



The Role of Multicultural Education in Enhancing Inclusivity and Global Awareness: A Comparative Study of English Language Textbooks

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Abstract

English language textbooks have a key place in encouraging inclusiveness and nurturing a global understanding as they function as a basic studying tool in learning for students. This study comparatively analyzes Grade V English language textbooks of Cambridge University Press (international curriculum) and Punjab Textbook Board (regional curriculum) by using James A. Banks' Five Dimensions of Multicultural Education Framework. The representation of different cultural perspectives, knowledge construction, reduction of stereotypes, equity pedagogy, and inclusive school culture were analyzed through qualitative content analysis. Meanwhile, focus group discussions with educators were also performed to ascertain the effectiveness of these textbooks in the teaching of multicultural competence. It was found that Cambridge textbooks include a wider variety of global cultural narratives and more actively challenge biases and promote critical thinking, whereas Punjab textbooks emphasize national identity with few global perspectives. Regional textbooks bore no diverse content, teachers using them expressed worries about the need to reform the curriculum. We reached to a conclusion that the textbooks should contain balanced multicultural content as student are primed for an interconnected world. The results have bearing on curriculum development, educational policy, and teacher training, and argue for a more inclusive process of textbook design so as to foster global awareness and cultural inclusivity.

Keywords: Multicultural Education, English Language Textbooks, Inclusivity, Global Awareness, Banks' Framework

1. Introduction

In this global and interconnected world, the education systems around the world are obligated to equip students to live and produce in the global society. Multicultural education plays a major part in achieving this mission by fostering inclusiveness, awareness and understanding of others and the world in the learning environment. In this endeavor, English language textbooks, being the basic tools in language instruction, play an important role. The discussion aims to understand its persuasive significance in multicultural education by establishing inclusivity and global awareness, and identifying the importance of English language textbooks.



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The strategies and materials to promote multicultural education are those that recognize, respect and celebrate cultural diversity within an educational context. In this case it helps to give equitable educational opportunities by vilifying and recognizing the same cultural backgrounds for all the students (Banks, 2020). Foster the more inclusive environment, and develop students to be successful in a globalized world.

Current studies explore the need for incorporating multicultural content in curricula in order to improve cultural sensitivity and inclusivity. For example, adding different viewpoints in educational materials improves critical cultural self-awareness and empathy for students, further creating co-existent interactions in multicultural learning environments (Selvi & Yazan, 2020). In addition to that, exposure to relevant multicultural literature and content improves linguistic development by offering language in different cultural environments as this factor adds value to the learning process (International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews, 2024). Textbooks of English language play a crucial role as the prime sources of language and its meaningful cultural contexts, creating learners' views of the language. These textbooks present such content that it impacts the students' understanding of cultural diversity and global perspectives. This is why multicultural content should be integrated in English language textbooks so as to promote inclusivity and raise awareness about global issues to learners.

Nevertheless, research indicates that diversity of cultures is still not well represented within English language textbooks. In a cultural study of English language learning, it was found that culture has been incorporated in ELT, but it faced challenges when it was implemented into the teaching of language because there was a shortage of multicultural content texts in most language textbooks (Zhang & Chen, 2023). The deficiency in this case may block intercultural communicative competence for global citizenship's development.

Content integration of multicultural items in English language textbooks entails both difficulties and possibilities. A major challenge is that of potential resistance to change whereby educators and institutions continue to use traditional curricula – the curricula are not reflective of the diversity of cultures (Dinh and Sharifian 2021). Moreover, teacher training in multicultural education is insufficient and limited resources may frustrate inclusive teaching ideas using diverse perspectives.

Although there are such challenges, the thoughtful curriculum design presents some notable opportunities for fostering inclusivity. For example, the Lit in Colour campaign in the United Kingdom calls for more diverse and more up-to-date stories in English curriculum. The purpose of the initiative is to make literature more relevant and relatable for students whose backgrounds are different than the classic (The Guardian, 2024).

This belief has led to a suggestion that teacher education is critical in ensuring the multicultural content is incorporated into English language instruction. With knowledge and skills on how to address cultural diversity, educators will be able to implement these practices in teaching more effectively. According to Selvi and Yazan (2020), teacher's competencies should be enhanced; to this end, teacher should be trained to meet expectations in the modern world. The development of Global English paradigm knowledge on the part of teachers helps them to better foster students' intercultural communicative competence and global awareness.



