Building a Future Education Model: the Cultural and Ideological Integration of Educational Theory, Management and Digital Technology

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Abstract: Curriculum design goes beyond just subject content and involves comprehensive approach where various courses are interwoven to achieve the broader educational goal of cultivating well-rounded individuals with strong moral values based on ideological integration of educational theory, management and digital technology. Our mixed methods study explored the potential for integrating cultural considerations into educational practices at Tianxiang Teacher Education Institution (TTEI). The findings highlight a strong desire from educators to celebrate student diversity through Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP). However, challenges exist in implementing CRP effectively. Interviews revealed educators struggle with a lack of culturally diverse learning materials and limited support for developing CRP curriculum units. Also, document analysis revealed a policy emphasis on diversity and intercultural understanding, but it lacked clear guidelines for implementing CRP. The curriculum framework included some references to cultural diversity but lacked practical examples or activities for teachers. In conclusion, there is need of equipping teachers with culturally diverse resources, professional development opportunities on CRP strategies, and guidance on integrating technology effectively are crucial steps towards creating inclusive learning environments that celebrate the rich diversity of student backgrounds.
Keywords: Cultural Background, Education, Technology, Curriculum and CRP

1. INTRODUCTION

The term "curriculum" originates from Herbert Spencer's work "What Knowledge Is Most Valuable" (Diamond, 2022). In essence, the curriculum represents a structured plan for learning that facilitates cultural transmission and development. More specifically, the curriculum refers to the educational content chosen by schools to achieve specific learning objectives. This encompasses the various subjects offered in a school setting, along with planned and purposeful educational activities. Many educators associate the curriculum directly with the subjects they teach.

According to Roth curriculum design goes beyond just subject content (Roth, 2020). They propose a comprehensive approach where various courses are interwoven to achieve the broader educational goal of cultivating well-rounded individuals with strong moral values. Similarly, Li

and Liu emphasizes the integration of moral and ethical considerations into the teaching and development of all courses (Li & Liu, 2023), not just dedicated political education classes. Building on this idea, curriculum design should actively incorporate these elements into the learning process itself, be it through knowledge acquisition, experiential activities, or various learning engagements.

The rapid integration of technology into education has often portrayed it as a neutral tool for enhancing learning (Oliveira et al., 2019; Videnovik et al., 2020). This simplified view overlooks the crucial role of pedagogy in this relationship. Factors like teacher expertise the learning environment and the value of experience and adaptation in teaching are all essential considerations. These issues become especially critical in the context of the recent surge in online, blended, and remote learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Williamson et al., 2020). The quick adoption of technology-based solutions can be tempting during periods of uncertainty (Teräs et al., 2020). While online formats ensured educational continuity, they can exacerbate existing educational inequalities and create new market opportunities. Furthermore, a focus on technological solutions can overshadow established pedagogical practices (Pischetola, 2021). The current situation also raises concerns about the influence of commercial entities shaping future education models through untested approaches.

The ultimate goal of higher education is to cultivate well-rounded graduates. These individuals should possess strong academic abilities, a sense of social responsibility, and the skills to compete effectively in the globalized world. This requires not only fostering intellectual growth but also nurturing well-developed personalities (Aliakbari & Sadeghi, 2022). Central to achieving this goal is the quality of teaching and learning experiences offered by universities and colleges. Strong teaching practices not only enhance a university's reputation and competitiveness but also equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world (Eybers & Kruger-Roux, 2021).

Well-trained teachers guide students through a dynamic learning process. Students analyze and synthesize conflicting information, prioritize goals at various levels, and hone their persuasive communication skills. This equips them to navigate uncertainty, seize opportunities, and make informed decisions (Abonyi & Ahwireng, 2020). Schools themselves are cultural entities. They serve as inheritors and creators of culture, shaping individuals through their unique environments. This inherent link between education and culture offers unparalleled potential for ongoing improvement. By establishing robust quality management systems, schools can continuously

refine teaching practices. This includes implementing quality information systems, supervision processes, monitoring mechanisms, and assessment tools at all levels – from individual instructors to departments and entire institutions. The ultimate goal of these efforts is to consistently enhance the quality of experimental teaching and ensure graduates achieve their learning objectives (Sun et al., 2017; Wu, 2023).

The growing diversity of China's student body, particularly with an influx of ethnic minority students, presents a new set of challenges for educators. While international research offers a wealth of insights on teacher competence in handling multicultural classrooms, these concepts haven't been extensively translated into the design of teacher education programs in China. There's a critical need for more empirical research to understand how these programs are adapting to equip future teachers with the skills necessary to navigate the complexities of culturally diverse classrooms.

