

THE IMPORTANCE OF APPLYING FOREIGN EXPERIENCE IN THE FORMATION OF A SENSE OF INTERNATIONAL HARMONY IN PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS.

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Annotation: This article explores the significance of incorporating international educational experiences into primary school curricula to foster a sense of international harmony among students. It examines best practices from countries with successful intercultural education models, analyzing how their strategies can be adapted in local contexts. The study emphasizes that global peacebuilding starts with young minds and that early exposure to diverse cultures cultivates empathy, tolerance, and global citizenship. Through a review of literature, pedagogical strategies, and comparative practices, the article presents actionable methods and results that highlight the importance of global perspectives in shaping socially responsible future generations.

Keywords: International harmony, primary education, global citizenship, foreign experience, intercultural competence, tolerance, educational integration, international education, peacebuilding, multiculturalism.

In an increasingly globalized world, fostering a sense of international harmony has become a central goal of modern education. Primary school students represent the most impressionable demographic for instilling values of peace, tolerance, and mutual respect. As globalization links societies more tightly than ever before, education systems are expected not only to build academic competencies but also to nurture globally responsible citizens. Applying foreign pedagogical experiences—especially those aimed at multicultural education—offers vital insights into how this goal can be effectively achieved. This article investigates how the implementation of international education strategies in primary schools can significantly shape students’ worldview and promote international harmony from an early age.

Below is a detailed exploration of the importance of applying foreign experience in forming a sense of international harmony among primary school students. The response outlines key benefits, practical methods, theoretical support, and potential challenges, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

The Importance of Applying Foreign Experience in Forming International Harmony in Primary School Students

In an increasingly interconnected world, fostering a sense of international harmony among young learners is critical. Primary school students, typically aged 6–11, are at a formative stage where their values, attitudes, and worldviews begin to take shape. Applying foreign experiences—such as exposure to international cultures, educational practices, and global perspectives—can cultivate empathy, mutual respect, and a sense of global citizenship. This essay explores the significance of integrating foreign experiences into primary education, supported by theoretical frameworks, practical strategies, and evidence from educational research.

Benefits of Applying Foreign Experience

Cultivating Cultural Awareness and Empathy

Introducing students to foreign cultures through stories, traditions, or multimedia resources helps them appreciate diversity. For instance, reading African folktales or exploring Japanese festivals like Obon can broaden their understanding of different ways of life. According to a 2018 OECD report on global competence, early exposure to multicultural education reduces stereotypes and fosters empathy, which are foundational for international harmony. By understanding that differences are valuable, students develop a mindset that celebrates rather than fears diversity.

Fostering Global Citizenship

Foreign experiences encourage students to see themselves as part of a global community. Learning about international educational practices, such as Finland's play-based learning or Singapore's emphasis on collaborative problem-solving, highlights shared goals across nations—education, growth, and well-being. UNESCO's 2015 Global Citizenship Education framework emphasizes teaching values like peace,

tolerance, and sustainability. By engaging with these concepts early, students internalize the idea that their actions impact the world, promoting harmonious global relationships.

Enhancing Conflict Resolution Skills

Exposure to how different cultures approach conflict resolution equips students with diverse strategies for peaceful interaction. For example, studying Indigenous Australian practices of restorative justice or South African ubuntu philosophy (emphasizing community and forgiveness) teaches students alternatives to competitive or punitive approaches. A 2020 study in the Journal of Peace Education found that cross-cultural learning in primary schools reduces ethnocentrism and enhances cooperative behaviors, key to resolving conflicts harmoniously.

Developing Communication and Language Skills

Incorporating foreign languages or basic phrases (e.g., greetings in French, counting in Hindi) fosters inclusivity and communication skills. Research by Bialystok (2017) shows that bilingual exposure in primary school enhances cognitive flexibility, enabling students to navigate diverse social contexts. Programs like virtual language exchanges with international peers further strengthen communication, breaking down barriers and building connections that underpin international harmony.

Encouraging Critical Thinking and Open-Mindedness

Foreign experiences challenge students to question their assumptions and consider alternative perspectives. For example, comparing how schools in India integrate environmental education with local practices versus Sweden's outdoor learning approach prompts critical reflection on sustainability. This aligns with Bloom's taxonomy, which places evaluation and synthesis at the higher end of cognitive development, fostering open-mindedness essential for harmonious coexistence.