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Educators need professional development programs focusing on cultural sensitivity and inclusivity to empower educators. International TEFL and TESOL Training (2025) states that these programs also offer teachers strategies to confront language barriers, adjoin multicultural elements in lesson plans, and have an amiable learning ambiance which historicizes divergent perspectives. Initiatives such as these are important in creating an educational environment where every student feels as if they expect and are understood.

Multicultural education must be incorporated in the English language instruction for developing inclusivity and global awareness among students. The curriculum itself, in a major way, is constituted by the English language textbooks which shapes learners' cultural perceptions and competencies. To meet the challenge of incorporating multicultural content, a coordinated effort is needed at curriculum development, in teacher education, and through appropriate policy initiatives. Educators who welcome cultural diversity into educational materials and practices are better equipped to educate students to succeed in a global interdependent society by practicing mutual respect and understanding across cultures.

The modern globalized world now changes how schools teach their students everywhere. The fast connections between economies, societies and cultures force schools to redefine their teaching goals that prepare students for life in a global society. The frameworks of global and multicultural education have become essential to handle 21st-century problems and things in education. These educational methods work powerfully both to improve student learning results and to develop essential values that celebrate cultural inclusivity and ethical teamwork across nations.

Students following global education learn to think critically about world issues through ethical choices while understanding problems like climate change and human rights migration. The teaching approach builds global capabilities for learners which shows them their part in world community life. The approach known as multicultural education champions local and national settings as places to value assorted cultures. The approach promotes teaching about multiple cultures in all subjects while forming spaces where all students see themselves reflected and acquire strength in their identity.

Modern educational changes across nations include the addition of these education models to state-approved teaching plans. Education systems in Finland, Singapore, and Canada successfully teach global and multicultural learning by making national policy changes along with training teachers who then design flexible classrooms. These nations teach global education values to teach students while making their classrooms more engaging and developing students' capacity to understand different cultures.

The establishment of global and multicultural education has faced problems despite achieving many victories. When students learn from their own cultural background, they resist the new multicultural ideas taught in schools. Teacher training needs improvement to become a major problem in educational systems. Educators who teach students need better ways to share cultures of others and know how to talk about world-wide subjects. Resource availability and professional education opportunities depend on nation-level and school-specific budget variations making them difficult to access.

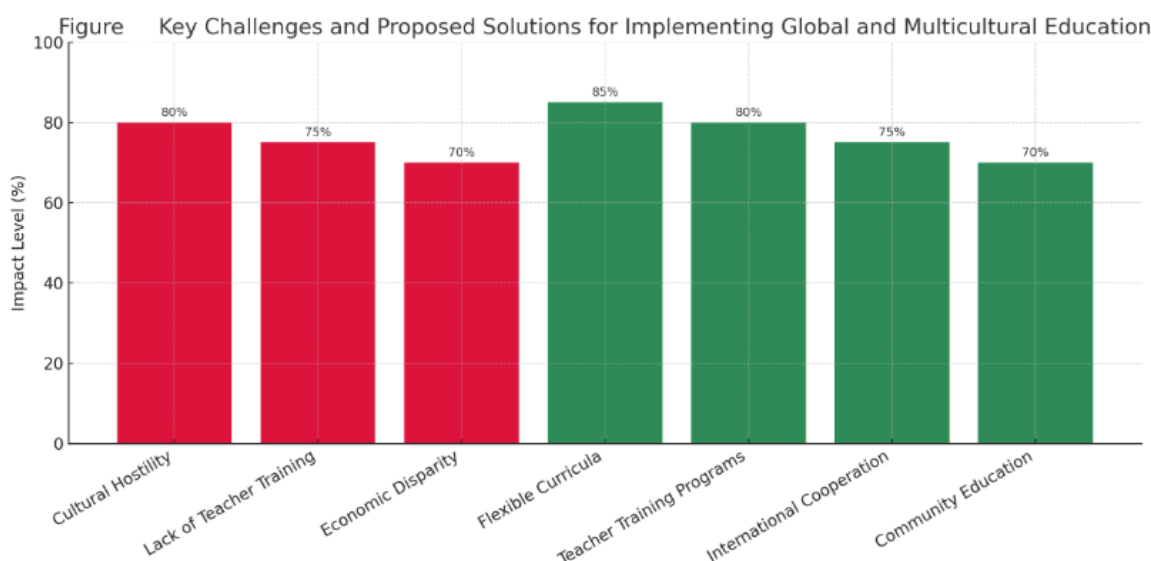


Figure 1: Key Challenges and Proposed Solutions for Implementing Global and Multicultural Education

The chart compares both major barriers and recommended solutions to establish global and multicultural education. Educational diversity remains limited by three main obstacles: cultural hostility at 80%, teacher skill deficiency at 75% and financial divides between 70%. Educational scholars and studies recommend using four particular approaches such as Flexible Curricula (85%), Teacher Training Programs (80%), International Cooperation (75%) and Community Education Initiatives (70%). Every evaluation element receives a percentage score that shows its importance versus other factors through expert opinions. The chart shows that multiple global programs and training systems need to be developed to achieve educational equity while building an inclusive education system worldwide.

