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Article

Chinese and British University Teachers' Emotional Reactions to Students' Disruptive Classroom Behaviors

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Abstract: As globalisation increases, more teachers are teaching abroad. New teaching contexts present challenges to international teachers' mental health. According to appraisal theory, the elicitation of an emotion is an interplay between situational (context) and dispositional (beliefs) antecedents, and people's built-in dispositions are socially constructed and culturally shaped. Based on this premise, it can be assumed that, compared with local teachers, international teachers may experience different types or intensities of emotions due to their different beliefs and goals when they confront the same disruptive behaviours by students in the classroom. The aim of this research is to investigate Chinese teachers' and British teachers' emotional experiences while working in universities in the UK through a mixed methods study. The methodology that is employed in the present research is a pragmatic approach. A sequential mixed-methods design was used to examine the assumptions and discover possible explanations for the phenomenon. Study One investigated 99 participants (47 Chinese teachers and 52 British teachers) through a novel video-based survey and found that university teachers who were originally from China experienced a significantly higher level of anxiety and shame than teachers who were originally from Britain. The results show that in a new cultural context, international teachers can experience higher-level negative emotions in comparison with indigenous teachers. Study Two used semi-structured interviews to examine what factors could result in the differences discovered by Study One. The results indicated that the appraisal dimension of accountability and self-construals, shaped by cultural values, were the key factors influencing teachers' emotional experiences. Overall, the research findings have implications for supporting international teachers' emotional acculturation and the sustainable development of both policymakers and practitioners in foreign teaching contexts.

Keywords: international teachers; emotional acculturation; appraisal theory; student disruptive behaviour

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1. Introduction

As globalisation increases, many countries have issued policies to facilitate the migration of academics to higher education to improve economic competitiveness [1]. The current research is situated in the context of the rapid globalisation of education and the growing popularity of learning the Chinese language in the United Kingdom [2]. According to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, in the UK higher education sector, 32% of academic staff during the years 2021/22 were non-UK nationals [3], compared with 28% over the period of 2015–2016 [4], and sixteen percent (16%) were non-EU nationals [3].

Research conducted by British Council reveals that UK parents see Mandarin Chinese as the 'most beneficial' non-European language for their children to learn [5]. As a result of this trend of globalisation, more teachers are currently teaching abroad [4,6,7]. A great deal of research has documented the variable challenges that this group of teachers can face. Some of the challenges include the unfamiliarity with indigenous pedagogy [8], different students' classroom behaviours [9], language barriers [10] and loss of social roles or routines [11–13]. These difficulties have caused major problems, such as international teachers'

emotional exhaustion, low job satisfaction among minority employees and the drain of the diversity of the teaching profession [9,10,14–16]. In addition, although some studies [6,17] have recognised the influence of emotional experiences on immigrant teachers' acculturation, the full complexity of how immigrant teachers' emotions shape their professional transition in their host countries is rarely examined. According to appraisal theory, when judging an event as an emotion, people's culturally shaped beliefs and goals can influence their judgements because these beliefs and values work as built-in standards for appraising the situation [18–21]. Correspondingly, people produce culturally normative emotions that enable them "to navigate the intricacies of their social environments in a coordinated fashion" [22]. Therefore, some questions are raised for researchers: Whether teachers who teach abroad produce "old" culturally normative emotions in a "new" cultural context or not? If yes, how do the old culturally normative emotions sustain them in the new teaching environment? Questions such as these call for research to examine international teachers' acculturation of emotion since the inconsistency between teachers' emotional experiences and the demands in the teaching context may increase acculturative stress and impair international teachers' psychological and socio-relational well-being [23,24].

Furthermore, the teacher emotion model, refined by Chen [25], indicates that the personal and contextual antecedents in the teaching environment shape teachers' emotions, and these emotions not only influence the teaching consequences (including teachers' job satisfaction, teachers' effectiveness and students' learning motivation) but also reciprocally place impacts on the antecedents (e.g., teachers' values, students' performances and students' classroom behaviours). To be more specific, on the one hand, teachers' emotional well-being and job dissatisfaction are directly influenced by their emotional exhaustion [26,27]. On the other hand, teachers' emotions can influence teaching behaviours, which are central to teachers' interactions with students and to students' learning [28,29]. This model notes the importance of studying teachers' emotions and provides a conceptual framework for the current research. Chen [25], after reviewing 812 articles, also identified one gap in the relationship between sociocultural factors and teachers' emotions. She argues that most of the previous studies [30,31] focused on building a linkage between the antecedents and teacher emotions but overlooked the detailed influential process of these factors on teacher emotions.

Thus, the present research aims to discover the precise influential mechanism of teachers' social-cultural backgrounds on their emotional experiences. Through investigating and comparing Chinese (i.e., Chinese nationality with self-described Chinese cultural heritage) teachers' and British, (i.e., British nationality with self-described British cultural heritage) teachers' emotional reactions to students' disruptive behaviours in a British teaching context, specific differences in the emoting process can be identified and possible appraisal mechanisms that facilitate immigrant teachers' emotional adaptations can be proposed. The results not only improve international teachers' psychological well-being but also complement the teacher emotion model.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Situational and Dispositional Antecedents of International Teachers' Emotions

According to Frijda [32], events and thoughts that can elicit emotions are called antecedents. However, the same event may trigger different emotions from time to time. Factors such as the setting in which the event occurs, an individual's adaptation level and the individual's expectations at the time all contribute to differences in emotions [19,32]. Therefore, the elicitation of an emotion can be seen as an interactive process between situational antecedents and dispositional antecedents [32,33].

