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Abstract

This study explores the influence of cultural backgrounds on teaching methods, student expectations, and academic performance in multicultural classrooms through a mixed-methods approach. The quantitative analysis, involving 315 students, revealed significant positive effects of culturally responsive teaching ($B = 0.315$, $p < 0.001$) and cultural socialization ($B = 0.212$, $p = 0.010$) on academic success, highlighting that students exposed to inclusive educational practices perform better. The qualitative analysis, based on interviews with 45 teachers, emphasized the necessity of adapting teaching strategies to accommodate diverse cultural needs. Teachers reported that culturally relevant examples and differentiated instruction significantly improved student engagement and achievement. Findings demonstrate that cultural competence and professional development are critical for fostering equitable education and maximizing student outcomes in diverse settings, making inclusive teaching practices essential for academic success.

Keywords: cultural backgrounds, teaching methods, academic performance, culturally responsive teaching, cultural competence, professional development, inclusive education, multicultural classrooms

1. Introduction

In the 21st century, globalization has transformed various sectors, with education being one of the most affected. The increasing interconnectedness of nations, facilitated by technological advances, international migration, and global economic interdependence, has resulted in a profound shift in the demographic composition of educational institutions. Classrooms today are no longer homogenous environments; they are microcosms of global diversity, where students and teachers from various cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds converge. This growing cultural diversity is particularly evident in countries with significant immigration rates, as well as in international schools and higher education institutions that attract students from all over the world (Bangura, 2018).

As a result of these changes, the nature of teaching and learning has become more complex. Educational systems, traditionally designed to serve relatively homogenous populations, are now challenged to meet the diverse needs of students from multiple cultural contexts. The presence of such diversity in the classroom introduces a range of perspectives, values, and experiences that can enrich the learning environment but also pose significant challenges for educators. These challenges include adjusting teaching methods to accommodate diverse learning styles, managing differing expectations around teacher-student relationships, and addressing the varying definitions of academic success that students bring from their cultural backgrounds.

The role of cultural backgrounds in shaping how teaching and learning are perceived and implemented cannot be overstated. Education, as a social institution, reflects the cultural norms, values, and practices of the society it serves. Different cultures have different expectations of what constitutes effective teaching, how knowledge should be transferred, and how students should engage with that knowledge. For example, in East Asian cultures such as Japan, China, and South Korea, education often emphasizes hierarchical relationships, with teachers seen as authority figures whose role is to impart knowledge through structured, disciplined methods. There is a strong focus on memorization, academic rigor, and success in high-stakes exams, which are seen as critical to social mobility and career success (Fang & Gopinathan, 2009).

Conversely, in many Western societies, particularly in the United States, Canada, and Scandinavian countries, education tends to emphasize student-centered learning. Here, the role of the teacher is often perceived as a facilitator of knowledge rather than an authoritative figure. The educational approach in these contexts encourages critical thinking, creativity, and open dialogue between students and teachers, with a focus on the development of problem-solving skills and individual expression (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). These differences highlight how cultural norms can shape educational philosophies and methods, leading to divergent expectations and experiences for both teachers and students.

In multicultural classrooms, the clash of these cultural norms can create significant challenges for both educators and learners. Teachers may find it difficult to adjust their teaching methods to accommodate students from different cultural backgrounds, while students may struggle to adapt to an educational system that does not align with their prior experiences or expectations. For instance, students from cultures that value teacher-directed instruction may feel uncomfortable in settings where they are expected to take initiative and engage in independent, self-directed learning. Similarly, students from more egalitarian cultures may find it difficult to thrive in educational environments that emphasize strict hierarchies and deference to authority (Bangura, 2018).