Scholars and specialists have put forward various ways to handle these problems. Schools should adjust their lesson plans to show global ideas together with regional classroom subjects. Teachers need thorough training to learn the proper methods for delivering global and multicultural lessons to their students successfully. Sharing educational policies, scientific findings and university partnerships at an international level helps nations learn best practices and unify their educational quality standards. Community-based learning programs with parent and local group participation help schools spread multicultural and global values throughout the entire society.

2. Literature Review

A review of educational materials and policies shows how international and multiple cultures education works in different schools. The research shows why our education system must accept these frameworks because it trains students to handle international demands before they enter society.

Improved technology and worldwide linkages between countries (Dahmardeh & Kim, 2020) have made English the primary international language of communication (Jenkins, 2018). Most experts believe learning language works poorly when separated from the cultural aspects that accompany it (Hillard,



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2014). Students gain better intercultural skills through materials that integrate culture into language teaching.

After the 1979 Islamic Revolution Iran made educational updates to teach students about their national identity plus improve English abilities to talk to people around the world. According to Aliakbari (2004) the time brought up worries about foreign textbooks containing imperialistic messages. Textbooks created by local authors usually reflect national values by showing local cultural points of view. This study deeply examines both local and published English Language Teaching books to analyze how they show cultural variation in (a) approach, (b) products, (c) application, and (d) personnel. The study checks cultural details to build educational content that helps learners develop cultural skills related to different subjects. This study demonstrates how textbooks create intercultural competence skills. This study provides important information that helps educational institutions develop better materials for teaching English in multicultural settings. Research about ELT and globalization needs cultural representation analysis to teach people effective communication skills that benefit diverse communities. Through a thorough analysis of cultural elements in domestic and worldwide textbooks this project provides guidance on making ELT materials that respect all global cultures equally.

In current times of fast globalization and interconnectedness multicultural education and global citizenship have gained significant importance. Diversity among our modern populations makes multicultural education fundamental for educational leaders to create better learning environments for everyone. Teaching about different cultures became part of learning through multicultural education because of the rights movement in the United States. During the Civil Rights Movement the educational system faced racial inequality issues so the movement started to create justice for everyone over all racial backgrounds. Educators and policymakers benefit from multicultural education research led by experts like Banks, Gay, and Nieto who aim to boost marginalized groups and fight against oppression.

The development of global citizenship ideas now drives important discussions within educational settings. Educational systems should develop students who understand their need to care for people everywhere regardless of nation or cultural background. Modern connections from technology to trade to communication make it essential for people to learn about global matters and respond with compassion. The United Nations SDGs highlight SDGs promote international goals that require nations to maintain peace restore social fairness and develop their societies responsibly.

This research examines how multicultural education and global citizenship work together to build community harmony and responsible citizenship. When tackling social justice matters you need to view how different social categories impact someone's rights and chances based on their race background gender status and class situation. This research evaluates all available studies to identify what makes multicultural education and global citizenship difficult to implement. Educators and decision-makers receive useful information about practical and theoretical aspects of these systems to help build better educational experiences that adapt to modern global needs. This research study closes knowledge gaps and reveals new ways for understanding how multicultural education and global citizenship build social harmony and justice.



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This approach has become more relevant to the current world and classrooms with globalization and diverse societies to embrace other people's cultures other than their own. To this effect, it is crucial to encourage educational systems that embrace multiculturalism in societies that are increasingly interdependent and diverse. Multicultural education has been defined as a process by which culturally different students are integrated into the mainstream educational systems and are provided equal status in the classroom.

This research aims at identifying and discussing the attitudes and approaches to multicultural education in the developed and developing countries in terms of policies in use, the methods employed in implementation, and the issues encountered by these nations. Viewing the subject under consideration from the lens of the two world categories – the developed and developing nations – the research employs a qualitative method in exploring how the multicultural aspect of education is framed within the overall national framework of education systems.