Students' classroom behaviours, especially disruptive or uncivil behaviours, become situational antecedents of teachers' emotions in the class [34]. If students commit an offense that is disrespectful to the teacher [35], negative emotions (e.g., anger) can be elicited in the teacher. For international teachers, local students' disruptive behaviours that are unfamiliar to them can be challenging situational antecedents [6].

Cross-cultural teaching contexts also challenge international teachers' dispositional antecedents since people's inner dispositions are socially constructed and culturally shaped [22,36]. Therefore, to investigate Chinese teachers' emotional fit with British teaching contexts, differences in the cultural contexts of China and the UK need to be examined. Research on cultural differences has traditionally been limited in its scope to explicit cultural practices and values (e.g., language, food or other preferences), which are regarded as "surface-level aspects" in acculturation [37,38]. Cultural psychologists argue that mentalities that emerge in different cultural contexts are related to implicit and profound changes in psychological functioning [38,39]. As Eid and Diener [40] noted, "Cultural differences in values and norms for experiencing emotions can be predicted from cultural differences in self-construals". Based on this perception, the current research approaches cultural differences through the view of the "self".

Many cross-cultural psychologists agree on two typical self-construals, interdependent and independent self-construal [41,42]. Although it is quite challenging to say that one culture holds one absolute type of self-construal [42,43], a few studies have proposed that the interdependent self is the predominant self-construal in the Chinese cultural context, whereas the British cultural context recognised a view of the self as independent [44,45]. These views of the self are derived from social histories (e.g., Buddhism and Protestantism) and ideologies (e.g., collectivism and individualism) [40,44,46].

In a culture where collectivism is a salient value, people in society may develop an interdependent self-construal, which highlights relatedness in society and recognises that individuals are inseparable from the group or the social context [40,43,47]. People with this type of self-construal may have a sense of duty to create group harmony with one another. If this harmony is facilitated, positive social emotions (e.g., happiness or compassion) emerge in the person, and respect from others could enhance the person's view of the interdependent self. However, if this harmony is disrupted, certain negative emotions (e.g., shame or guilt) emerge as a result of a sense of losing respect from others [48]. This tendency to have emotions can be called the socially engaged model of emotions [49].

In contrast, people from a culture where individualism is the priority in social values may have independent self-construal [49]. This view of the self thus endorses a pure form of autonomy and holds that an individual is unique from others in a group [44,50]. A person with this view of the self would focus more on his or her independent self when engaged in social interactions. As a result, their emotional experiences in these interactions are mainly derived from situations where the independent self is enhanced (emotions such as pride may appear) or impeded (emotions such as anger or frustration may appear) [51]. This way of generating emotions is called the socially disengaging model [49].

2.2. International Teachers' Emotional Acculturation and Well-Being

These systematic cultural differences in emotional models, or the patterns of frequencies and intensities with which people experience particular sets of emotions, serve as the starting point for research on emotional acculturation [52]. As Vaughn [53] denotes, when people move to a new country or an unfamiliar cultural setting, additional emotional and psychological stress occurs. In order to overcome this stress and fit into the new culture, people may alter their emotional life after sustained exposure to a different culture. This changing process is called emotional acculturation [52,54].

While there is a scarcity of empirical studies recognising implicit cultural schemas as dispositional antecedents in the emotional process, a small body of research throws some light on this matter. A quantitative study that examined two different immigrant minority groups, Korean Americans and Turkish Belgians, showed that first-generation minorities matched the majority culture's conventional emotional patterns much less when compared to majority members [55]. This study recognised the mismatch in the emotional experiences of immigrant and indigenous groups. However, due to the limitation of the research method, it did not uncover specific cultural factors that underlay changes in emotional patterns during acculturation. Later, other studies explored the influence of

cultural schemas in the process of emotional acculturation. For example, Kafetsios [56], after modelling 165 participants' self-construal with their emotions in everyday social interactions, found that people who had a greater chronic interdependent self-construal tended to reckon lower personal positive emotion levels were beneficial for a higher social interaction quality. Another study, which examined Albanian and Indian immigrants residing in Greece, revealed that immigrants with higher levels of interdependence were inclined to reduce their feelings of depression by joining in with in-group members, although this action could increase their separation from the host country [57].

These studies elucidate how cultural schemas play a mediating role between cultural contexts and people's emotional experiences and expose issues in the process of emotional acculturation. They also indicate the imperative demand for a nuanced understanding of international teachers' emotional acculturation [44]. Although previous research has discovered that a cultural fit in emotion is closely associated with people's psychological and work-related well-being [23,58,59], limited knowledge is known about international teachers' emotional acculturation and their well-being.

Existing studies have focused on several aspects of international teachers' emotional experiences in new cultures. For example, Madrid, Baldwin and Belbase [60] used ethnographic methods to investigate six US early childhood educators' emotional experiences during a 3-week teaching experience in Nepal. Their study uncovered that, after going through the feeling of excitement and nervousness, the Western teachers started to experience the emotion of frustration when their built-in educational ideals were challenged by the Nepali educational system. It indicates that international teachers need a lot of time and reflection to comprehend how their emotional reactions are ingrained in cultural ideology and national identity. Another qualitative study, which focused on 10 Asian teachers' experiences of professional vulnerability in Australian schools, revealed that international teachers' authority was weakened by students' disrespectful behaviour, which made them feel vulnerable and reduced their confidence in their influence on students [17]. In addition, Xu and Yan [10] used an approach of phenomenology to explore the challenges in the professional transition of two Chinese immigrant teachers in American institutions. They found that the feeling of isolation usually lasts longer than the language barrier. To resolve these emotional issues and challenges in the process of international teachers' professional transitions, some studies have started to explore the appropriate emotional regulation strategies for immigrant teachers. For example, Antoniadou and Quinlan [6] interviewed 20 international academic staff who worked in the UK through a phenomenological approach and discovered that reappraisal was the most frequently mentioned regulating tactic that allowed teachers to recover from setbacks and produced long-term benefits. However, the detailed effective reappraisal method is not summarised in their research.