The field of multicultural education has long emphasized the importance of teacher competence in diverse classrooms (Seeberg & Minick, 2012). Equipping pre-service teachers with this competence, encompassing cultural knowledge and pedagogical skills, is considered a cornerstone of 21st-century teacher education programs. Inspired by this global discourse, Chinese researchers have echoed the need for multicultural competence among educators working in China's diverse regions. They advocate for teacher education programs to adapt to the demographics of these areas and equip future teachers with the skills to effectively support culturally diverse students. However, compared to the vast body of international research examining practical implementation of multicultural education within teacher training programs(Gorski, 2009), Chinese scholarship lacks a strong foundation in empirical studies (Wang, 2018). This highlights a critical gap – a need for more research on how these programs are translating theory into practice within the unique context of China.

Rationale and Objective

The future of education demands a holistic approach that integrates educational theory, effective management practices, and the transformative power of digital technology. The rationale of our study is based on addressing the shortcomings of traditional models that may not adequately address the needs of a globalized world with a growing emphasis on cultural competency and digital fluency. Our study seeks to develop a comprehensive future education model that seamlessly integrates cultural and ideological considerations within educational theory, best practices in educational management, and the strategic implementation of digital technologies.

2. METHODS

2.1 Study Design

Our study adopted a mixed methods approach to explore the potential for a future education model that integrates cultural and ideological considerations within educational theory, management practices, and digital technology implementation. The research was conducted at Tianxiang Teacher Education Institution (TTEI) in Yunnan province, China. This location was purposefully chosen due to its status as having the most complex ethnic minority demographics in China. The study involved a sample size of 73 participants. Prior to commencing data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at TTEI. All participants were provided with detailed information about the study's purpose, data collection procedures, and their right to withdraw at any stage. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before their involvement in the study.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Informed by the data collected through our mixed methods approach at Tianxiang Teacher Education Institution (TTEI), this conceptual framework outlines a future education model that integrates cultural and ideological considerations with educational theory, management practices, and digital technology implementation.

At the heart of the model lies Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), which acknowledges the diverse backgrounds and experiences of students. The framework emphasizes equipping educators with the tools and approaches to foster inclusive learning environments that celebrate cultural differences. Data from interviews and focus groups can inform strategies for incorporating cultural elements into curriculum design, teaching methods, and classroom activities.

The next element involves an Ideologically Aligned Education that recognizes the role of education in shaping social values and critical thinking skills. Data analysis, including document analysis of existing educational policies, can help identify the desired ideological goals for education within the specific context. The framework emphasizes aligning educational practices with these goals, ensuring a curriculum that fosters critical thinking, responsible citizenship, and intercultural understanding. Lastly, the model acknowledges the potential of technology to personalize learning experiences, enhance accessibility, and promote collaboration. The

framework emphasizes using technology to optimize educational management practices, such as data-driven decision-making and resource allocation.

2.3 Data Collection

We carried out qualitative data collection through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis. We conducted semi-structured interviews with a total of 30 participants. This included 10 educators (teachers from diverse ethnicities), 10 administrators (school principals and curriculum directors), and 10 educational technology experts. Interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes each and were conducted in a private setting. An interview guide with open-ended questions explored participants' views on cultural integration in education, current management strategies, and the perceived role of technology in future educational models. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim with participants' consent.

Three focus groups were conducted, each with 10 educators from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Participants were recruited from various departments within TTEI to ensure a range of perspectives. Each focus group discussion lasted approximately 90 minutes and was facilitated by a trained researcher. A semi-structured discussion guide prompted participants to explore existing challenges in integrating cultural and ideological aspects into education. The group then brainstormed potential solutions and innovative strategies for curriculum development, management practices, and technology use within a culturally responsive framework. All focus groups were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim with participants' consent.

We collected and analysed a range of official documents from TTEI, including existing educational policies, curriculum frameworks, and strategic plans for educational technology integration. Documents were reviewed thematically, focusing on identifying current trends and gaps in how cultural considerations are addressed within these frameworks. The analysis also explored the existing vision for technology use in education and its potential for supporting culturally responsive teaching practices. Our study utilized a quantitative survey to gather broader data on demographics, learning styles, technology use, and preferred teaching methods.

The survey was distributed to all 73 participants involved in the study, resulting in a high response rate of 90% (n=66) from both educators and students from Tianxiang Teacher Education Institution (TTEI). The

survey was administered online using a secure survey platform to ensure participant anonymity and convenience and was designed to be completed within approximately 20 minutes.

2.4 Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected from the survey was analysed using GraphPad Prism version 9.5.1 statistical software at a statistical significance of 5%. Descriptive statistics were performed to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents, learning style preferences, and frequency of technology use in classrooms. Correlational analyses were used to explore potential relationships between variables, such as learning styles and preferred teaching methods. All qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis.