Hypothesis: The attained level of multicultural Education policies is closely related to the fact that, the educational systems in developed countries are well endowed in terms of escalations and structures. These nations usually accommodate structures for the integrated education of learners with disabilities within common infrastructure, qualified teachers and trainers, as well as, a superior form of institutional support to the integration of diversity. Still there too are several existing and emerging concerns such as; increase in social exclusion, problem of inequality in enrollment and completion of high-quality education, with implication of past and present discrimination and marginalizations. However, there are still the disparity of multicultural education theory and practice after the passing of the deeply influential events in the United States.

On the other hand, many of the developing nations run into challenges of limited resources, uneven distribution of wealth, and having to deal with the culturally segment people in their countries. However, these countries itself possess more adaptive and flexible approach to installing multicultural values into the educational curricula. Given poorly controlled and poorly designed professionally inspired learning material and teaching aids, many teachers in the developing countries make use of locally available material and culturally relevant materials within the community to fit student needs. These are features that point to the aspects of flexibility as well as resourcefulness of the developing countries in the face of key challenges in education.

This paper captures the fact that there is a need to contextualize multicultural education policies in the country. There is a fundamental understanding of the conditions of developing and post-developing states and their impacts on individuals and society that is necessary in constructing instruction and organization of schools to be effective and include the lion's share of the citizens. The hopes of the study are to help the policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders from the developed and developing countries with the expectations of how they can carry out effective multicultural education for the benefit of their society. In doing so, this study adds to the knowledge that is currently available on educational, equity, and social justice practices in nations that are both developed and developing whereby all societies are progressively experiencing diversification to a varying degree.



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Today's society is globalized and therefore, the educational institutions are facing the diverse student population having representative of multitude of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The diversity of both approaches to learning and learning styles present both opportunities and challenges for educators; particularly with respect to developing innovative approaches to instructional design that cater to the needs of all learners. Cross cultural instructional design, which is one such approach that is gaining popularity involves infusing the concept of cultural and linguistic diversity into educational practices (Kumaravadivelu, 2008; Howard, 2019).

Cultural competence is key to education, and cross-cultural instructional design seeks to write learning environments that are inclusive and responsive to different backgrounds among the students. This is more than being aware of the differences of culture; it is the inclusion of cultural perspectives into the methods of curriculum and ways of teaching, as well as within the learning materials. In this manner, its aim is to encourage equity, develop cross cultural understanding and improve learning outcomes for all students. While it is increasingly recognized that cross cultural instructional design is useful, research on the practical use of it has also been lacking. Although there is a significant amount of theoretical literature on the responsibility and importance of education within the topic of cultural competence, there is little practical frame work that gives clear recommendations to educators. However, this research gap indicates a requirement for further research that focuses on how cross-cultural instructional design can be appropriately included into educational practices (Rogers, et al., 2007; Dimitrov and Haque, 2016).

Creating inclusive learning environments is also about multilingual education, where learners have multiple home languages. Recent research has revealed that in addition to improving cognitive capacity multilingual languages enhance its ability to communicate with the different cultures, thereby creating better understanding. Finally, while the integration of multilingualism into educational practices can be made, it has its own challenges such as the development of adequate language policies, curriculum and teacher training. Though multilingual education is shown to hold clear benefits, some research is still lacking in the area of actual implementation within the instructional design process. A lot of current language education approaches tend to encourage monolingual paradigms over considerations of the benefits of multilingualism to learning.

Such an absence of research gap emphasizes the need for novel approaches recognizing and utilizing the worth of linguistic diversity in classroom environment (Kirss, et al., 2021; Ziegler, 2013). To fill in the research gap of it, this paper proposes a framework of cross cultural instructional design for multilingual education based on interdisciplinary teaching approaches. We synthesize insights from education, linguistics, and cultural studies in an effort to offer working guidance to educators for promoting a culturally responsive learning environment. Via a thorough review of prior literature and case studies, we attempt to discover finest methods and suggestions for incorporating cultural and linguistic differences into curricular style. This will allow us to make a small contribution to the development of inclusive educational practices that allow all students to achieve in today's multicultural and interconnected world.



3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The content analysis approach used in this study focuses on evaluating representation of multicultural content in English language textbooks. One of the commonly used procedures in educational research is the content analysis for systematic analysis of text in order to discover underlying themes (Krippendorff, 2021). In order to gain a thorough understanding of the comparative research, this study involves elements in the comparative research by studying English textbooks within various educational systems, i.e., international (Cambridge University Press) curriculum and regional (Punjab Textbook Board) curriculum. In addition, qualitative insights into efficacy of these textbooks for engendering students' multicultural awareness are obtained through focus group discussions with educators.