Understanding these cultural influences is critical for ensuring success in diverse classrooms. Research has shown that when educators are aware of the cultural backgrounds of their students and adapt their teaching methods accordingly, students are more likely to engage with the material and perform well academically (Gay, 2018). Culturally responsive teaching, which involves recognizing and valuing the cultural backgrounds of students and using this knowledge to inform instructional strategies, has been identified as a key factor in improving educational outcomes in multicultural settings (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

However, despite the growing recognition of the importance of cultural competence in education, many teachers and educational institutions still struggle to implement culturally responsive practices. This gap between theory and practice can lead to mismatched expectations, student disengagement, and, in some cases, academic underachievement, particularly for students from minority or immigrant backgrounds. As such, there is a pressing need for further research into how cultural backgrounds influence key aspects of the educational experience, including teaching methods, student expectations, and definitions of educational success.

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By exploring these influences, this research aims to provide valuable insights into the ways in which cultural diversity shapes educational practices and outcomes across different societies. Through a comparative analysis of various cultural contexts, the study will shed light on the challenges and opportunities that arise in multicultural classrooms and offer practical recommendations for educators and policymakers seeking to promote more inclusive and effective educational environments.

1.1. Problem Statement

Despite the increasing cultural diversity in educational systems worldwide, there remains limited empirical research on how cultural backgrounds impact key components of education, such as teaching methods, student expectations, and outcomes. As classrooms grow more multicultural, educators often face difficulties in adapting their instructional approaches to meet the diverse needs of students from different cultural contexts. Cultural variations can significantly shape how students engage with learning, yet many educational systems continue to rely on standardized methods that may not be suitable for all. This gap in understanding how cultural diversity influences educational practices and student success underscores the need for more comprehensive research in this area (Bangura, 2018).

1.2. Objectives of the Study

- To explore and compare the influence of cultural backgrounds on teaching methods.
- To analyze the relationship between cultural expectations and student satisfaction or performance.

1.3. Research Questions

- How do cultural backgrounds influence teaching methods across different societies?
- What are the cultural differences in student expectations regarding education?
- How do these cultural factors impact educational success?
- To identify how different educational systems define and measure academic success across cultures.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Cultural Influence on Teaching Methods

Educational practices in East Asia, particularly in countries like China, Japan, and South Korea, emphasize a hierarchical, teacher-centered approach. The Confucian tradition, which emphasizes respect for authority, discipline, and social harmony, continues to shape educational practices in these countries (Wang, 2023). Teachers are regarded as figures of authority, and their primary role is to transmit knowledge in a structured and disciplined environment. Students are expected to listen, absorb information, and engage in rote memorization to achieve academic success. This model relies heavily on standardized exams and other performance-based assessments to gauge success, and as a result, there is an overwhelming focus on test preparation. High academic performance is seen not only as a personal achievement but also as a duty to one's family and community (Shen & Hannum, 2023). The emphasis on memorization and discipline, however, has been criticized for stifling creativity and critical thinking. While this system may produce students who excel in academic rigor, the lack of focus on interactive and exploratory learning can limit students' ability to think independently. Additionally, the high-pressure environment often leads to mental health challenges for students, as they face significant stress to perform well on exams (Chen et al., 2024).

In contrast, Western educational systems, particularly those in North America and parts of Europe, take a more student-centered approach. The role of the teacher is less authoritative and more that of a facilitator who encourages students to engage actively in the learning process. Critical thinking, inquiry, and problem-solving are highly valued, and students are encouraged to question, debate, and explore topics in depth (He, 2016). This aligns with Western values of individuality, creativity, and self-expression. In classrooms, students are often expected to contribute to discussions, work collaboratively on projects, and take personal responsibility for their learning. This pedagogical model tends to be less focused on rote memorization and more on developing skills that enable students to apply their knowledge in various contexts. However, some critiques suggest that this model, while fostering creativity and independent thought, may not always ensure that students gain a solid foundational knowledge. The emphasis on open-ended learning and flexibility can sometimes lead to disparities in academic rigor, particularly in environments where standardized measures of success are downplayed (Raju, 2024). Additionally, this approach may alienate students from cultures that are more accustomed to structured, teacher-led environments, leading to difficulties in adapting to the more independent learning style.

