

Chapter 5

Promoting Inclusive Practices in Transnational Higher Education Through Staff Training and Development

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the critical role of staff training and development in fostering inclusivity within transnational higher education (TNHE), focusing on the integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles. Through a qualitative case study of four individuals from TNHE institutions, the research reveals the impact of staff training on implementing inclusive practices, addressing barriers such as lack of awareness and systemic issues. It highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity, the challenge of resistance to change, and the influence of power dynamics on inclusivity. The chapter concludes that a multifaceted approach, considering personal, cultural, systemic, and career-related factors, is necessary to foster inclusivity in TNHE and calls for ongoing research and action to advance inclusive practices in higher education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Transnational higher education (TNHE) is experiencing a growing emphasis on issues of equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Recent studies have highlighted the need to address historically exclusive climates and dated policies in professional work environments, as well as the importance of providing equitable learning and development opportunities for staff with diverse learning needs. At the same time, there is increasing recognition of the crucial role that faculty and staff play in creating inclusive learning environments. Providing comprehensive training and professional development opportunities with a focus of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) has been identified as a best practice for promoting inclusive practices in higher education (Kim et al., 2023). However, research on the specific strategies and impact of inclusive staff training and development in the context of transnational higher education in China remains limited. This chapter delves into the critical role that staff training and development plays in fostering an inclusive environment within TNHE. The chapter emphasises the importance of recognising and valuing the varied cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds that staff bring with them. The authors argue that for true inclusivity to be achieved, it is not enough to simply admit a diverse staff population. Instead, institutions must also ensure that their staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to support and engage with this diversity effectively. The chapter also tackles the issue of equity in staff training and development. It underscores that inclusivity is not just about acknowledging differences; it is about ensuring that all staff have equal opportunities to grow and develop professionally. This includes providing training that is accessible and relevant to all staff, regardless of their position or background. The authors further discuss the role of technology in facilitating inclusive practices. They explore how digital platforms can be used to deliver training, provide resources, and create communities of practice that transcend geographical boundaries. The chapter concludes with a call to action for institutions to prioritise inclusive staff training and development. It argues that such efforts are not only morally right, but also strategically essential for institutions that aim to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Inclusivity in TNHE

In TNHE, the principles of inclusivity and diversity have become central to the mission of many institutions. The concept of inclusivity in education is supported by several theoretical frameworks, each offering a distinct perspective on how to achieve

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