3.2 Textbook Selection

In particular, the study chooses Grade V English language textbooks from two curriculum programs.

1. Cambridge University Press Textbook (International Curriculum) – Known for its global perspective and diverse representation of cultures.
2. Punjab Textbook Board Textbook (Regional Curriculum on Pakistan's Front): Focuses on the national identity, Global restrictions are yet to be seen.

Widely used in their educational systems and in molding students' cultural understanding, these textbooks were chosen for such reasons. The selection of grade V is due to the fact that this level of education is characterized by the emergence of the culture and cognitive ability of the students making it suitable in analysis of the representation of the multicultural (Banks, 2020).

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

3.3.1 Content Analysis of Textbooks

The qualitative content analysis of all the documents is purposed through James A. Banks' Five Dimensions of Multicultural Education, Framework (Banks, 2020). Based on these dimensions each textbook is analyzed.

- Content Integration – Includes how much multicultural themes, diverse characters, and a global perspective are included.
- Knowledge Construction Process – Textbooks drive students to work with cultural narratives critically and contest against biases.
- Textbooks that help reduce prejudice and stereotypes by facing them and advocating cultural empathy.
- Equity Pedagogy – The inclusivity of teaching strategies and representation of different cultural groups.
- Empowering School Culture – The promotion of social justice, inclusivity, and cultural competence.

These dimensions are used to create a coding framework that is supported by NVivo software to assist with coding and analyzing recurring themes within the textbook content (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2022).

3.3.2 Focus Group Discussions

Besides the content analysis, focus group discussions (N = 10) are also carried



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out with English language educators, who are from international and regional schools. Purposive sampling is applied to select the educators so that diversity is present in terms of experience and teaching backgrounds (Patton, 2021).

The discussions focus on:

- Cultural Diversity Representation in Textbooks – Perceptions of Multicultural Representation in textbooks.
- Inclusivity – How well the materials promote inclusivity by cultivating a global awareness.
- Questions of Multicultural Content in the Classroom – Issues related to how multicultural themes are included with other content.
- Suggestions for Improvements – Suggestion that could improve the multicultural education in textbooks.

The session duration is approximately 60 minutes, audio recorded with consent, and later transcribed using Braun & Clarke's (2022) six-step thematic framework.

1. Reading and re-reading transcripts with the goal of familiarizing themselves with the data.
2. Identifying key themes towards multicultural education follow the generation of initial codes.
3. Grouping similar codes in order to find themes.
4. Reviewing themes – we've refined and validated themes.
5. Naming and defining themes – making sure that themes are clear and coherent.
6. Presenting findings in humorous report.

3.4 Reliability and Validity

Further to strengthening the credibility and the dependability of the research, the paragraphs under it were for verifying the accuracy of the research and the researcher credibility.

- Content analysis is triangulated with educator's perspective (Denzin, 2021). Moreover, inter-coder reliability is found by having different researchers analyse the textbooks independently and then compared findings.
- Participants are engaged in member checking, by sharing preliminary focus group findings for them to validate.

Reflexivity is maintained which includes the acknowledging of researcher bias and also an objective approach towards the data interpretation (Lincoln and Guba, 2022).

Results and Findings

The results of the content analysis of English language textbooks and thematic analysis of focus group of educators are presented in this chapter. These findings are structured using the James A. Banks' Five Dimensions of Multicultural Education Framework used to evaluate the program. Frequency and representation of multicultural elements in tables are then followed by qualitative insights from teachers.

4.1 Content Analysis Results

Banks' Five Dimensions of Multicultural Education was used to compare the content CUP grade V English textbook (International Curriculum) and PTB grade



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V English textbook (Regional Curriculum) through the content analysis. The summary of the results is shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Multicultural Representation in Textbooks (Content Analysis Results)

Dimension	Cambridge (International)	Punjab (Regional)	Findings
Content Integration	High (78% of lessons include multicultural themes)	Low (25% of lessons focus on diverse perspectives)	Cambridge integrates global cultural references, while Punjab focuses on local culture.
Knowledge Construction	Moderate (56% of lessons encourage critical thinking about cultures)	Low (20% of lessons challenge cultural assumptions)	Punjab textbook presents culture as fixed, whereas Cambridge encourages analysis.
Prejudice Reduction	High (72% of lessons portray diverse ethnicities positively)	Low (18% challenge stereotypes)	Punjab textbook lacks content that actively reduces bias.
Equity Pedagogy	Moderate (60% of activities support inclusive teaching)	Low (30% of activities promote diversity)	Cambridge includes diverse teaching strategies, while Punjab follows a uniform method.
Empowering School Culture	High (80% of content promotes global citizenship)	Low (15% emphasize multicultural awareness)	Cambridge focuses on preparing students for a diverse world, while Punjab emphasizes national identity.