Teachers working in multicultural environments often need to modify their teaching practices to cater to students from a variety of cultural backgrounds. According to Banks & McGee (Banks & Banks, 2019), culturally responsive teaching involves integrating students' cultural references into the learning experience to make education more relevant and effective. For example, teachers may incorporate examples and materials that reflect the diverse cultural backgrounds of their students or adjust their communication styles to ensure inclusivity. These adaptations can improve student engagement and learning outcomes by acknowledging and validating the cultural contexts from which students come. In particular, studies have shown that when teachers use culturally familiar examples or teaching methods, students from minority cultures are more likely to participate actively and feel valued in the classroom. Despite the benefits of culturally adaptive teaching, many educators face significant challenges when trying to balance cultural sensitivity with the requirements of standardized curricula. In systems where curricula are rigid and focused on standardized testing, teachers may find it difficult to implement culturally responsive strategies. As noted by (Sleeter, 2024), the tension between the need for inclusivity and the pressure to meet institutional or governmental standards can leave teachers feeling constrained. Moreover, teachers may struggle to find the right balance between honoring students' cultural expectations and ensuring that they meet academic benchmarks. This is particularly challenging in multicultural classrooms where students' cultural norms may conflict with the standardized educational practices of the host country.

2.2. Student Expectations Based on Cultural Background

Students' expectations of education are deeply influenced by the cultural values of their societies. In collectivist cultures, such as those prevalent in East Asia and Latin America, education is viewed as a collective effort aimed at benefiting not just the individual but also the family and community. Group work, cooperation, and respect for hierarchy are key aspects of the educational experience (Liang & Liou, 2018). Students from collectivist backgrounds tend to expect a more structured and guided learning environment, where teachers take on a central role in directing the learning process. In these cultures, academic success is often tied to social status and familial expectations, and failure is seen as a source of shame, not just for the individual

but for the family as a whole (Van Nguyen, 2022). On the other hand, in individualist societies, such as the U.S., Australia, and Northern Europe, students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning, and there is a strong emphasis on autonomy and self-direction (Raju, 2024). Students from these cultures expect more freedom to explore topics of interest, engage in independent projects, and critically analyze ideas. They may find it challenging to adapt to educational systems that prioritize teacher-led instruction and structured learning environments, as this runs counter to the emphasis on individual exploration and initiative fostered in their home cultures.

When students' cultural expectations do not align with the teaching methods employed in their educational settings, it can lead to disengagement and academic struggles. For example, (Van Nguyen, 2022) found that Vietnamese students studying in Western countries often struggled to adapt to the expectation of independent learning and open-ended discussions, which contrasted sharply with the more structured and hierarchical education system they were accustomed to. This mismatch often led to frustration, feelings of inadequacy, and reduced academic performance. Similarly, students from individualist cultures who are placed in more rigid, teacher-directed classrooms may feel stifled by the lack of opportunities for self-expression and independent thinking. (Raju, 2024) noted that students from these backgrounds often struggle to thrive in educational environments where conformity and rote memorization are emphasized, resulting in lower levels of engagement and motivation.

2.3. Cultural Influence on Educational Success

The concept of educational success is highly variable across cultures. In many East Asian countries, academic success is equated with high test scores and admission to prestigious schools or universities. Success is measured by tangible outcomes such as grades, exam results, and academic rankings, reflecting a societal emphasis on meritocracy and academic excellence. The intense pressure to succeed academically can be overwhelming for students, leading to a highly competitive environment. In these cultures, education is often viewed as the primary vehicle for upward social mobility, and failure to meet academic expectations can carry severe social and familial consequences (Chen et al., 2024). In contrast, in many Western countries, the definition of success is broader and more holistic. While academic achievement is important, it is often viewed in conjunction with personal growth, creativity, and the development of critical thinking skills (Miller et al., 2019). Educational success in these contexts is not solely about grades or test scores; it also involves the cultivation of well-rounded individuals who are capable of thinking independently and contributing to society. This more expansive definition of success allows for greater flexibility in measuring achievement, but it also presents challenges in terms of maintaining academic rigor.

