

The Challenges and Strategies for Humanistic Literacy Education in a Cross-Cultural Context

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ABSTRACT

In the context of globalisation, cross-cultural education has become a significant issue in the field of education, and humanistic literacy education faces numerous challenges in a cross-cultural environment. This paper aims to explore the challenges faced by humanistic literacy education in a cross-cultural context and propose corresponding strategies to address them. The study first analyses challenges such as cultural differences, disparities in educational philosophies and methods, cross-cultural adaptation issues for teachers and students, differences in educational resources and environments, and variations in assessment and feedback mechanisms. Subsequently, systematic strategies are proposed from the following aspects: culturally sensitive education, multicultural educational methods, teacher professional development, student support systems, optimisation of educational resources and environments, and improvement of assessment and feedback mechanisms. The research findings indicate that implementing these strategies can effectively enhance the quality of humanities education in a cross-cultural context, promote educational equity and multicultural integration, and provide practical guidance for educational practitioners.

KEYWORDS

Cross-cultural education; Humanities education; Cultural sensitivity

1 Introduction

With the acceleration of globalisation, cross-cultural interactions have become increasingly frequent, presenting the education sector with unprecedented cross-cultural challenges and opportunities. In the wave of globalisation, education is no longer confined to a single cultural context but must adapt to the integration and exchange of diverse cultures. Cross-cultural education has emerged to cultivate students' adaptability, communication skills, and cultural understanding in multicultural environments. However, educational practices in cross-cultural contexts are not without challenges, particularly in the critical area of humanities education. Humanities education is an integral part of education, focusing not only on students' knowledge accumulation but also on cultivating their moral character, aesthetic abilities, critical thinking, and cultural identity. In a cross-cultural context, the importance of humanities education becomes increasingly evident. On the one hand, cross-cultural environments provide students with abundant cultural resources, helping to broaden their horizons and foster cultural inclusivity; on the other hand, cultural differences may lead to misunderstandings, conflicts, or even hinder the achievement of educational goals. Therefore, how to effectively implement humanities education in a cross-cultural context has become an urgent issue in the field of education. This study aims to deeply explore the challenges faced by humanities education in a cross-cultural context and propose corresponding strategies. It analyses the specific challenges of humanities education in a cross-cultural context, including cultural differences, differences in educational concepts and methods, and cross-cultural adaptation issues for teachers and students. It explores how to optimise educational practices in a cross-cultural context through strategies such as culturally sensitive education, multicultural educational methods, teacher professional development, and student support systems. It proposes specific implementation recommendations to provide practical guidance for educational practitioners, thereby promoting the effective implementation of humanities education in a cross-cultural context.

2 Challenges of humanities education in a cross-cultural context

2.1 Challenges posed by cultural differences

Cultural differences are the primary challenge faced by humanities education in a cross-cultural context. Different cultures have significant differences in their understanding and emphasis on humanities education, which may lead to conflicts in educational goals and content. Humanities education has different focuses in different cultures. For example, humanities education in Western cultures places greater emphasis on individualism, critical thinking, and innovative spirit; while Eastern cultures place greater emphasis on collectivism, moral cultivation, and the inheritance of traditional culture^[1]. This diversity in cultural understanding makes it extremely difficult to design a unified humanities education curriculum in a cross-cultural environment. Additionally, cultural differences may lead to conflicts and misunderstandings in educational practices. For example, educational methods in certain cultural contexts may be perceived as overly authoritarian or lacking flexibility, while those in other cultural contexts may be seen as too lenient or lacking structure^[2].

Such conflicts not only affect the relationship between teachers and students but may also hinder the achievement of educational objectives.

2.2 Differences in educational philosophy and methods

Differences in educational philosophy and methods across cultural contexts are also a significant challenge for humanities education. Educational philosophies vary significantly across different cultural contexts. For example, Western educational philosophy places greater emphasis on student autonomy and personalised development, while Eastern educational philosophy prioritises student discipline and collective interests^[3]. These differences may make it difficult to achieve consensus on educational philosophy in cross-cultural environments, thereby affecting the implementation of humanities education. The adaptability of teaching methods in cross-cultural contexts is also a critical issue. Certain teaching methods may be highly effective in one cultural context but may struggle to achieve the same results in another. For example, group discussions and project-based learning are widely used in Western education but may require more adjustments and adaptations in some Eastern cultures^[4]. Such issues of teaching method adaptability not only affect teaching outcomes but may also lead to students' misunderstandings or resistance toward educational content.