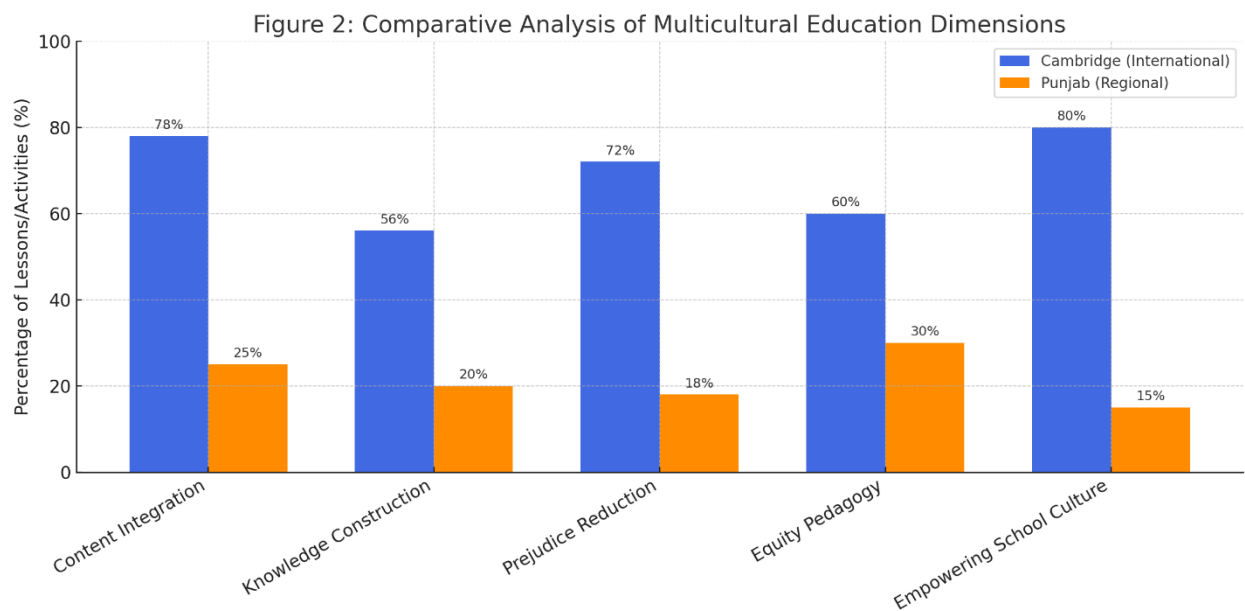


Figure 2: Comparative Analysis of Multicultural Education Dimensions

This figure compares the implementation of five dimensions of multicultural education across two curricula—Cambridge (International) and Punjab (Regional). The data highlights significant disparities:

- Teachers at Cambridge use multicultural content more frequently than teachers in Punjab where it appears only a quarter of the time.
- The Cambridge curriculum features moderate attention to Knowledge Construction although Punjab only uses this method 20% of the time.
- Punjab lacks lessons that challenge stereotypes because its textbook shows prejudice reduction in 18% of instruction while 72% of Cambridge lessons show it.
- Cambridge students learn principles of Diversity Support and Empowerment Education at higher rates (60 and 80 percent) than Punjab students who primarily focus on community-specific matters in their lessons (30 and 15 percent).

The chart shows how Cambridge educates students in an inclusive global way that Punjab's regional education system does not offer.

4.1.1 Content Integration

The Cambridge textbook integrates multicultural content in 78% of lessons, incorporating global stories, cultural references, and international authors. In contrast, the Punjab textbook primarily focuses on national identity, with only 25% of lessons referencing diverse cultures.

Example from Cambridge:

- A lesson on "Festivals Around the World" covers Diwali (India), Chinese New Year (China), Thanksgiving (USA), and Eid (Islamic World).

Example from Punjab:

- A lesson on "Pakistan's Cultural Heritage" describes traditional clothing, local festivals, and national heroes but lacks references to global cultures.



