Strategies (D)

This component focuses on flexible and updated teaching approaches. Blended learning, case studies, project-based learning, and collaborative tasks can enhance engagement and practical skills.

Part 4: Expert “Learning Facilitators” (E)

This component highlights the importance of qualified academic and support staff. Staff development, mentoring, guest speakers, and student support services can strengthen learning and career readiness.

Part 5: Assessment for True Potential (A)

This component promotes authentic assessment methods that better reflect learner competence. Portfolios, simulations, projects, and employer participation can improve evaluation quality.

Part 6: Linking Budget to Outcomes (L)

This component stresses aligning financial resources with learning goals. Budgets for training, technology, internships, and staff development should be linked to measurable outcomes.

Part 7: Industry Collaboration (I)

This component focuses on strong university–industry partnerships. Internships, company projects, guest lectures, and employer consultation can improve graduate employability.

Part 8: Systematic Co-Curricular Activities (S)

This component emphasizes structured co-curricular activities that develop soft skills and confidence. Leadership programs, student clubs, volunteering, and intercultural activities are valuable examples.

Part 9: Theory–Practice Integration (T)

This component highlights the connection between academic learning and workplace application. Internships, fieldwork, simulations, and applied projects can help students become job-ready graduates.

In summary, the IDEALIST Model provides an integrated framework for enhancing the cross-border employability of Chinese students in Thailand through structured training modules and supporting educational management strategies, as illustrated in Figure 1.

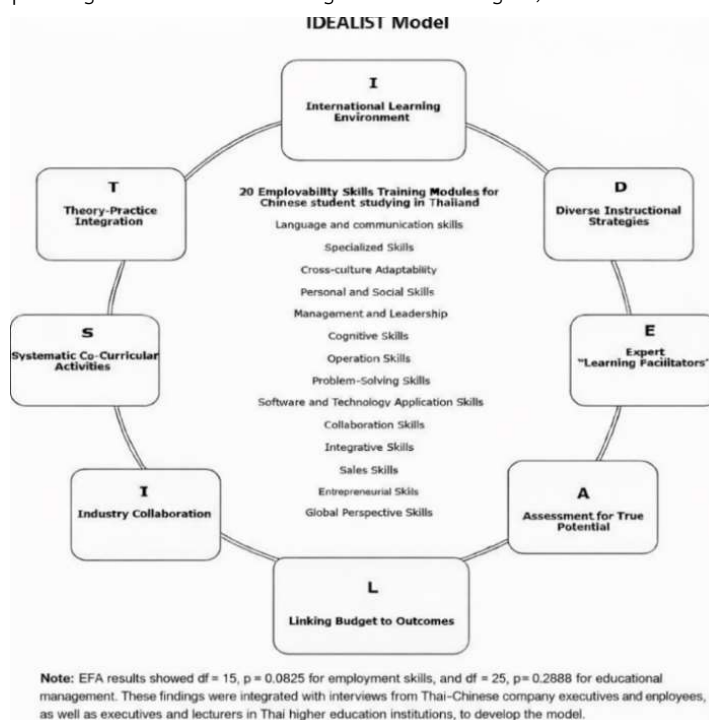


Figure 1 Educational Management Model “IDEALIST” for Enhancing Cross-Border Employability Skills for Chinese Students Studying in Thailand

Discussion

Cross-Border Employability as a Multidimensional Skill Set

The findings indicate that cross-border employability should be understood as a multidimensional skill set rather than a single competence. The fourteen identified domains show that successful cross-border employment requires the combined use of language and communication, cross-cultural adaptability, cognitive skills, problem-solving, technological

application, and global perspective. This supports employability frameworks that view employability as a composite construct shaped by transferable skills and adaptability (Hillage & Pollard, 1998; Yorke, 2006; Sathiyay, 2024), and is also consistent with Scalberg (2013), Cai (2014), and Liu (2024), who emphasized the importance of cultural intelligence, international business knowledge, legal awareness, and global mindset.

What is more, this study suggests that these competencies need to be applied simultaneously in cross-border work settings. In the Thai–China context, Chinese graduates need not only language ability, but also the capacity to navigate organizational hierarchy, cultural expectations, and changing digital work practices. Universities therefore need more integrated and practice-oriented approaches that combine academic learning with workplace, intercultural, and digital skill development.