2.3. Appraisals and Teachers' Emotional Experiences

Emotional experience can be understood as subjective awareness of a series of certain emotional components, including the eliciting events, appraisals, physiological changes and body readiness [32,61,62]. The teaching profession demands that teachers work closely with students in the classroom, which exposes teachers to a variety of emotional experiences, from happiness to fury [63]. In order to analyse the complex interplay among students' classroom disruptive behaviours, teachers' emotional experiences and cultural contexts, appraisal theory is adopted in the current research. Human appraisals have many dimensions; together, these dimensions determine or differentiate discrete emotions when a person judges a situation [19,64,65]. Among the various dimensions, the most frequently referenced in educational research are a person's goals, certainty, perceptions of blame (also known as agency or accountability), coping potential (or control) and cultural norms/values [66,67].

2.3.1. Goals

According to Lazarus [19], goal relevance represents the extent to which an external factor is important to personal goals. If an encounter is seen as significant to the person, emotions are potentially aroused. Goal congruence predicts people's positive or negative emotions by judging whether the event is coherent with a person's goals [67,68].

2.3.2. Certainty

This appraisal variable represents the extent to which a person understands what is happening in a particular context and how confident he or she is in the current situation [69,70]. This dimension is closely related to the elicitation of anxiety, which is often felt when a person lacks certainty about what is happening.

2.3.3. Accountability

This dimension describes a person's judgement of who should be responsible/credited for the failure/success of achieving a goal [71]. It is a particular indicator of anger in the case of goal incongruence and others being blamed for it [66].

2.3.4. Coping Potential/Control

Coping potential indicates a person's assessment of his or her ability to deal with or control the outcomes of an event [18]. In the situation of goal incongruence, anxiety may increase if people have a low ability to control the antecedent, whereas anger may be facilitated if they have a higher coping potential [72].

2.3.5. Values/Norms

A member of a social group usually pays considerable attention to the reactions of other group members to adapt to society [73]. If these norms are violated and judged as one's own fault, emotions such as guilt or shame can be elicited [19,64].

Appraisal theory provides a theoretical framework to understand the interplay among students' disruptive behaviours, teachers' emotional experiences and cultural contexts.

In conclusion, previous studies provided evidence that international (i.e., immigrant) teachers' emotional experiences and their well-being are challenged in a new cultural context; however, most of the studies used qualitative research methods only; as a result, the representativeness and generality of their research findings can be limited. Furthermore, the influential mechanisms of the implicit cultural schemas as dispositional antecedents on international teachers' emotional experiences are not recognised explicitly, and the extent to which their emotional experiences may differ from the average emotional experience of home-culture teachers and the relationship between teachers' appraisals of antecedents and their distinct emotions are largely unexplored.

2.4. Current Research

By controlling situational antecedents, the current research tries to recognise implicit cultural schemas as dispositional antecedents in the emotional process of international teachers during their acculturation. Through the comparison of emotional experiences between immigrant Chinese university teachers and home British university teachers, it aims to identify the underlying factors that influence international teachers' emotional acculturation and discover the possible appraisal mechanisms that can effectively help international teachers emotionally adapt to a new teaching context.

Unlike previous research [55,68,74], which used text descriptions and participants' retrospective memories as scenarios to elicit human emotions, the current study employed video clips as situational antecedents to trigger teachers' emotions. Video scenarios create more realistic and fixed situational antecedents than when participants make judgements about situations in a survey [75]. As such, the influences of dispositional antecedents can be revealed more clearly.

This research addresses the following research questions:

- Main question

Do immigrant Chinese teachers and home British teachers have different emotional experiences when they encounter the same disruptive behaviours by students in the UK?

- Subquestions

If the answer to the main question is yes, how and why do these two groups of teachers' emotional experiences differ? If the answer is no, why is there no difference?

The current research took a pragmatic approach to investigate the targeted research questions through a sequential mixed-methods design. Beliefs of pragmatism claim that the world is not dualistic. Different ways (e.g., observation, experiments, human experience) of research can be useful as long as they help the researcher gain a better understanding of the researched world [76,77]. As Johnson and Onwuegbuzie [78] state, quantitative data can provide objective proof of the qualitative data (e.g., words and opinions); in turn, qualitative data, such as texts and narratives, can make numerical data become meaningful. Since one of the ultimate aims of the present research is to test the assumption of whether Chinese teachers' emotional experiences are different from those of British teachers, the quantitative method is used, as it is strong in examining pre-set assumptions and avoiding bias from researchers' subjective values. The current research also strives to discover the detailed implicit cultural schemas that influence international teachers' emotional experiences of student disruptive behaviours; thus, it is quite appropriate to employ qualitative methods to collect teachers' own interpretations of their experiences. Through this mix-method design, the goals of this research can be accomplished in an effective way.

3. Study One: Questionnaire Survey

3.1. Method

3.1.1. Sample

The participants in this study were 99 teachers from universities in the UK. The university teachers are here referred to as professors, lecturers, tutors or postgraduates who taught in universities. Teachers who had either British or Chinese nationality and perceived their cultural heritage as either British or Chinese, respectively, were recruited and categorised. Participants who claimed to have dual cultural heritage were excluded from this research. In all, there were 47 Chinese and 52 British teachers. In the Chinese group, the teachers were aged between 24 and 63 years, with a mean age of 31.74 years (SD = 8.46); of the total participants in this group, 53.19% were female. The mean years of teaching experience in this group were 4.30 (SD = 6.54). In the British group, the mean age of the participants was 46.04 years (SD = 13.95), and their ages ranged from 22 to 71. Of the total British participants, 38.46% were female. The mean years of teaching experience of respondents in this group were 14.88 (SD = 12.71), which was significantly higher than that of Chinese teachers, as shown by a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA; F (1, 97) = 37.02, p = 0.00, η^2 = 0.28).