3. RESULTS

The study involved a total of 66 participants, with 40 (60.6%) identifying as educators (including 10 teachers, 10 administrators, and 10 educational technology experts) and 26 (39.4%) as students (see Figure 1). In terms of ethnicity, 32 (48.5%) participants were Han Chinese, followed by Bai (10, 15.2%), Yi (8, 12.1%), and other minority groups (16, 24.2%). The gender breakdown revealed a majority of female participants (44, 66.7%) compared to males (22, 33.3%). The age range distribution showed 28 participants (42.4%) between 18-24 years old, 24 (36.4%) between 25-34 years old, and 14 (21.2%) aged 35 or above (see Figure 2).

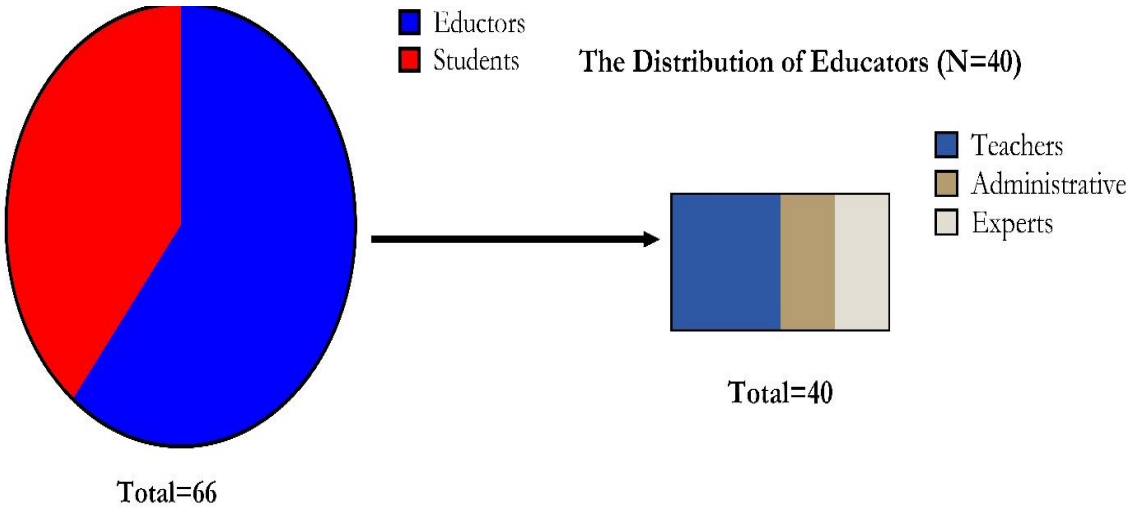

Figure 1: A pie chart (A) and a horizontal slice (B) distribution of the participants based on education role and the number of educators (Teachers, Experts and Administrators).