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4.1.2 Knowledge Construction

The Cambridge textbook encourages students to analyze cultural narratives (56%), while the Punjab textbook presents cultural knowledge as static (20%). Critical thinking questions in the Cambridge textbook encourage students to reflect on similarities and differences between cultures, while Punjab's textbook primarily reinforces national cultural identity.

4.1.3 Prejudice Reduction

Cambridge actively portrays diverse ethnicities, gender roles, and social backgrounds in 72% of its lessons. For instance, stories feature female scientists, disabled athletes, and characters from diverse ethnic backgrounds. In contrast, Punjab's textbook contains only 18% of content that challenges stereotypes, mostly reinforcing traditional roles.

4.2 Focus Group Discussion Results

A total of 10 English teachers (5 from international schools using Cambridge textbooks and 5 from regional schools using Punjab textbooks) participated in focus group discussions. The results were categorized into major themes using thematic analysis.

Table 4.2: Educator Perspectives on Multicultural Representation

Theme	Cambridge (International Teachers)	Punjab (Regional Teachers)	Findings
Cultural Representation	Sufficiently diverse (Multicultural stories, authors, and characters)	Limited to local culture (Minimal global perspectives)	International textbooks prepare students for global interaction, while regional ones focus on national identity.
Bias and Stereotypes	Actively challenges gender and racial biases	Reinforces traditional roles	Teachers using Punjab textbooks felt students lacked exposure to global perspectives.
Student Engagement	High engagement due to relatable global content	Moderate engagement (Students relate to local stories but lack exposure)	Students using Cambridge textbooks showed higher cultural curiosity .



Theme	Cambridge (International Teachers)	Punjab (Regional Teachers)	Findings
Teaching Challenges	Some students with struggle with unfamiliar cultures	Teachers feel by restricted syllabus limitations	Regional teachers expressed a need for curriculum reforms to incorporate diversity.

4.2.1 Theme 1: Cultural Representation

As to the choice of Cameron, teachers who integrate Cambridge textbooks mentioned multicultural content, explaining that it expands the horizons of the audience. One teacher commented:

“Hera learns about various traditions thus makes her becomes more curious and freer of prejudice.”

However, the Punjab textbook teachers said that there was no sufficient cultural emphasis on global culture:

“The strengths in our textbook include that it is mostly about Pakistan cultures that the students should know, however, there is more out there than Pakistan culture alone.”

4.2.2 Theme 2: Bias and Stereotypes

The selected Cambridge materials are subversive of the gender-role stereotype and ethnic type, in contrast to what is found repeatedly in Punjab textbooks. A Punjab teacher stated:

“A woman or female figure is rare in the stories and most of the stories depict women as inferior to men.”

Cambridge text was populated with girls, Black people, scientists and different ability protagonists and authors and students got to have more inclusive discussions with the text.

4.2.3 Theme 3: Student Engagement

The student exposed to Cambridge textbooks were much more culturally insightful and perceptive, frequently posed questions about cultures in general. While the Punjab textbook users were familiar with regional particularities, they did not receive information about diversity of the global world.

One Cambridge teacher remarked:

“One of the presented writers shares an opinion that her students are more enthusiasm towards learning when the books they use in class reflect different cultures.”

Meanwhile, a Punjab teacher stated:

“Students love to learn content that is from their own country as they can associate with the content but the international contents are rare to come across.”



4.2.4 Theme 4: Teaching Challenges

Based on the analysis of the responses given by international school teachers, the authors identified that some students operate at lower cultural frames, which makes additional explanations necessary. But they opined that the exposure to other cultures assist the students in developing compassion.

Concerning curriculum, regional school teachers paraphrased by saying that:

“Though we would like to cover different areas of culture, there is no room for choice as the syllabus is already mapped. There is little flexibility.”

In their opinion, policy adjustments need to involve the integration of multicultural aspects to the curricula of member states.

4.3 Discussion

The findings of this study highlight significant disparities in the representation of multicultural content in English language textbooks from international and regional curricula. The comparison made between the Cambridge textbook and the Punjab Textbook Board (PTB) textbook indicated that the Cambridge Social Studies, encompass a wider world view while the Punjab Textbook Board's Social Studies contains a predominantly nationalistic view. Such a contrast implies that students, studying with the help of Cambridge published textbooks, develop a broader perspective of cultural diversity in contrast to the students, who study regional oriented curricula and may have much more limited exposures to the world cultures. In the framework of Banks' Five Dimensions of Multicultural Education, content integration is considered to be one of the key factors that affect changes in diverse learning environments. The finding of this study reveals that though both the Cambridge textbook contain multicultural comparison, the Punjab textbook explicitly provoked more ethnocentrism as it provides more information regarding the local culture and history. Lack of multicultural experience can impede students' growth of intercultural sensitivity, which is vital in the present world economy.