3.1.2. Measures

Emotional experience was measured using a questionnaire survey with video scenarios of disruptive classroom behaviours. The participants were asked to watch five video clips showing different disruptive behaviours by white Caucasian students in the classroom. The five scenarios included students (1) arriving late; (2) playing on their phones; (3) interrupting the teacher with irrelevant questions; (4) joking with each other; and (5) sleeping in class. These behaviours were selected from an instrument that was originally created by Wheldall and Merrett [79] to investigate which classroom behaviours teachers find most troublesome, and it was developed and validated by previous research [80,81] in different cultural contexts. The original video of these behaviours was downloaded from a video website and was cut into five short video clips by the current researcher. The average length of each video is 10–15 s.

After each video, the participants were asked to rate the intensity of six emotions (anger, anxiety, hopelessness, shame, sadness and annoyance) that they would feel if this behaviour happened in their class. A 5-point Likert scale (from "1 = no emotional reaction" to "5 = high emotional reaction") was provided for the respondents to rate the intensity of their feelings. This scale was adapted from the Achievement Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ), which was created by Pekrun et al. [74] and translated into English by Pekrun et al. [82]. Originally, the AEQ included both positive and negative emotions. However, in the present study, the behavioural videos displayed students' disruptive behaviours only; as such, extremely positive emotions (e.g., pride and happiness) were excluded from this scale and after being tested and refined by a pilot study, new items (e.g., sadness and annoyance) were added.

The reliability of this adapted scale was high, as all Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.96$. The construct's validity of the scale was demonstrated by the confirmatory factor analysis conducted by Pekrun et al. [82], which showed that the internal structural validity of the AEQ scales in terms of emotional component structures was acceptable.

3.1.3. Procedure

After this research received ethical approval from the University of York Dept of Education Ethics Committee, at least one university from each of the four nations (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) of the United Kingdom and all 25 Confucius Institutes (which are embedded in universities to teach the Chinese language and to introduce Chinese culture to students across the UK) were contacted.

An email that contained a questionnaire link and basic information on this study was sent to teachers in these universities and the Confucius Institutes. A follow-up email that indicated the deadline for the survey was sent two months later, and a reminder email was sent one day before the deadline. Participants joined the study by clicking on a link to a Qualtrics survey website, where they read an information page and indicated their consent to participate in the study.

3.1.4. Analyses

The quantitative data were processed and analysed with SPSS software version 26. First, descriptive statistics were provided to demonstrate the comparison between the two groups. Second, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were applied to investigate the influence of a variety of independent variables (e.g., gender and country of birth) on teachers' emotional reactions. Third, Pearson's correlation tests were run to examine the results from the comparison tests.

3.2. Results

3.2.1. Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation tests were employed to evaluate the relationship between teachers' country of birth, genders, ages and years of teaching and their emotional experience across the videos. The reason for choosing this test was that the causality relationship between the variables (e.g., age and emotional experiences) in this research is not clear; more specifically, one variable as an X variable was not experimentally manipulated to see the effect from the Y variable, as it did not matter which variable was the X variable in the current research. As such, according to Field [83], instead of using the linear regression that clearly defines which variable is X and aims to predict the Y from it, the correlation test is more appropriate to use if the researcher measures both variables [83].

Teachers from China were coded as "1", and teachers from Britain were coded as "2". Significant negative correlations were revealed between teachers' cultural backgrounds and their feelings of anxiety ($r = -0.24$, $n = 90$, $p < 0.05$) and shame ($r = -0.31$, $n = 90$, $p < 0.01$; see Table 1). There were two negative correlations also discovered between the teachers' age and their feelings of anxiety ($r = -0.22$, $n = 90$, $p < 0.05$) and shame ($r = -0.24$, $n = 90$, $p < 0.05$; see Table 2). These results illustrated that teachers' emotional reactions

may be related to the cultural context in which they were born and their ages. However, no significant relationships were detected between teachers' genders and years of teaching and their emotional experiences.

Table 1. Between-group correlations for teachers' country of birth and each emotion across the videos.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Country of birth	-	−0.08	−0.24 *	−0.14	−0.31 **	−0.20	0.08
2 Anger	-	-	0.67 **	0.63 **	0.53 **	0.51 **	0.72 **
3 Anxiety	-	-	-	0.77 **	0.71 **	0.62 **	0.52 *
4 Hopelessness	-	-	-	-	0.70 **	0.72 **	0.51 **
5 Shame	-	-	-	-	-	0.80 **	0.35 **
6 Sadness	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.37 **
7 Annoyance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 2. Between-group correlation for teachers' age and each emotion across videos.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Age	-	−0.14	−0.22 *	−0.17	−0.24 *	−0.07	0.02
2 Anger	-	-	0.67 **	0.63 **	0.53 **	0.51 **	0.72 **
3 Anxiety	-	-	-	0.78 **	0.71 **	0.62 **	0.52 *
4 Hopelessness	-	-	-	-	0.70 **	0.72 **	0.51 **
5 Shame	-	-	-	-	-	0.80 **	0.35 **
6 Sadness	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.37 **
7 Annoyance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

3.2.2. Comparisons between Chinese and British Teachers

An initial MANOVA examined age and years of teaching in the UK as covariates, mean scores for six emotions as dependent variables (DVs), and gender and country of birth as independent variables (IVs). After age and years of teaching, which were found to be nonsignificant, were excluded, a follow-up MANOVA examined the associations between the DVs and IVs described above. It showed significant multivariate main effects for gender: $\lambda = 0.82$, F (3, 86) = 2.98, $p = 0.011$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.18$; and for country of birth: $\lambda = 0.82$, F (3, 86) = 3.00, $p = 0.013$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.18$. This result indicated that there were differences in the emotional reactions between Chinese and British teachers. However, the interaction between gender and country of birth in the survey was nonsignificant. Follow-up univariate analyses were conducted to test the specific effects of gender and country of birth on all the DVs.