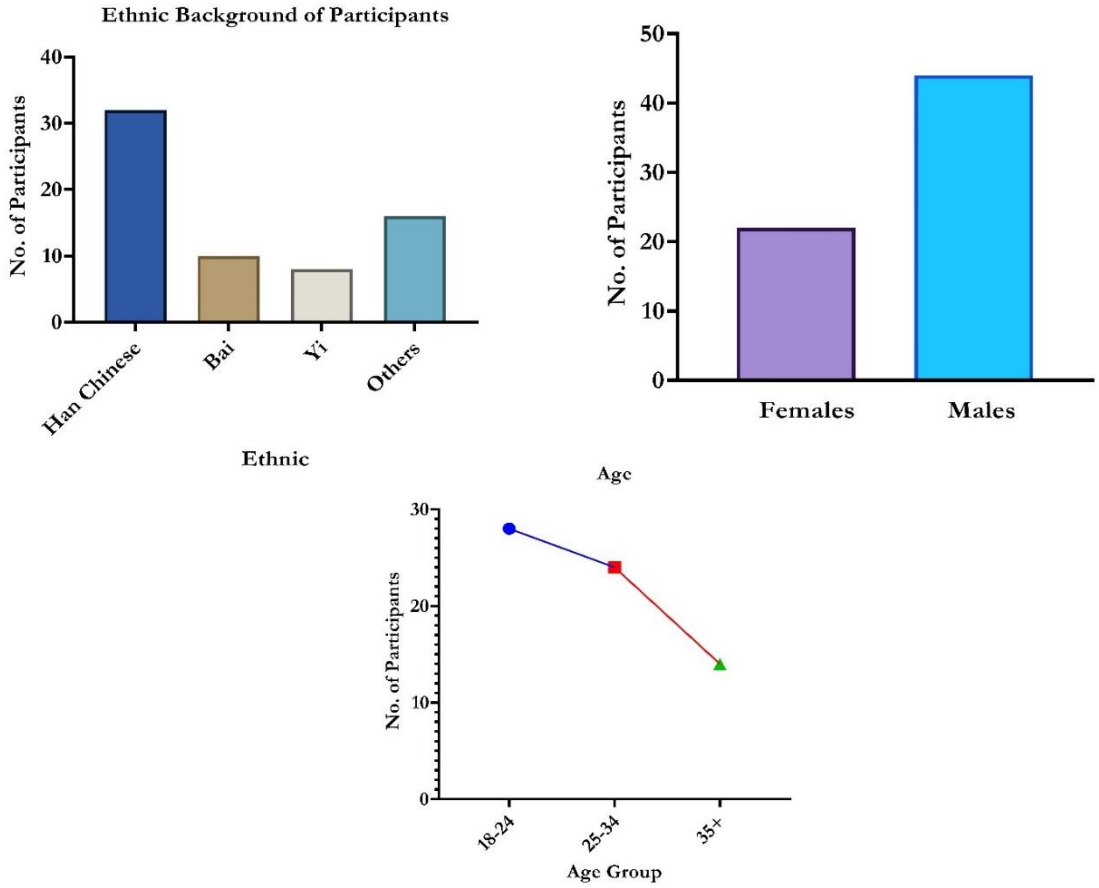

Figure 2: Column Charts and a Line Graphs showing the number of participants based on ethnic background, gender distribution and age categories.

In Figure 3A, the results on learning styles showed participants had a mean preference for a visual learning style (M = 3.8), with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.6. Auditory learning style had a mean score of 2.8 (SD = 0.2) and kinesthetic learning style had a mean of 3.2 (SD = 0.5). Scores were based on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree) where participants rated their preference for statements aligned with each learning style (e.g., "*I learn best by seeing pictures and diagrams*" for Visual learners).

In Figure 3B, the results on preferred teaching methods showed that project-based learning had the highest mean score (M = 4.3) with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.7. Collaborative learning (M = 4.1, SD = 0.8) was also favoured by participants. Lecture-based learning received the lowest mean score (M = 3.2, SD = 1.0), followed by the flipped classroom approach (M = 3.8, SD = 0.9). Scores were based on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree) where participants rated their level of agreement with statements about each teaching method (e.g., "*I prefer learning through lectures where the instructor presents the material*" for Lecture-based).

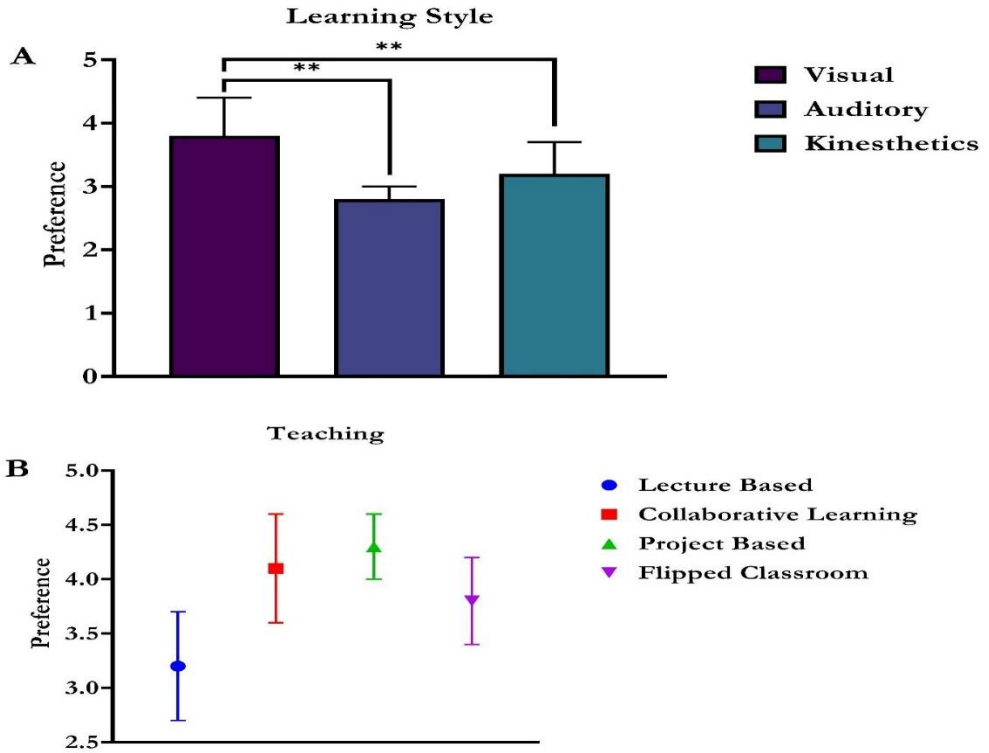

Figure 3: A comparative bar chart showing the preferred learning styles suggested by students (A) (** $p < .01$, multiple comparisons) and the preferred teaching methods used by teachers (B).