Also, the study showed that employing the Cambridge textbook created constructive knowledge since it provided learners with diverse cultural perspectives and required them to analyze. Conversely, the writer of the Punjab school text book seems to promote culture as something fixed and paints only one picture of culture, the Pakistani, which does not encourage the student to think about differences and similarities. This difference in approach affects the way and extent to which conception of cultural Diversity is comprehended by the students. In my opinion, only if learners are exposed to multiple and diverse points of view, they are able to challenge the hegemonic discourses of the societies on the other end. The lack of such opportunities in regional context of coursework also hinders students' ability to analyze cultural traditions in the framework apart from their own nationality. Besides, this study found that prejudice reduction was not given adequate attention in the Punjab textbook, although more prejudice aspects such as stereotyping and gender roles were evident. The Cambridge textbook for the children, however, had a variety of characters and was free from gender stereotyping as well as racist concepts. This evidence is in line with the Culbertson et al.'s contingency theory, which states that eradicating stereotypes in books will lead to the delivery of better attitudes among learners. Culturally diverse characters and stories that are integrated into



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the textbooks play a major role in depolarizing the learners, since the students can eliminate existing stereotypical perceptions about fellow learners from other cultural backgrounds.

It also noted that equity pedagogy was more prevalent in Cambridge curriculum implementation strategies since the teachers' crafted mechanisms that effectively provided all students with equal chance to make meaning of multicultural contents. However, in the case of Punjab textbook the flexibility, in terms of factors governing the teaching-learning process was less as compared to other three. This it implies that regional curricula have to encourage the use of teaching approaches that promote consideration of the cultural and economic differences among the students.

The results from the focus group discussions are in a way in a tandem with the content analysis as the educators apprehensive over scarcity of global cultures included in Punjab text series. Some teachers also pointed out that curriculum must be changed to include more pluralistic perspective, as the students they teach seem to be unaware of the rest of the worlds' views. They stressed that while the observation of the local culture is important, equal attention should be paid to worldwide cultivation because the peaceful coexistence of all nations and cultures in our world is nowadays the main question. From these findings, it can be recommended that the policymakers and curriculum developers should think of including a more diverse multicultural content in regional textbooks and help the students to develop the required global citizenship skills. Herein lies the role of education systems to prepare the students with the competencies needed to live in the world that is growing more interconnected each day.

5. Conclusion

This paper is devoted to the analysis of the significance of multicultural education in raising awareness of cultural diversity and internationalization through textbooks in English. In this case, the comparative analysis of theoretical curriculum of Cambridge and PTB was found to indicate differences about the treatment of multicultural contents. It is indicated here that Cambridge textbooks are more diverse and freer from stereotyping and biases while encouraging critical thinking than PTB textbooks are more fixated with their own nation and its view of other global societies. Hence the exposure that the students working under the Punjab curriculum get tends to be low in terms of touching the different cultural areas that are crucial in the attainment of the intercultural competence.

The study also reveals that cultural diversity is addressed in textbook as one of the primary sources of information through which students develop attitude towards culture and integration. Cambridge materials were however found to be most congruent with Banks' Five Dimensions of Multicultural Education in aspects of content, knowledge and stereotype dimensions. In this context, it has been possible to identify that PTB textbooks did not present other cultures in a more diverse manner or critical appraisal of cultures as well; they only provided conventional points of view that did not allow the development of comparative analysis. The focus group discussions also supported these findings where the teachers who adopted the regional text felt that there was inadequacy of multicultural aspects and most of them noted that the education system needs to be more prepared for international interaction.



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In light of these gaps, it is advisable for the policymakers and curriculum developers to consider acculturation of regional textbook to contain both a local as well as the international aspects. So many students who are currently in classes also need to be given different cultural materials to enable them understand the world that they live in and to be able to deal with issues that affect such a world. For this reason, multicultural content integration into teacher training programs should enable teachers, although there exists restricted curriculum, to adopt diverse strategies in implementing multiculturalism into the classroom. Hence, there is an excellent opportunity to equip students with the essential civility skills by means of textbooks that are free from discriminating clichéd thoughts. Admittedly, it is high time to push for the culture of multicultural education within the ELT curricula for the young generation to be culturally relevant and ready for an increasingly diverse world.

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