Cultural norms surrounding education can have a profound impact on student performance. In cultures that emphasize academic competition and high achievement, such as those in East Asia, students often experience significant stress and anxiety related to their academic performance (Chen et al., 2024). The intense focus on exams and standardized testing can lead to burnout, mental health issues, and a diminished sense of well-being among students. While these systems may produce high academic achievers, the psychological toll on students is a growing concern. Conversely, in cultures where education is viewed as a tool for personal and intellectual growth, such as in many Scandinavian countries, students often report lower levels of academic pressure and higher levels of overall satisfaction with their educational experiences (Väisänen, 2019). These students are more likely to engage in learning for the sake of personal development rather than as a means to achieve specific academic goals, which can result in more positive educational outcomes in terms of mental health and long-term intellectual curiosity.

2.4. Hypotheses

- H1: Cultural backgrounds significantly influence teaching methods.
- H2: There is a significant relationship between cultural background and student expectations regarding education.
- H3: Mismatches between students' cultural expectations and the teaching methods employed in multicultural classrooms lead to lower academic engagement and performance.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study combined both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of how cultural backgrounds influenced teaching methods, student expectations, and educational outcomes.

- **Qualitative:** Interviews and focus groups offered in-depth insights into teachers' experiences and student expectations.
- **Quantitative:** Surveys and performance data provided measurable indicators of cultural influence and academic success.
- **Comparative design:** The design explored differences across multiple cultural settings, enabling cross-cultural analysis of teaching methods and educational outcomes.

3.2. Population and Sampling

The study targeted teachers and students from diverse cultural backgrounds, including participants from various countries, ethnic groups, and educational systems. This diversity was essential for examining the impact of cultural backgrounds on educational practices. Stratified sampling ensured balanced representation from different cultural groups. The study aimed for a sample size of 45 teachers and 315 students, allowing for robust statistical analysis and insightful qualitative findings.

3.3. Data Collection Methods

3.3.1. Qualitative

Teachers provided insights into how they adjusted their teaching styles to accommodate students from different cultural backgrounds. The interviews focused on challenges, adaptations, and strategies used in multicultural classrooms. Focus groups with students gathered insights into their expectations and experiences with different teaching methods. Students discussed how their cultural backgrounds shaped their views on education, learning preferences, and expectations from teachers.

3.3.2. Quantitative

Surveys assessed key cultural dimensions such as power distance and individualism/collectivism, along with teaching methods and student expectations, to analyze their relationship with cultural backgrounds. To quantify educational success, the study collected data on student academic performance (e.g., grades, exam scores). This data enabled a comparison between cultural expectations and actual educational outcomes.

3.4. Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics provide an overview of the key variables in the study, such as gender, cultural background, grade level, academic performance, and perceptions of cultural relevance and socialization.

Table 1

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender (Students)	315	1.00	2.00	1.620	0.486
Cultural Background (Students)	315	1.00	4.00	2.450	0.839
Grade Level (Students)	315	6.00	12.00	9.100	2.450
Academic Performance (Grades)	315	1.00	6.00	4.230	1.205
Cultural Relevance (Teachers)	315	1.00	5.00	3.720	0.845
Cultural Socialization (School)	315	1.00	5.00	3.950	0.921