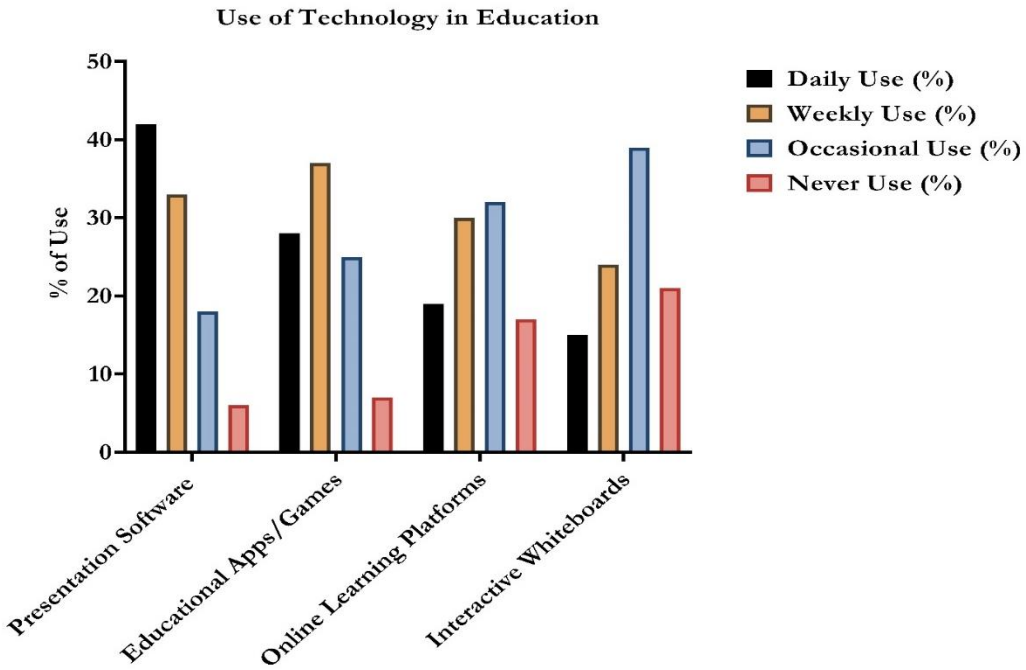

Figure 4: Analysis of the various types of technological practices used in educational teaching.

In Figure 4, the survey revealed varying technology use frequencies in classrooms. Presentation software had the highest daily usage (42.4%), followed by weekly use (33.3%). Educational apps and games saw

moderate adoption with weekly use (37.9%) being more prevalent than daily use (28.8%). Online learning platforms had a similar distribution with weekly use (30.3%) edging out daily use (19.7%). Interactive whiteboards had the least frequent use, with the majority (39.4%) only using them occasionally.

Table 1: Challenges in Integrating Cultural Considerations into Classrooms (n=66)

Category	Frequency	Description
Curriculum Materials	22	Lack of culturally diverse content and resources in textbooks and lesson plans.
Language Barriers	18	Difficulty adapting instruction for students with limited proficiency in the primary language of instruction.
Assessment Methods	15	Standardized tests not reflecting the diverse knowledge and skills of students from different backgrounds.
Teacher Training	12	Need for professional development opportunities to equip educators with culturally responsive teaching strategies.
Classroom Management	9	Difficulty addressing cultural differences in communication styles and student behaviour expectations.

In Table 1, the study identified challenges in integrating cultural considerations. The most frequent issue (22) was a lack of diverse learning materials. Language barriers (18) were another hurdle, with standardized tests (15) seen as inadequate. Teacher training (12) needs were highlighted, along with classroom management challenges (9) due to cultural differences.

Table 2: Themes from Semi-Structured Interviews (n=30)

Theme	Participant Quotes
Importance of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP)	* "Our students come from such rich backgrounds; we need teaching methods that celebrate those differences." (Educator) * "I struggle to find materials that reflect the experiences of my Yi students. We need more culturally relevant resources." (Educator)
Challenges in Implementing CRP	* "There's not enough support for teachers to develop culturally responsive curriculum units." (Administrator) * "Feeling overwhelmed by the diversity in my classroom, I'm not sure how to address everyone's needs." (Educator)
Perceptions of Technology in CRP	* "Technology can be a powerful tool for creating interactive lessons that showcase diverse cultures." (Educational Technology Expert) * "We need to ensure technology integration doesn't overshadow the importance of face-to-face interaction in building a culturally inclusive classroom." (Educator)

In Table 2, Interviews highlighted the importance of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) to celebrate student diversity (Educator quotes). However, challenges arose due to limited support for developing CRP materials (Administrator) and educator overwhelm managing diverse needs (Educator quotes). Technology's potential for creating interactive, culturally diverse lessons was acknowledged (Expert quote), but concerns lingered about it overshadowing face-to-face interaction (Educator quote).