First, the subsequent ANOVA revealed that across the five video clips, teachers from China experienced a significantly higher level of anxiety (F (1, 88) = 5.30, $p = 0.02$, $\eta^2 = 0.06$) and shame (F (1, 88) = 9.26, $p = 0.00$, $\eta^2 = 0.10$) than British teachers (see Table 3). A Mann–Whitney U test was applied to test the reliability of the ANOVA results. It also indicated that there were statistically significant differences in the emotions of anxiety ($p = 0.03$) and shame ($p = 0.01$) between Chinese and British teachers.

Table 3. Means and standard deviations for each emotion across the five videos.

	Chinese Teachers		British Teachers			
	M	**SD**	**M**	**SD**	η^2	p
Anger	2.58	0.94	2.43	1.02	-	0.48
Anxiety	2.12	1.01	1.67	0.83	0.06	0.02
Hopelessness	1.99	0.93	1.71	0.96	-	0.18
Shame	1.90	1.03	1.36	0.67	0.10	0.00
Sadness	1.91	0.99	1.57	0.74	-	0.07
Annoyance	3.04	0.91	3.12	0.92	-	0.46

Second, as shown in Figure 1, in addition to the similar patterns of emotional responses shown in each scenario between the Chinese and British teachers, all of the means of overall emotional intensity felt by the Chinese teachers for each student's behaviour were higher than those of the British teachers.

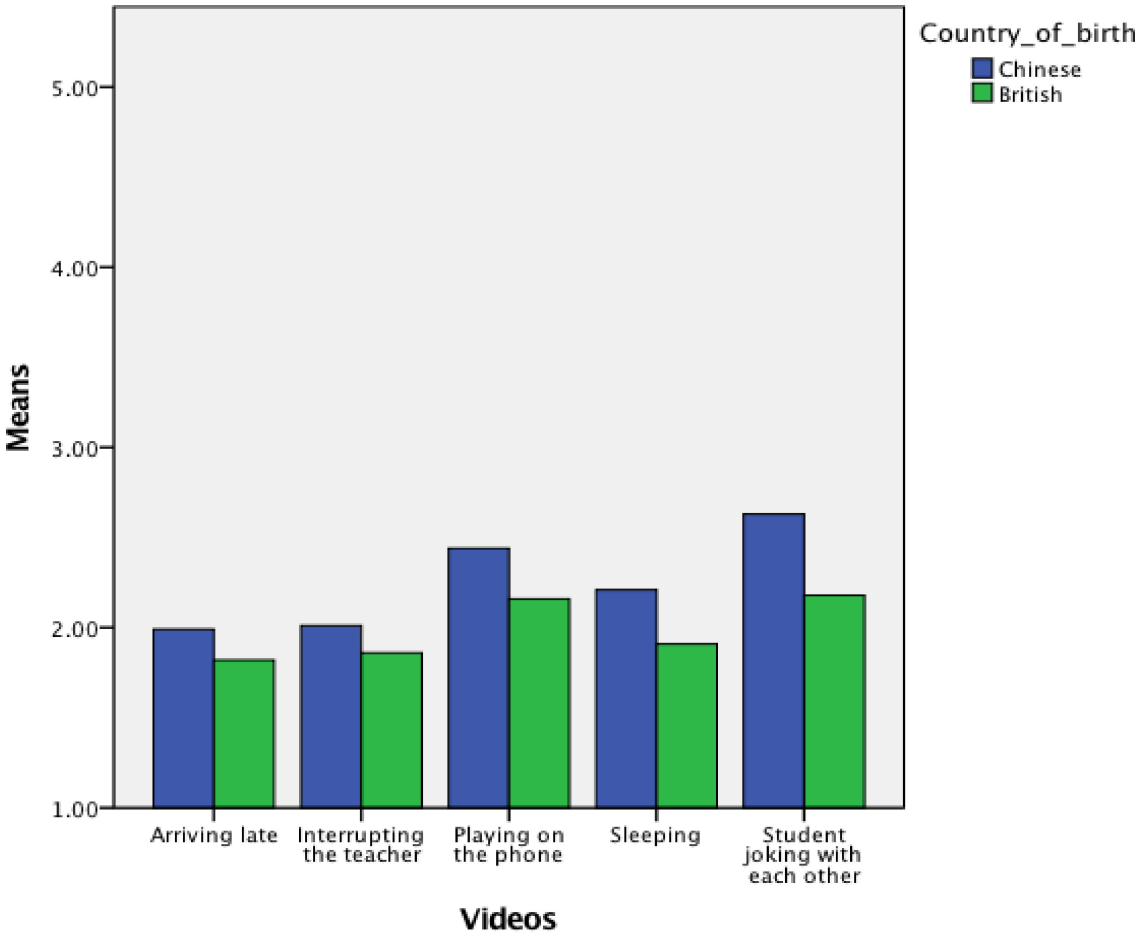

Figure 1. Trend of the overall emotional reactions to each behavioural scenario.