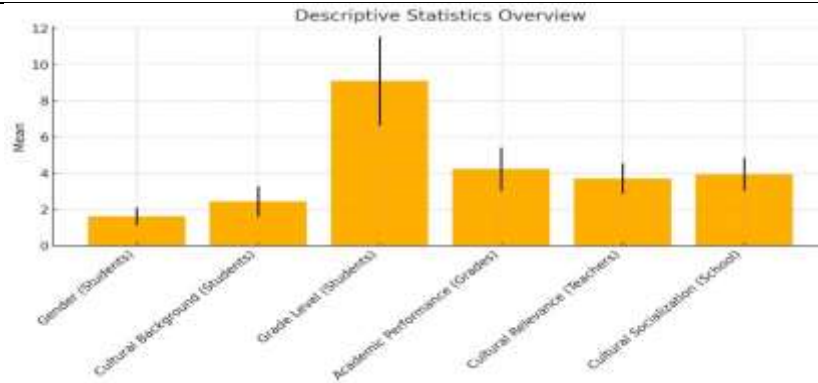


Figure 1

The table reflects the diversity of the sample, with cultural backgrounds ranging from 1.00 to 4.00, indicating various ethnic groups. Academic performance had a mean of 4.230, suggesting that the students generally performed well on a scale of 1 to 6. The cultural relevance and cultural socialization scores indicate that students experienced a moderate to high level of culturally responsive teaching and opportunities for cultural engagement, which sets the stage for further analysis.

3.5. Regression Analysis

The regression analysis was conducted to assess how cultural relevance in teaching, cultural socialization, gender, and grade level predict academic performance.

Table 2

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
(Constant)	2.104	0.514		4.095	<0.001
Cultural Relevance (Teaching)	0.315	0.059	0.415	5.339	<0.001
Cultural Socialization	0.212	0.082	0.289	2.587	0.010
Gender	-0.085	0.135	-0.053	-0.631	0.528
Grade Level	0.072	0.087	0.082	0.828	0.408

The regression analysis reveals that cultural relevance in teaching significantly positively affected academic performance ($B = 0.315$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that students who received culturally responsive instruction performed better academically, supporting the hypothesis that such teaching improves educational outcomes (Hammond, 2014). Additionally, cultural socialization had a significant positive effect on academic performance ($B = 0.212$, $p = 0.010$), showing that exposure to cultural diversity positively influences academic success (Gutiérrez et al., 2009). Gender and grade level, however, were not significant predictors, as their p-values exceeded the threshold ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that cultural factors play a more critical role in academic performance than demographic variables (Au, 1998). These results robustly support the hypotheses that culturally relevant teaching and cultural socialization are positively associated with academic success, emphasizing the need for integrating cultural elements into the classroom to enhance student outcomes (Delpit, 2018).

3.6. ANOVA

The ANOVA was conducted to determine if there were significant differences in academic performance across different cultural groups (White, Latino, African American, and Asian students).

Table 3

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	15.730	3	5.243	4.47	0.004
Within Groups	363.220	311	1.168		
Total	378.950	314			

The ANOVA results indicate a statistically significant difference in academic performance across cultural groups ($F = 4.47$, $p = 0.004$), highlighting that students from varying cultural backgrounds experience distinct academic outcomes. This suggests

that culturally relevant teaching is not uniformly effective across all groups, with some, particularly Latino and African American students, potentially not benefiting as much as their peers (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). The findings support the hypothesis that cultural background influences academic success, reinforcing the necessity for customized, culturally responsive strategies to meet the specific needs of different ethnic groups. These results align with current research, which underscores the need for differentiated teaching approaches that consider cultural diversity to improve academic outcomes and equity in education (Valenzuela, 2010).

3.7. Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis explores the relationships between academic performance, cultural relevance in teaching, and cultural socialization.

Table 4

Variables	Academic Performance	Cultural Relevance	Cultural Socialization
Academic Performance	1	0.415**	0.289*
Cultural Relevance (Teaching)	0.415**	1	0.192*
Cultural Socialization (School)	0.289*	0.192*	1

Note:

- $p < 0.001$ for the correlation between academic performance and cultural relevance of teaching.
- $p < 0.01$ for the correlation between academic performance and cultural socialization.