Table 3: Key Findings from Focus Group Discussions (n=3 groups)

Focus Group Topic	Key Discussion Points
Integrating Cultural Elements into Curriculum	* Brainstorming strategies for incorporating local folktales and music into language learning lessons. * Identifying opportunities to invite guest speakers from different ethnicities to share their cultural experiences.
Fostering Intercultural Understanding in Classrooms	* Discussing the importance of promoting respectful dialogue and appreciation for cultural differences. * Exploring ways to address potential cultural conflicts through open communication and mediation.
Leveraging Technology for Culturally Responsive Teaching	* Sharing ideas for using online platforms for collaborative projects between students from different backgrounds. * Discussing the potential of educational apps and games to promote cultural awareness in a fun and engaging way.

In Table 3, focus groups explored integrating cultural elements like folktales and music into lessons (language learning) and inviting guest speakers (diverse ethnicities). They emphasized fostering intercultural understanding through respectful dialogue and open communication to manage potential cultural conflicts. Technology's role in culturally responsive teaching was discussed, with ideas on using online platforms for collaborative projects and educational apps/games to promote cultural awareness in a fun way.

Table 4 (a): Outcomes from Document Analysis: Educational Policies and Frameworks

Document	Key Findings
Educational Policy on Cultural Integration	* Emphasizes the importance of promoting respect for diversity and fostering intercultural understanding in schools. * Lacks clear guidelines on how to implement culturally responsive teaching practices in the classroom.
Curriculum Framework	* Includes some references to the importance of cultural diversity but lacks specific examples or activities for teachers to integrate cultural elements. * Provides limited guidance on differentiating instruction to cater to diverse learning styles and cultural backgrounds.

Table 4 (b): Outcomes from Document Analysis: Educational Policies and Frameworks

Document	Key Findings
Strategic Plan for Educational Technology Integration	* Focuses on improving technological infrastructure and teacher training on using technology tools. * Does not explicitly address the potential for technology to support culturally responsive pedagogy.

In Table 4, document analysis revealed an educational policy promoting diversity and intercultural understanding (schools) but lacking implementation guidance (classroom). The curriculum framework included references to cultural diversity but offered minimal practical examples or activities for teachers. The strategic plan prioritized improving technology infrastructure and teacher training on using these tools, but it did not explicitly address how technology could support culturally responsive teaching methods.

4. DISCUSSION

Our findings highlight a strong desire from educators to celebrate student diversity through Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP). However, challenges exist in implementing CRP effectively. Interviews revealed educators struggle with a lack of culturally diverse learning materials and limited support for developing CRP curriculum units. Previous studies have suggested that China's 55 ethnic minorities possess distinct cultural identities, distinguished from the majority Han population and each other in language, customs, and religion (Lee, 2016). Ideally, "ethnic minority education" caters to homogenous classrooms within a single minority group. However, China's reality is far more complex. Ethnic minorities exhibit a pattern of "dispersed concentration" (*dazajü xiaojüjü*), meaning they are scattered throughout provinces and cities but concentrated in smaller villages. This pattern was further complicated by the 2001 "merged school" (*chedian binxiao*) policy, which closed small village schools and consolidated students in centralized urban schools. Although intended to address resource imbalances and promote educational equality, this policy transformed village schools serving single ethnicities into multicultural town and city schools. Consequently, a previously homogenous student body is now increasingly heterogeneous, creating a new set of challenges for educators in ethnic minority education. This shift towards multicultural classrooms underscores the critical need for teacher

education programs to prioritize the development of multicultural competence amongst educators. Equipping teachers with the skills to navigate diverse student backgrounds is essential for ensuring effective learning in this evolving educational landscape.

The growing diversity in classrooms has fueled a surge in research on multicultural education and teacher preparation in this field. Within this scholarship, various terms emerge, including multicultural competence (Banks, 2008), cross-cultural competence (McAllister & Irvine, 2000), and intercultural competence (Mushi, 2004). While these concepts have subtle distinctions, they all emphasize the knowledge and skills necessary for teachers to effectively navigate diverse classrooms. For instance, Mushi highlights the importance of intercultural competence for teachers to create well-planned and inclusive learning environments (Mushi, 2004).