2.3 Cross-cultural adaptation issues for teachers and students

The adaptability of teachers and students in cross-cultural contexts is another significant challenge facing humanities education. Teachers face numerous challenges in their professional development in cross-cultural contexts. They need to possess cross-cultural communication skills, cultural sensitivity, and multicultural teaching abilities, but the cultivation of these skills is not achieved overnight^[5]. Many teachers may encounter cultural shock and teaching method incompatibility issues in cross-cultural environments, which may affect their teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction. Students' adaptation issues in cross-cultural environments are equally significant. They must quickly adapt to new cultural environments, educational methods, and learning requirements, which may lead to psychological stress and learning difficulties^[6].

2.4 Differences in educational resources and environments

In a cross-cultural context, differences in educational resources and environments also pose challenges to humanities education. There are significant disparities in the allocation of educational resources across different cultural backgrounds. Some regions may have abundant educational resources and advanced facilities, while others may face resource shortages and inadequate educational infrastructure^[7]. This imbalance not only affects educational quality but may also lead to inequalities in educational opportunities. The diversity of educational environments also presents challenges for humanities education. Educational environments in different cultural contexts may exhibit significant differences in terms of cultural atmosphere, social support, and family involvement. For example, educational environments in certain cultural contexts may place greater emphasis on close collaboration between schools and families, while those in other cultural contexts may rely more heavily on the school's own resources [8]. This diversity in educational environments requires educators to fully consider the characteristics of educational environments in different cultural contexts when designing humanities education curricula.

2.5 Differences in assessment and feedback mechanisms

Differences in assessment and feedback mechanisms across cultural contexts also pose challenges for humanities education. Assessment standards vary significantly across different cultural contexts. In some cultural contexts, assessment standards may place greater emphasis on knowledge mastery and exam scores, while in others, they may prioritise students' overall qualities and innovative abilities. Such differences in assessment standards may make it difficult to establish a unified assessment system in cross-cultural environments, thereby affecting the evaluation and feedback of educational outcomes. The adaptability of feedback mechanisms in cross-cultural contexts is also a critical issue. Certain feedback mechanisms may be highly effective in one cultural context but struggle to achieve the same results in another. For example, feedback mechanisms in some cultural contexts may prioritise direct and explicit feedback, while those in others may emphasise indirect and subtle feedback. This issue of feedback mechanism adaptability not only affects the improvement of teaching effectiveness but may also lead to students misinterpreting or resisting feedback information.

3 Coping strategies

3.1 Cultural sensitivity education

Cultural sensitivity education is a foundational strategy for addressing cross-cultural challenges, aiming to cultivate teachers' and students' understanding and respect for different cultures, reduce cultural conflicts, and enhance cultural adaptability. Enhancing teachers' cultural sensitivity is the critical first step. As key implementers of cross-cultural education, teachers must possess a high degree of cultural sensitivity. Through cross-cultural training, teachers can learn about educational philosophies, teaching methods, and student needs in different cultural contexts, thereby better adjusting their teaching strategies. Building on this foundation, enhancing students' understanding of multiculturalism is equally important. Students in cross-cultural environments need to develop cross-cultural communication skills and cultural inclusivity.

3.2 Multicultural education methods

Multicultural education methods emphasise fully considering different cultural backgrounds in educational practice and adopting diverse teaching methods to meet the educational needs of different students. Designing multicultural curricula is an important means to achieve this goal. Curriculum design should fully incorporate multicultural elements, covering knowledge, values, and skills from different cultural backgrounds. At the same time, adopting flexible teaching methods is also crucial. The selection of teaching methods should be adjusted according to students' cultural backgrounds and learning needs.