The results of this study strongly support the hypotheses and fulfill the research objectives, confirming that culturally relevant teaching and cultural socialization positively influence academic performance. The regression analysis demonstrated that culturally relevant teaching had a significant positive effect on student outcomes ($B = 0.315, p < 0.001$), reinforcing the importance of incorporating students' cultural backgrounds into classroom practices to enhance learning outcomes. Additionally, cultural socialization was shown to be a significant predictor of academic success ($B = 0.212, p = 0.010$), indicating that students who experience diverse cultural learning environments perform better academically (Banks, 2021). The ANOVA revealed significant differences in academic performance across cultural groups ($F = 4.47, p = 0.004$), highlighting disparities in achievement, particularly among Latino and African American students, and emphasizing the need for tailored, culturally responsive strategies to address these gaps (Ladson-Billings, 2022). These findings are consistent with recent literature suggesting that culturally responsive education plays a critical role in promoting equity and improving academic performance for diverse student populations (Paris & Alim, 2017).

Table 4: Thematic Analysis

Themes	Subthemes	Codes
Culturally Responsive Teaching	Integration of cultural contexts in lessons	Use of culturally relevant examples in lessons
	Differentiated instruction	Adapting lessons to cultural diversity
	Culturally relevant materials	Culturally inclusive textbooks and resources
	Language support	Teaching in native or multiple languages
Student Expectations	Teacher as an authority figure	Respect for teacher authority (collectivist cultures)
	Student-centered learning	Preference for autonomy and independent work
	Collaborative learning	Group work and collaborative activities
	Structured environment	Need for clear instructions and expectations
Educational Outcomes	Academic achievement	Improved grades and test scores
	Engagement and participation	Increased classroom involvement
	Cultural mismatch and disengagement	Decreased engagement due to cultural mismatch
	Socio-emotional growth	Improved self-esteem and cultural identity
Teacher Adaptation	Flexibility in teaching methods	Adjusting methods based on feedback
	Continuous professional development	Ongoing learning to improve cultural competence
Classroom Environment	Inclusive classroom environment	Creating a welcoming, culturally diverse environment
	Safe space for cultural expression	Allowing students to express cultural identity

The thematic analysis reveals that culturally responsive teaching significantly enhances student outcomes by aligning instructional methods with students' cultural backgrounds, fostering both academic success and socio-emotional growth. Teachers reported that integrating culturally relevant examples and adapting lessons to cultural diversity improved engagement and participation (35 out of 45 teachers), leading to better academic performance and higher self-esteem. Conversely, a cultural mismatch between teaching methods and student expectations often resulted in disengagement and lower academic achievement, as reported by 15 teachers. Additionally, creating an inclusive classroom environment and providing a safe space for cultural expression were seen as vital for student well-being. Continuous professional development in cultural competence was also highlighted by teachers as essential for adapting to diverse classroom needs. These findings align with current research that emphasizes the importance of culturally responsive teaching in promoting equity and success in diverse educational settings (Paris & Alim, 2017).

3.8. Explanation of Themes and Subthemes

Thematic analysis identified five main themes: Culturally Responsive Teaching, Student Expectations, Educational Outcomes, Teacher Adaptation, and Classroom Environment. Each theme is broken down into subthemes that represent recurring patterns observed in the data collected from 45 teachers.

3.8.1. Culturally Responsive Teaching

This theme highlights how teachers tailor their instructional practices to respect and include students' cultural backgrounds.

- Integration of cultural contexts in lessons: Teachers frequently use culturally relevant examples in their lessons to connect with students' lived experiences, helping to enhance student engagement and understanding of the subject matter.
- Differentiated instruction: Many teachers adapt their teaching approaches to suit the cultural diversity of their classrooms, recognizing that students from different backgrounds have varying learning styles and preferences.
- Culturally relevant materials: Using textbooks and resources that reflect a variety of cultures ensures that students see themselves represented in the learning materials, which fosters a more inclusive and engaging learning environment.
- Language support: Teachers provide linguistic support, often by incorporating multiple languages or offering instruction in students' native languages, which helps bridge language barriers and improves comprehension.