Multicultural competence is a multifaceted concept crucial for effective teaching in today's diverse classrooms. Many researchers break it down into three key dimension (Papadopoulou et al., 2022; Pope et al., 2019). The first dimension is awareness. This foundational element precedes the others and requires teachers to develop cultural sensitivity. This means recognizing that students' backgrounds profoundly shape their learning styles and behaviours. Culturally aware teachers demonstrate acceptance of differences and hold anti-racist perspectives. They actively cultivate respect for diverse cultures and eliminate prejudice, fostering a positive learning environment for all students. The second dimension focuses on knowledge. Multiculturally competent teachers possess factual knowledge about minority cultures and broader cultural diversity. This knowledge allows them to integrate cultural elements into educational activities, promote cross-cultural understanding, and avoid stereotypes (Yuan, 2018). Additionally, they have a strong grasp of the principles, ideologies, and theoretical foundations of multicultural education (Abacioglu et al., 2020; Gay, 2018). The final dimension is skills. In contrast to deficit-based theories that blame cultural backgrounds for lower academic performance, culturally competent teachers embrace cultural difference theory. They develop skills in using culturally relevant content and pedagogical strategies to create effective learning experiences for diverse students. Culturally responsive teaching empowers teachers to respect and value students' cultural backgrounds. They translate their multicultural knowledge into actionable skills for designing inclusive curriculums and classroom instruction, ensuring all students can thrive in the learning environment (Abacioglu et al., 2020; Gay, 2018). Our study also identified technology as a potentially powerful tool for CRP. Educators and educational technology

experts acknowledged technology's ability to create interactive lessons that showcase diverse cultures and facilitate collaboration among students from different backgrounds. However, concerns were raised about technology overshadowing the importance of face-to-face interaction in building a culturally inclusive classroom environment.

Research over the past two decades highlights the complexities of implementing digital technologies in education (Clark-Wilson et al., 2020). A common theme is the existence of various barriers that can hinder teachers from effectively adopting these technologies in their pedagogy. One set of challenges lies at the school level. These include factors like limited time for integrating technology, insufficient training for teachers, restricted access to technology resources, and a lack of dedicated technical support. Another set of challenges pertains to teachers themselves. These may include a lack of confidence in using technology effectively in the classroom, limited technical skills, or a general resistance to changing established teaching methods (Lawrence 18). Additionally, pre-conceived beliefs about the role of technology in education can act as a barrier to its successful integration (Tondeur et al., 2019). Many studies have explored the connection between teacher characteristics and the adoption of digital technologies in classrooms (Lawrence & Tar, 2018). These studies often highlight the importance of positive teacher attitudes and prior experience with technology for successful integration into teaching practices. However, a common assumption suggests that failed technology adoption stems solely from teacher resistance to change and innovation. This perspective could be interpreted as reflecting a technological determinist view, where the mere presence of digital tools is presumed to drive educational innovation.

The introduction of new technologies into society often sparks debates about their impact. In education, some argue that technology will inevitably lead to positive change. This viewpoint aligns with the concept of technological determinism. Determinism suggests that technology itself is the driving force behind social and cultural change, with its presence automatically leading to predetermined effects. However, this perspective can be overly simplistic. The way a society perceives and adopts a new technology plays a crucial role in shaping its actual impact. For example, diffusion of innovation theories emphasizes the importance of communication and social context in technology adoption. While they acknowledge the role of innovation characteristics, they don't isolate communication as the sole factor. Critics argue that such theories can still lean towards determinism by attributing too much power to the technology

itself. In the early days of technological exploration, theories often painted a picture of uncontrollable change. Technology, it was believed, unfolded according to its own internal logic, an unstoppable force shaping societies and history (Dafoe, 2015). More moderate perspectives acknowledged some social influence, but still viewed technological innovation as the primary driver of social and cultural change. These deterministic views shared several core elements. First, they placed technology above human agency, suggesting its development followed an inevitable path (Dafoe, 2015). Second, they envisioned technology as evolving independently within a specific historical context, largely separate from human influence. Third, they disregarded any conscious consideration of technology's social impact (Dafoe, 2015). These studies, according to dos Santos Ferreira et al. essentially assumed a prophetic role, envisioning preordained uses for technology based solely on its existence (dos Santos Ferreira et al., 2024).

One prevalent approach to integrating technology in education emphasizes teacher proficiency. This perspective suggests that a teacher's technical skills and knowledge are the key factors determining successful implementation and improved learning outcomes.

When challenges arise, the blame often falls on individual teachers who haven't adapted their practices or acquired sufficient technical expertise. This view prioritizes the "how" of technology integration, assuming the "why" (the inherent value of technology in education) is self-evident (Pischetola, 2021). However, this focus on individual skillsets can overlook broader systemic issues that may hinder successful technology adoption.