Third, the ANOVA test for a gender effect on emotional reactions was not significant, which indicated that, although gender had a significant effect on the combined emotions (as indicated in the MANOVA), it did not have a significant effect on individual emotions (as indicated on the ANOVAs). Thus, male and female teachers were not significantly different in their individual emotional reactions to students' disruptive behaviours.

Last, since the Pearson's correlation test showed there were significant negative correlations between teachers' ages and their emotional experiences, the ages of the teachers were recoded into new variables, and the teachers' emotional experiences among different age groups were compared. Although there are many ways to divide age groups [84], after drawing on the limited sample size of the current research and criteria used in much of the social science research, e.g., [85], the age groups were divided as follows. Those including and under 30 were labelled as the junior group, those ages 31 to 49 were labelled as the middle-aged group and the ages including and over 50 were labelled as the senior group. A one-way ANOVA test was applied, and no significant difference was revealed among the participants' responses to six emotions between these different age groups. After splitting the file based on the participants' nationality, there were still no significant differences discovered among these three age groups in each country group.

4. Study Two: Interview Study

4.1. Method

4.1.1. Sample

Teachers who indicated their willingness to join the interview study at the end of the questionnaire were contacted. A total of 13 participants participated in semi-structured interviews (please see Table 4). To protect the participants' confidentiality, pseudonyms were used.

Table 4. Demographic information.

	Chinese Teachers	British Teachers	Total
N	7	6	13
Gender	F = 6, M = 1	F = 1, M = 5	F = 7, M = 6
Age (mean/SD)	28.29/5.01	45.50/12.88	36.23/12.80
Years of teaching in the UK (mean/SD)	2.10/2.07	16.33/12.46	8.66/11.15

F = Female; M = Male; SD = Standard Deviation.

4.1.2. Measures

Semi-structured interviews were used in this study based on the guidelines and suggestions proposed by Robson [77]. The study aimed to find the explanatory data for the quantitative findings discovered between the two groups. Based on this purpose, the interview questions focused on two main aspects of the findings from Study One:

1. Why would Chinese teachers experience a significantly higher level of anxiety and shame than British teachers?
2. What factors would influence Chinese and British teachers' appraisals?

The interview questions were developed to explore teachers' perceptions of the differences discovered in their subjective experiences of emotions. For example, teachers were asked, "As you recalled, we asked you to watch 5 video scenarios and rate your emotional response (Anger, anxiety, hopelessness, shame, sadness and annoyance) to these videos. According to our analysis, Chinese teachers reported experiencing significantly higher level of anxiety and shame than British instructors. So, as a Chinese/British teachers, in your estimation, what factors might relate to that difference?". For probing the insight of the teachers' appraisals, follow-up questions based on the participants' responses were asked. For instance, "Could you please explain why you would not take the students' disruptive behaviors personally?". Before conducting the survey, in order to maintain the validity and reliability of the instrument, three pilot interviews were carried out to test and pilot this schedule. Based on the feedback from the participants, the time and the structure of the interview were modified.

4.1.3. Procedure

Ten telephone interviews and three face-to-face interviews were conducted to investigate the participants' interpretations of their emotional experiences. At the beginning of the interview, the researcher read the interview protocol and obtained verbal consent from the participant. Each interview lasted approximately 30 min. Audio recordings and written notes were taken, and the recordings were subsequently transcribed verbatim. Information that could reveal the participants' identities was removed from the transcripts.

4.1.4. Analyses

The current study followed six phases by using the thematic coding method proposed by Braun and Clarke [86] to analyse the qualitative data. First, by transcribing and reading the data several times, the researchers familiarised themselves with the data. Second, codes were systematically assigned across the entire dataset by summarising some interesting features. Third, themes were identified from these codes, and all the data were collated

under these themes. Fourth, to make a thematic "map", the labelled themes were reviewed not only at the level of coded extracts but also at the level of the entire dataset to determine if they made sense. Fifth, all of the themes were specified and refined by creating definitions and naming each theme. Sixth, abstracts that compelled these themes were summarised and interpreted. Comparisons were made between the two groups of participants. In addition, to validate these codes, one Chinese and one British PhD student, familiar with qualitative research methods, were hired to match 10 codes with 10 extracts. In the first round, the Chinese assistant obtained 7 out of 10, and the British assistant obtained 8 out of 10, similar to the matches made by the researchers. After further discussion and revision, both of the assistants obtained 10 out of 10 agreements with the code matches. Discussions were also held on the final codes and patterns between the first and second authors, and consensus and agreement on the coding were reached.

4.2. Results

In the qualitative data, two predominant themes prevailed: differences in the appraisal dimensions and the diversity of cultural values.

4.2.1. Theme 1 Differences in the Appraisal Dimensions

Subtheme 1 Novelty:

Unlike the five most popular appraisal dimensions mentioned in other emotion studies, one innovative finding was that the dimension of novelty rather than personal goals was proposed as an influential appraisal dimension by the participants in the current research. This dimension could lead to cultural shock, misunderstandings and challenges for Chinese teachers. Xiaoxia gave a detailed comment on this point.

