Cross-cultural Adaptation in the U.S. of Students in Chinese-foreign Higher Education Cooperation Program

-- A Literature Review

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Abstract

This article presents the literature review of a study on Cross-cultural adaptation (CCA) in the U.S. of students in Chinese-foreign Higher Education Cooperation Program (CFHECP). The authors focus on a general review and analysis of the existing studies on CCA of CFHECP students.

Keywords

Cross-cultural Adaptation (CCA); Chinese-foreign Higher Education Cooperation Program (CFHECP); Literature Review; Analysis.

1. Introduction

The author’s study is mainly aimed at the students who study abroad under the mode of CFHECP, focusing on the CFHECP students’ major barriers to their CCA and their acculturation experiences in the mainstream culture during their overseas study. Therefore, this article focuses on a general review and analysis of the existing studies on CCA of CFHECP students.

2. Literature Review of Cross-cultural Adaptation of CFHECP Students

The focus of CCA is the process of students’ studying abroad. However, at present, there are very few studies specially emphasizing CCA of CFHECP students during their overseas study. As far as the researcher can see, there are only 13 relevant research articles listed below both east and west. Xu (2017) pointed out that due to the lack of attention paid to the cultivation of students’ intercultural communication competence in CFHECP, students’ practical application of intercultural communication is mainly manifested in three aspects: lack of cultural common knowledge, weakness in routine knowledge of life and insufficient cultural vocabulary. Therefore, it is necessary to cultivate the Cross-cultural communication ability of the program students in a targeted way, which can help them better integrate into the foreign society and reduce the barriers caused by cultural differences. Tian and Liu (2018) believed that CFHECP students not only have common mental health problems among ordinary college students, but also bear more psychological pressure from special influencing factors due to the particularity of their environment. Ma Long, He Qinghua, Zhao Yufang and Michael Kyrios (2018) have deepens the research in the above aspect by investigating the mental health status of 196 students from two programs of CFHECP. The results showed that compared with the individual studying-abroad students, CFHECP students tends to be in a poorer mental health status due to the more courses and tight schedule.

Meanwhile, the findings showed that compared with male students, female students showed worse psychological endurance and emotional regulation ability, besides, the closer the family relationship, the better the students’ mental health performance.
Hou Junxia (2019) explored Chinese students’ transnational learning experience in a Sino-British cooperative education program. The research shows that there are obvious differences between CFHECP students and individual students in CCA, which need to be treated differently, and specific strategies of the adaptation need to be sought. Therefore, it provides valuable basic information for this study and also proves the necessity of specialized research on CCA of CFHECP students. However, the study mainly used quantitative statistical methods in data processing and analysis, while it did not make enough descriptions and explanations on the specific content of the interview, thus it was slightly weak in qualitative analysis. At the same time, although this study indicates that the systematic training and preparation received by CFHECP students during the domestic study may have a positive effect on their CCA, it does not analyze in depth what kind of preparation and training before going abroad will be most effective. Therefore, this is one of the knowledge gaps in the current study.

Wang (2021) explored the academic adaptation of joined-education Chinese students in American universities, focusing on CFHECP students. The article discussed the challenges of their academic adaptation and analyzed the factors in order to propose practical implications to the classroom teaching in Chinese universities. However, the statement and analysis of the interview in this article are relatively simple, especially the discussion of the factors influencing CFHECP students’ CCA is neither detailed nor in-depth enough. This knowledge gap piqued my interest in further exploring the topic.

Different from domestic scholars, international scholars have focused on the Cross-cultural conflicts and problems involved in program management, subject setting, course teaching, of Chinese-foreign Cooperative Higher Education (Lan & Ersi, 2017). Cross-cultural awareness, Cross-cultural communication and management ability are continuing problems in Chinese-foreign Cooperative Education (Svetlana, Hannah & Anna, 2018; Chen & Yu, 2018; Ariel & Gary, 2019). Research suggests that the problem of psychological adaptation of CFHECP students does exist and should be paid adequate attention to (Lucas, 2019; Chen, 2019).

### 3. Conclusion

In summary, the CCA of CFHECP students during their overseas study has its own characteristics, and indeed there are still many problems under-researched. These problems not only have an important impact on students’ academic achievement and personal growth, but also play an important role in the quality and sustainable development of the entire Chinese-foreign Cooperative Higher Education (CFCHE). Therefore, it is necessary to conduct specialized and targeted studies on them. But till now, the research on Cross-cultural issues of CFHECP mainly focuses on the following aspects: the cultural differences and their influences in the program management, the intercultural competence training, the practical research on some specific cases of CFCHE as well as the teaching methods of courses in these programs. Although a few studies have also noticed the status and problems of CFHECP students’ mental health, the inspection scope is limited in the students’ study of domestic stage. Investigation of CFHECP students’ major barriers to their CCA and their acculturation experiences in the mainstream culture during their overseas study in the mainstream culture, also the strategies adopted and the affecting factors will provide help for program students’ language training, academic and psychological preparation before going abroad and the improvement of CCA training for the colleges/universities both at home and in the host culture that carry out the CFHECP, all of that will contribute to the formation of a CCA framework for the CFHECP.
References