Focus groups and document analysis provided further insights. Focus groups explored strategies for integrating cultural elements into the curriculum and fostering intercultural understanding in classrooms. Document analysis revealed a policy emphasis on diversity and intercultural understanding, but it lacked clear guidelines for implementing CRP. The curriculum framework included some references to cultural diversity but lacked practical examples or activities for teachers. The strategic plan for technology integration focused on infrastructure and teacher training but did not explicitly address how technology could support culturally responsive pedagogy. Recent years have seen a growing emphasis on the importance of "school culture" within educational institutions (Dužević et al., 2019). This concept extends beyond mere management strategies and delves into the broader values, attitudes, and behaviours that permeate a university's environment. A strong school culture fosters collaboration, innovation, and a commitment to excellence, all of which contribute to a more enriching learning experience for students. However, ensuring quality

in higher education goes beyond internal university efforts. Ideally, there should be a mechanism for external social participation in quality management. This can help to ensure that universities remain accountable and responsive to the needs of society as a whole (Seyfried & Ansmann, 2018).

Management education plays a critical role in shaping future business leaders. One key method in this field is case teaching, where students grapple with real-world scenarios faced by companies. This approach goes beyond simply presenting theoretical frameworks. Instead, it actively cultivates critical thinking, analytical skills, and the ability to make informed decisions under pressure – all essential qualities for innovative management talent (Herkanaidu et al., 2021). The benefits of case teaching extend beyond the individual student. By fostering a dynamic learning environment that caters to diverse needs, it can also enhance the overall competitiveness of educational institutions. This, in turn, strengthens the value proposition offered to students and society at large. Furthermore, case studies can inform the ongoing development of management education theory. By analysing real-world situations, educators can gain insights into the evolving needs of the business world and refine their curriculum accordingly. Our findings were similar to previous studies who observed that Greek schools have witnessed a significant rise in the number of students from diverse minority backgrounds, including ethnicity, race, language, and religion (Gergana & Simona, 2023; Palaiologou, 2023). This shift has transformed the once-homogeneous student population into a multicultural one. This newfound diversity presents both challenges and opportunities for educators and the entire education system (Tsaliki, 2012). Ensuring the smooth integration of these migrant students into the broader Greek society remains a top priority (Palaiologou, 2012).

Ensuring inclusivity in schools requires a two-pronged approach. First, the school itself, as a social institution, needs to recognize and embrace the diverse "ethno-cultural capital" that migrant and refugee children bring (Gurer, 2019; Kaldi et al., 2018; Ratini, 2019; Schmidt, 2015). This diverse cultural background is a valuable asset. Second, educators, as the primary drivers of the learning process, play a critical role in fostering equal educational opportunities for all students. This commitment to equity aims to promote social justice, social cohesion, and empowers students to develop their multifaceted identities within the school environment. The growing diversity in classrooms across the globe necessitates a radical transformation towards multicultural learning environments (Gropas &

Triandafyllidou, 2011; Papadopoulou et al., 2022). This shift exposes the limitations of monocultural and narrowly nationalistic educational systems, rendering them inadequate for the realities of the 21st century.

Since the mid-1990s, the need for an intercultural educational framework has become a prominent issue within educational policy and social discourse. The influx of students from diverse backgrounds creates a complex learning environment for both educators and students (Hysa, 2020). Migrant students often grapple with social and academic difficulties due to limited Greek language proficiency. This can hinder their ability to not only follow the curriculum but also to build social connections within the classroom and broader school community (Palaiologou, 2012). Another key challenge lies in implementing intercultural education principles. Schools must find ways to respect the cultural backgrounds these students bring ("cultural capital" in (Hadjisoteriou & Angelides, 2016) and integrate them effectively into the learning process.

Despite a growing recognition of the need for intercultural education, research suggests that the Greek educational system often struggles to fully embrace the cultural diversity of its migrant student population (Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2020; Lazaridou et al., 2020). Studies indicate a tendency towards assimilationist practices within the system. To bridge this gap, teachers play a crucial role. They need to critically examine their own cultural assumptions and challenge the idea of solely representing the dominant culture. Ongoing intercultural training is essential to equip them with the skills to navigate the complexities of multicultural classrooms and manage diverse student backgrounds effectively (Beckett & Kobayashi, 2020; Domingo & Guerrero, 2018; Gibbs, 2020). This need for teacher development persists despite institutional efforts undertaken by the state and European programs over the past two decades.

5. CONCLUSION

Overall, the study underscores the need for a multifaceted approach to integrate cultural considerations into education at TTEI. This may involve developing culturally relevant curriculum materials, providing professional development opportunities for teachers on CRP strategies, and exploring the potential of technology to support culturally responsive teaching practices while maintaining the importance of face-to-face interaction. Furthermore, there is need of equipping teachers with culturally diverse resources, professional development opportunities on CRP strategies, and

guidance on integrating technology effectively are crucial steps towards creating inclusive learning environments that celebrate the rich diversity of student backgrounds.

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