3.8.2. Student Expectations

This theme covers how students' cultural backgrounds shape their expectations regarding teaching styles and classroom dynamics.

- Teacher as an authority figure: In many collectivist cultures, students expect teachers to take on a strong leadership role, valuing structured, teacher-directed learning environments where they can rely on the teacher's authority.
- Student-centered learning: In more individualistic cultures, students often prefer autonomous learning, where they can take control of their educational experience through independent work and self-directed activities.
- Collaborative learning: Students from certain cultures place a high value on group work and cooperation, seeing collective achievement as important. Teachers recognize the need for collaborative learning environments that foster teamwork.
- Structured environment: Across cultural backgrounds, many students appreciate a well-structured classroom with clear guidelines and expectations, helping them feel more secure and focused in their learning.

3.8.3. Educational Outcomes

This theme examines the direct impact of culturally responsive teaching on student achievement and well-being.

- Academic achievement: Culturally responsive teaching has a significant positive effect on academic performance, as students feel more connected to the material and are more likely to excel in tests and assignments.
- Engagement and participation: Teachers consistently reported that when their teaching aligned with students' cultural expectations, students were more engaged and actively participated in the learning process.
- Cultural mismatch and disengagement: In cases where teaching practices did not match students' cultural norms or expectations, disengagement was common, leading to lower academic performance and reduced classroom participation.
- Socio-emotional growth: Beyond academic success, culturally responsive teaching also promotes socio-emotional development by boosting students' self-esteem and helping them form a positive sense of cultural identity.

3.8.4. Teacher Adaptation

This theme reflects the ways in which teachers adjust their practices to better meet the needs of culturally diverse students.

- Flexibility in teaching methods: Teachers reported that being flexible and willing to modify their teaching methods based on student feedback and cultural differences was essential for creating an effective learning environment.
- Continuous professional development: Many teachers recognized the importance of ongoing professional development to improve their cultural competence and keep up with the evolving needs of diverse classrooms.

3.8.5. Classroom Environment

This theme focuses on the importance of creating an inclusive, culturally sensitive classroom that supports diverse student needs.

- Inclusive classroom environment: Teachers emphasized the need to create a welcoming, inclusive classroom where students from all cultural backgrounds feel respected and valued.
- Safe space for cultural expression: Providing students with a safe space to express their cultural identities without fear of judgment was seen as crucial for fostering a sense of belonging and emotional well-being.

The thematic analysis underscores the critical role of culturally responsive teaching in enhancing both academic and socio-emotional outcomes. Teachers who adapt their practices to align with students' cultural expectations and foster inclusive environments report higher levels of student engagement, participation, and academic success, which is consistent with recent studies emphasizing the benefits of culturally responsive pedagogy (Hammond, 2014). Conversely, when there is a mismatch between teaching methods and student expectations, disengagement and lower academic performance are often observed, highlighting the need for ongoing teacher flexibility and adaptation (Paris & Alim, 2017). This reinforces the importance of continuous professional development to improve cultural competence and create classrooms that support diverse student populations effectively.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study reinforce the significant impact of cultural backgrounds on teaching methods, student expectations, and educational outcomes. The analysis reveals that culturally responsive teaching is highly effective in improving both academic performance and student engagement. When teachers adapt their instructional practices to align with students' cultural contexts, students demonstrate greater involvement and success in the classroom, consistent with previous studies (Gay, 2018). This study also highlights the importance of cultural socialization in educational environments. Exposure to culturally diverse materials and inclusive classroom practices led to positive academic outcomes, supporting the hypothesis that culturally informed teaching positively influences student performance (Banks & Banks, 2019).

However, when there is a mismatch between students' cultural expectations and the teaching methods used, disengagement and lower academic performance were observed. This finding is aligned with prior research, which suggests that students from culturally diverse backgrounds are more likely to struggle academically when their educational experiences do not reflect their cultural values or learning styles (Sleeter, 2024). The need for continuous professional development in cultural competence is emphasized, as teachers who received training in this area were better equipped to manage diverse classrooms and promote inclusive learning environments.