3.3 Teacher professional development

Teacher professional development is a key factor in the successful implementation of humanities education in a cross-cultural context. Through continuous professional training and practice, teachers can continuously improve their cross-cultural teaching abilities and educational quality. Cross-cultural training programmes are an important pathway for enhancing teachers' professional capabilities. Schools and educational institutions should regularly organise cross-cultural training programmes to help teachers master the theories and practical skills of cross-cultural education. Training content can include cross-cultural communication skills, multicultural curriculum design, and cultural sensitivity assessments. Additionally, establishing a platform for intercultural education research and exchange is also extremely important. Teachers should be encouraged to participate in intercultural education research and share teaching experiences and research findings. Through the establishment of intercultural education research groups, online forums, and academic conferences, teachers can engage in exchange and collaboration with other educators, continuously updating their educational concepts and methods. Collaborating with international educational institutions to conduct teacher exchange programmes can also effectively enhance teachers' intercultural teaching capabilities.

3.4 Student support system

Students require adequate support in a cross-cultural environment to help them better adapt to new cultural contexts and overcome academic and psychological challenges. Establishing a cross-cultural adaptation support system is an essential first step. Schools should establish dedicated cross-cultural adaptation support centres to provide students with comprehensive support in areas such as language learning, cultural adaptation, and psychological counselling. Additionally, organising cross-cultural exchange activities is equally important. Through diverse cross-cultural exchange activities, students can enhance mutual interaction and understanding.

3.5 Optimisation of educational resources and environment

The optimisation of educational resources and environment is a crucial guarantee for humanities education in a cross-cultural context. By reasonably allocating and utilising educational resources to create a multicultural educational environment, educational quality can be effectively improved. Optimising the allocation of educational resources is key to achieving educational equity. Educational policies should focus on the balanced distribution of resources to ensure that students from different regions and cultural backgrounds have access to equitable educational resources. Additionally, the use of information technology, such as online education platforms, can expand the coverage of high-quality educational resources and promote educational equity. At the same time, creating a multicultural educational environment is also of great importance. Schools should actively create a multicultural educational environment through campus cultural development, curriculum design, and social activities to reflect the inclusivity and diversity of multiculturalism.

3.6 Optimisation of assessment and feedback mechanisms

Optimising assessment and feedback mechanisms is a crucial component of humanities education in a cross-cultural context. By establishing a scientific and reasonable assessment system and feedback mechanism, educational outcomes can be effectively monitored, and educational strategies can be adjusted in a timely manner. Establishing a diversified assessment system is an important means to achieve this goal. Assessment criteria should fully consider educational objectives and student needs across different cultural backgrounds, establishing a diversified assessment system. Additionally, assessment content should cover multiple dimensions such as knowledge, skills, and attitudes to promote students' comprehensive development. At the same time, optimising the feedback mechanism is also of great importance. The feedback mechanism should be adjusted according to cultural contexts to ensure the effective transmission and understanding of feedback information.

4 Conclusion

This study delves into the challenges faced by humanities education in a cross-cultural context and proposes corresponding strategies to address them. The research finds that cultural differences, disparities in educational philosophies and methods, cross-cultural adaptation issues among teachers and students, differences in educational resources and environments, and variations in assessment and feedback mechanisms all pose significant challenges to the effective implementation of humanities education. These challenges not only impact educational quality but may also hinder students' comprehensive development and the realisation of educational equity. To address these challenges, this study proposes a series of systematic strategies: enhancing teachers' and students' cross-cultural understanding and adaptation capabilities through culturally sensitive education; adopting multicultural education methods to optimise curriculum design and teaching practices; strengthening teacher professional development to enhance their cross-cultural teaching capabilities; establishing a student support system to help students better adapt to cross-cultural environments; optimising the allocation of educational resources to create a multicultural educational environment; and improving assessment and feedback mechanisms to effectively monitor educational outcomes and promptly adjust educational strategies. These strategies complement each other to form a systematic solution, providing concrete guidance for educational practitioners and facilitating the smooth implementation of humanistic literacy education in a cross-cultural context, thereby promoting educational equity and multicultural integration. Although this study has achieved certain results in both theoretical and practical dimensions, it still has limitations.

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