> *. . .As a Chinese teacher I am not familiar with the environment. I am not a native, and I also have a lot of new rules I need to follow; sometimes I may want to discipline the student. . . but to be honest, if you put us in the situation I just mentioned, I dare not do what the British teachers had done.* (Xiaoxia, Chinese)

Some British teachers also provided opinions on this dimension. As Frank stated,

> *So I don't know if Chinese teachers may be new to the UK. And maybe their experience is completely different from our education and [they have] completely different undergraduate courses as well. . . I think the distress of teaching in a different country and the fact that [it] is [not] an easy comparison to your own undergraduate or whatever you know you did yourself back in higher education.* (Frank, British)

Subtheme 2 Uncertainty:

According to the participants' opinions, teachers' judgements on this dimension caused anxiety. The answers from a Chinese teacher, Anjun, emphasised this factor:

> *Especially when some unexpected situations happen in their (Chinese teachers') class, they don't know how to react. For instance, here, if I see a student comes to my class late, I'm not sure if I should smile and say, "It's ok", and let them sit down or tell them, "You had better not be late next time".* (Anjun, Chinese)

A British teacher, Barbara, also mentioned uncertainty in a foreign teaching context that could be a trigger for anxiety:

> *I mean, if you're teaching in a context which you're not used to, you don't really know how the students will behave or interact and how you'll be judged. It is from the fear of being judged inadequate or sort of different.* (Barbara, British)

Subtheme 3 Accountability:

This appraisal dimension seemed to play a crucial role in assigning Chinese and British teachers' emotional experiences in different directions. Specifically, Chinese teachers felt significantly more intense shame and anxiety than the British teachers did because these two groups of teachers blamed different agents when they encountered disruptive

student behaviours. Daniel, a professor at a university, articulated this point very clearly in his interview:

> *So my guess is who feels responsible for the behavior. It could annoy you intentionally, but you may not feel responsible for that. However, if you feel somehow you're responsible for it, then you're going to feel more anxious about it. Let's say somehow, it might be a question of who's to blame.* (Daniel, British)

Through further analysis, two different tendencies of appraising accountability were identified between the Chinese and British groups. Specifically, Chinese teachers were inclined to engage in uncivil behaviours personally, and they blamed themselves for students' failures. As Hanya noted,

> *Speaking of anxiety, Chinese teachers would like to link teaching outcomes to their performance. They may think, "I am the one who is teaching you. If you don't learn well, maybe I have a bit [of] responsibility for that, too."* (Hanya, Chinese)

In contrast, British teachers stated that they would not take these disruptive behaviours personally because they thought it was the students' fault for behaving poorly in class; therefore, this group of teachers felt less intense shame. Barbara's comments enriched this point. She said,

> *I suppose shame is something quite personal. I take the view that students are responsible for their own education. They chose to be there. . .So if somebody is not behaving professionally in a lecture, I don't see that it's my fault. . .and they need to learn how to behave.* (Barbara, British)

Some Chinese teachers sensed this difference in the attribution of failure between Chinese and British teachers in their workplace. As Yuli reported,

> *I have a class every Friday morning. There are 13 students enrolled in it. But usually only 5 to 6 people show up, and sometimes even less. In this situation, the leading lecturer and the other teaching assistant always gave me support by telling me I should not take it personally because it's Friday morning. Many students just could not get up early at the very end of the week.* (Yuli, Chinese)

Subtheme 4 Coping potential/control:

The last appraisal dimension that contributes to the differences between Chinese and British teachers' emotional experiences is the control/coping potential. As the Chinese teacher Xiaoxia noted,

> *I personally think the class should be under my control; at least, I thought that way before I came to the UK. Later, after I got some training here, I realised that as a teacher, you are not only a controller, not only a teacher, but an assistant, a listener or a facilitator to your class. So, I think maybe Chinese teachers feel more anxious because they perceive the situation has gone beyond their controlling abilities.* (Xiaoxia, Chinese)

This comment highlighted that Chinese teachers might give slightly more attention to the control dimension when they judge students' disruptive behaviours. They are likely to feel stronger negative emotions when they perceive that they have low control potential.

4.2.2. Theme 2 Diversity of Cultural Values

Based on the participants' responses, this theme emerged as a peripheral influence on emotional experiences. It impacted the criteria that teachers drew upon in their appraisals. A response from Albert illustrated the influence of culture in more detail.

> *The UK tends to be a, I think, quite individualistic society, and I think China is perhaps more community oriented or united. And so that's perhaps why I tend to say if you're not working hard, in fact it's your problem, it's not my problem. Maybe, I don't know, I'm guessing, but in China [there is] more of the feeling that you have to, like, bring everybody else along.* (Albert, British)

Chinese teachers also made some points about cultural influences on their appraisals. One particular cultural belief that they emphasised was "face". In different Chinese discourse contexts, this term can be understood with subtle differences; however, it mainly implies respect (to others or to oneself). Teacher Anjun explained the influence of this concept:

> *Speaking of shame, could it be because students did not give you the "face (respect)"? Take me as an example: even if the students behaved well in my class, I would still feel anxious because I would worry [about] if I performed well. It seems we Chinese really care about our "face" (figure in public).* (Anjun, Chinese)

In sum, this qualitative study revealed some specific factors, including differences in personal appraisal patterns and cultural values, that can influence teachers' emotional experiences. This finding contributes to the understanding of cultural differences in teachers.

5. Discussion

5.1. Discussion on the Quantitative Findings

The questionnaire study revealed that Chinese teachers experienced significantly higher levels of intensity of *anxiety* and *shame* than British teachers. This result shows that in a new cultural context, international teachers can experience higher-level negative emotions in comparison with indigenous teachers. The finding was in line with the results from a validation study of the AEQ. In that study, Frenzel et al. [87] revealed that Chinese students experienced higher levels of anxiety and shame but lower levels of anger than German students when doing mathematics. The quantitative findings also confirmed the previous suggestion that international teachers may be more likely to experience anxiety in a foreign teaching context [6,88].

Study One also uncovered that the differences between the two groups of teachers' emotional experiences were not related to their years of teaching in the UK. This finding, in a way, corresponds to the viewpoint of De Leersnyder [52] that heritage and new cultural and emotional patterns can co-exist, and immigrant minorities can shift between the two. The finding demonstrates the necessity and significance of identifying an appraisal mechanism that can help international teachers regulate their emotions intentionally.