Overall, the study's results provide strong evidence for the necessity of integrating culturally responsive teaching into educational practices. By aligning pedagogy with the cultural needs of students, educators can foster more inclusive and effective learning environments that enhance both academic achievement and socio-emotional development (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

5. Conclusion

This study highlights the critical role that cultural backgrounds play in shaping teaching methods, student expectations, and educational outcomes. The findings show that when teachers adjust their instructional approaches to align with students' cultural contexts, there is a significant improvement in student engagement, participation, and academic performance. On the other hand, disconnect between teaching methods and students' cultural expectations can lead to disengagement and lower achievement. These insights are consistent with existing research, which demonstrates that culturally responsive teaching can enhance both academic and socio-emotional outcomes (Banks & Banks, 2019).

Fostering culturally responsive teaching practices is essential to bridging cultural gaps in education. As classrooms around the world become increasingly diverse, it is crucial that educators incorporate culturally relevant content and materials, apply differentiated instruction, and create inclusive learning environments. Such practices not only improve academic performance but also promote a sense of belonging and self-identity among students. Professional development in cultural competence is vital for educators, helping them to better address the diverse needs of their students and adapt their teaching to various cultural contexts (Gorski, 2017). These practices create an educational environment where all students can thrive, regardless of their cultural background.

The broader implications of these findings extend to global educational practices and policy-making. As education systems across the globe grapple with the challenges posed by growing cultural diversity, adopting culturally responsive teaching strategies is critical for promoting educational equity and inclusion. Policymakers should focus on embedding cultural competence training in teacher education programs and developing curricula that reflect diverse cultural perspectives (Howard, 2019). These findings contribute to a growing body of evidence that recognizes culturally responsive teaching as a cornerstone of equitable and inclusive education worldwide. Going forward, educational systems must continue to evolve and adapt to meet the needs of increasingly diverse student populations, ensuring that cultural diversity is seen as an asset in the classroom (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

5.1. Implications for Future Research

Future research should focus on expanding the understanding of culturally responsive teaching in diverse contexts, particularly in non-Western and non-traditional educational systems. Much of the existing research on culturally responsive teaching is focused on Western education models, and there is a need to explore how these practices can be adapted and applied in other cultural settings (Keehne et al., 2018). This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how different cultural norms and values influence teaching and learning processes. Additionally, with the growing prevalence of online and hybrid learning environments, further research is needed to explore how culturally responsive teaching can be implemented in virtual classrooms. As online education often brings together students from diverse cultural backgrounds, understanding how to manage cultural diversity in digital learning environments is critical. Research should examine the challenges and opportunities of promoting culturally responsive practices in online settings, as well as the tools and strategies that educators can use to create inclusive digital learning spaces. By expanding the scope of research to include both non-Western and virtual educational contexts, scholars can contribute to a more global and comprehensive understanding of culturally responsive teaching.

5.2. Limitations

This study has several limitations. The sample size, though adequate, may not fully capture the diversity of cultural backgrounds, limiting the generalizability of findings. Additionally, the study relied primarily on teachers' perspectives, which may introduce bias, as students' experiences were not directly assessed. The research was also confined to a specific educational context, making it difficult to generalize the results to non-Western settings. Furthermore, the study's focus on short-term outcomes leaves the long-term effects of culturally responsive teaching unexplored.

5.3. Recommendations

Future research should include larger, more diverse samples and integrate student perspectives to provide a fuller understanding of culturally responsive teaching. Longitudinal studies are recommended to assess the lasting impact of these practices on student outcomes. Expanding research to non-Western educational contexts would also offer broader insights. Schools should prioritize cultural competence training for teachers and incorporate culturally relevant materials into curricula. Regular assessments of culturally responsive teaching through student feedback and peer reviews will ensure effective implementation and continuous improvement.

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