Educational Management Pathways Supporting Employability Development

The Research Results highlight that employability development depends not only on curriculum content, but also on broader educational management pathways, including curriculum–labor market alignment, experiential learning, institutional support, and industry engagement. This supports educational management perspectives that emphasize planning, organization, and implementation in achieving educational objectives (Nurhikmah, 2024). It also aligns with experiential and constructivist learning theories, which view active and real-world learning as essential for competence development (Kolb, 1984; Biggs & Tang, 2011).

The results further extend previous studies by showing that co-curricular learning, interactive pedagogy, and supportive learning environments can strengthen students' adaptability and professional readiness (Atobatele et al., 2024; Chen, Zhang, & Wu, 2024; Pham et al., 2018). In addition, this study highlights the often underexplored roles of faculty management, administrative coordination, evaluation systems, and resource allocation in sustaining employability initiatives. These findings also complement Subandi et al. (2024), who emphasized instructors as key actors in effective educational management, and Sun (2022), who stressed the value of technology-enabled and experiential learning.

This situation especially has relation to Thailand, in which the universities are carrying out expansion of international student recruitment work, and at the same time they are responding to the demands of labor market that are connected with Chinese investment and regional economic integration. The research results indicate that employability results are formed not only by students' personal hard work, but also by the efficiency that schools carry

out the arrangement of support systems, work position study opportunities, and cooperation with employing units.

Value of the Modular Educational Management Model for Cross-Border Employability

Integrating employability skills with educational management pathways provides a coherent framework for enhancing cross-border employability. The conversion of fourteen skill domains into twenty training modules shows how employability concepts can be translated into practical learning design. This reflects competency-based and modular training principles that emphasize flexibility and responsiveness to labor market needs (Mulder, 2012). The model therefore offers an empirically grounded framework linking skills development, institutional management, and training design.

In practice, the modular structure is well suited to Thai higher education institutions because it can be adapted across universities, disciplines, and student needs. It also allows modules to be updated efficiently in response to changing labor market demands without redesigning entire degree programs.

Convergence and Differences in Skill Emphasis

Although employers, institutions, and students showed broad agreement on core cross-border employability requirements, they differed in the emphasis placed on specific skills. Employers prioritized job-ready and operational skills, students focused more on language proficiency and labor market entry, while institutions emphasized balancing immediate market needs with long-term educational goals. These differences reflect stakeholder roles rather than fundamental disagreement, highlighting the need for integrative frameworks that balance short-term job readiness with sustainable career development in the Thai–China context.

Conclusion

Summary of Findings

Using an integrated mixed methods approach, this study identified fourteen core cross-border employability skill domains relevant to Chinese students in Thailand. Educational management components were validated through confirmatory factor analysis. Based on the convergence of employer, institutional, and student perspectives, the IDEALIST Model was

developed, comprising twenty training modules and eight educational management strategies to enhance cross-border employability.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, it was conducted within the specific context of Thai higher education, which may limit generalizability. Second, the quantitative sample focused on fourth-year Chinese undergraduate students selected through purposive sampling and may not represent other student groups. Third, the model was structurally validated, but post-training outcomes were not directly assessed.

Recommendations for Future Research

(1) Examining the long-term impact of the proposed model through longitudinal or follow-up studies, and to track graduates' employment outcomes and career development. (2) Experimental or quasi-experimental designs could further assess the effectiveness of modular employability training. (3) Expanding samples across institutions, disciplines, and academic years would also strengthen future investigations.

Practical Implications

The findings offer practical implications for stakeholders in cross-border education and employment. Effective use of the proposed framework and training modules requires adaptation to institutional, industry, and student contexts, as well as close alignment between curriculum design and labor market needs. Sustainable implementation also depends on faculty development, administrative coordination, and adequate resources. Thai universities may apply the IDEALIST Model to improve international student programs through modular training, curriculum enhancement, and stronger industry links, while MHESI may consider its use in national policies related to student development, graduate employability, and higher education internationalization. Key users include university administrators, curriculum planners, international offices, faculty leaders, and policymakers.

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