In addition, Study One revealed the similarity in emotional experiences between Chinese and British teachers. As Figure 1 illustrates, although the levels of emotional intensity experienced by Chinese and British teachers were different, these two groups of teachers responded with similar patterns of emotions to the five disruptive behaviours by students. This finding implies that teachers from different cultural contexts may have some consensus on how troublesome certain disruptive behaviours are.

In direct contradiction to Mesquita et al.'s [22] statement that people's culturally normative emotions change after they move to a new cultural context, the finding from the correlation test indicated that teachers' emotional experiences were significantly related to their cultural heritage. The intensity of immigrant Chinese teachers' experiences of the culturally normative emotion of shame was still significantly higher than that of local British teachers. This mismatch presents possible obstacles in Chinese teachers' emotional adaptation to the British teaching context.

5.2. Discussion on the Qualitative Findings

The interview study provided exploratory qualitative data to interpret teachers' emotional reactions to students' disruptive behaviours in a cross-cultural teaching context. Novelty was one important appraisal dimension revealed by the interview study. This dimension was not emphasised in Frenzel et al. [89] and Lazarus's [19] theoretical framework of using appraisal theory in explaining emotional experiences; thus, it was overlooked in the review. However, participants' responses in the interviews brought this dimension into the present researchers' awareness. According to the participants' comments, for the teachers who taught abroad, the management rules, the courses and local cultural values in a foreign teaching context were all new to them, and this novelty increased the uncertainty

of their teaching. This result echoes previous research [90] that studied the conflicts Chinese teachers confront when teaching in the UK.

In alignment with research on teachers' mental health and well-being [91], the current study noted that the perceived uncertainty in classroom management in a new teaching context made Chinese teachers prone to feel anxious in class.

The qualitative results also indicated that teachers' views of themselves in class shaped their emotional experiences. In comparison with British teachers, Chinese teachers worried more about their "face" in class and were inclined to take students' disruptive behaviours more personally. This judgement in the dimension of accountability mainly resulted in their different experiences of emotions. This finding is in line with previous studies [40,92] that proposed that a person from a culture that values collectivism tends to have interdependent self-construal, and this view of the self thus causes the person to use other group members' reactions to define himself or herself; as a result, socially engaging emotions (e.g., shame) are easily felt [49]. This finding confirms that the tendency of teachers to judge accountability can be an important predictor of their emotions in class.

In addition, because none of the immigrant teachers in the qualitative study reported facing racist behaviours from the students or being treated differently in the class, the observed differences may mainly involve teachers' dispositional antecedents rather than situational antecedents in the teaching context. This finding implies that the current teaching context in British higher education is welcoming to international academics and that a welcoming cultural context supports acculturation [39]. Therefore, to promote international teachers' emotional acculturation, there is a need to identify internal mechanisms that help them regulate the dispositional antecedents of emotions. Based on the qualitative results, we suggest a "reaccounting" appraisal mechanism to help immigrant teachers regulate their emotions. This mechanism illustrates the cognitive reappraisal strategy of emotion regulation proposed by previous studies [26,93] and encourages teachers who work in a different cultural context to carefully think about whom to blame when they confront students' disruptive behaviours. Through "reaccounting", international teachers may buffer the intensity of negative emotional experiences and more effectively adapt their emotions to the new teaching context.

6. Conclusions

This research provides an original contribution to identifying the specific differences between international and home teachers' emotional experiences, with particular emphasis on the appraisal mechanism that differentiates their feelings towards students' disruptive behaviours. This research highlights implicit obstacles in the process of international teachers' psychological adaptation. These findings have the potential to be generalised to other immigrant minority groups who also hold interdependence as the priority self-construal. It finally enriches our knowledge of teachers' emotion regulation strategies during acculturation.

6.1. Implications

The present research has implications for several domains.

First, the findings delineate the ways in which teachers in different cultures produce emotions and provide insight into the appraisal mechanisms underlying the cultural differences in emotions. These results can improve international teachers' emotional acculturation and mental well-being.

Second, this research makes important contributions to education practice. It offers policymakers and practitioners first-hand knowledge of the emotional difficulties and challenges of teaching abroad. It has implications for the recruitment and preparation of international teachers for UK universities, as being psychologically prepared for a job in a new cultural context is equally important as being linguistically and cognitively prepared [94].

Third, the results from the qualitative study illustrate the importance of the appraisal dimension of novelty in differentiating teachers' emotional experiences. This finding refines the theoretical model of using appraisal theory in analysing teachers' emotional experiences in cross-cultural settings.

Overall, reflecting on international teachers' emotional experiences in the classroom and their causes should be a key component of building equality and sustainability in teacher education programmes with a wider view towards enhancing teachers' mental well-being and teaching effectiveness.

6.2. Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations can be identified in the current research. First, this research only compared immigrant Chinese university teachers with home British university teachers. The emotional experiences of teachers at educational institutions of other levels and from other international groups remain unknown. Second, Chinese teachers' emotional adaptation in the current research may be limited by their few years of teaching in the UK; therefore, there is room for future researchers to explore the changes in international teachers' emotional adaptation over the years. Third, the sample in this study may also limit the wide generalisation of the research findings. For example, the two samples were not similar in many aspects (e.g., in their ages and years of teaching), which could have created noise in the data. Fourth, a scale validation using CFA with this sample could be an appropriate next step in this programme of research, which is beyond the scope of the current paper. Another limitation was that the participants' identities might be limited by the definition of the cultural group given by the current researchers. These limitations leave room for future research to explore the relationships between culture and teachers' emotions and, consequently, to achieve a more holistic picture of teachers' emotions and teacher effectiveness in classrooms.

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