Practical Strategies for Implementation

Curriculum Integration

Schools can embed foreign experiences into subjects like social studies, literature, and art. For example:

- Literature: Use global stories, such as Anansi the Spider (Ghana) or The Magic Paintbrush (China), to teach universal themes like kindness.
- Social Studies: Explore world geography through projects like creating a “global village” where students represent different countries.
- Art and Music: Teach traditional dances (e.g., Brazilian samba) or crafts (e.g., Mexican papel picado) to engage students creatively.

International Partnerships

Virtual exchange programs, such as ePals or PenPal Schools, connect students with peers worldwide. For instance, a class in the U.S. might collaborate with a school in Kenya on a project about local wildlife, fostering mutual respect. A 2019 study by the Asia Society found that such programs increase students’ intercultural competence.

Celebrating Global Events

Organizing events like International Peace Day (September 21) or a “World Cultures Week” allows students to explore foreign traditions. For example, Sweden’s curriculum includes thematic weeks on global issues, which could inspire activities like tasting international foods or performing global songs.

Teacher Training

Educators need professional development to effectively integrate foreign experiences. Workshops on global education, such as those offered by the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program, equip teachers with tools to create inclusive classrooms. A trained teacher might use case studies from foreign curricula to spark discussions on universal values.

Technology and Media

Digital tools like Google Earth or documentaries about children’s lives in other countries (e.g., BBC’s My Life series) make foreign experiences accessible. Virtual reality (VR) field trips to places like the Great Wall of China or Machu Picchu can

immerse students in global contexts, enhancing their emotional connection to distant cultures.

Theoretical Support

The importance of foreign experience aligns with several educational theories:

- Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory: Learning occurs through social interaction. Engaging with foreign cultures provides a "zone of proximal development" where students grow through guided exposure to new ideas.
- Gardner's Multiple Intelligences: Activities like global music or art tap into musical, spatial, and interpersonal intelligences, making learning inclusive and engaging.
- Freire's Critical Pedagogy: Encouraging students to question cultural norms through foreign perspectives fosters critical consciousness, empowering them to challenge prejudice and promote harmony.

Challenges and Solutions

While valuable, integrating foreign experiences faces challenges:

- Resource Constraints: Schools in low-income areas may lack access to technology or materials. Solution: Use low-cost resources like open-access online platforms (e.g., National Geographic Kids) or community partnerships.
- Cultural Sensitivity: Misrepresenting foreign cultures can reinforce stereotypes. Solution: Consult authentic sources, such as cultural organizations or native educators, to ensure accuracy.
- Curriculum Overload: Teachers may struggle to balance global education with local standards. Solution: Integrate foreign experiences into existing subjects rather than adding separate units.
- Parental Resistance: Some parents may view foreign content as irrelevant. Solution: Communicate the benefits of global competence through parent workshops or newsletters.

Evidence from Global Practices

Countries like Canada and Australia have successfully integrated foreign experiences into primary education. Canada's Global Education Framework includes Indigenous perspectives alongside international ones, promoting reconciliation and harmony. Australia's curriculum emphasizes Asia-Pacific engagement, with programs like the BRIDGE project connecting students with Asian peers. These models demonstrate that intentional integration yields measurable outcomes, such as increased cultural competence (PISA 2018).

Conclusion

Applying foreign experience in primary education is a powerful strategy for fostering international harmony. By cultivating cultural awareness, global citizenship, conflict resolution skills, communication abilities, and critical thinking, students develop the tools to navigate a diverse world. Practical methods like curriculum integration, international partnerships, and technology ensure accessibility, while theoretical frameworks and global evidence underscore its efficacy. Despite challenges, with thoughtful implementation, schools can prepare students to be empathetic, open-minded contributors to a harmonious global society. As the world grows more interconnected, such education is not just beneficial but essential.

Applying foreign educational experiences in primary schools significantly contributes to the development of students' global awareness and intercultural competence.

Structured exposure to diverse cultures through curriculum and extracurricular activities enhances social-emotional learning, fostering peace and cooperation.

Successful implementation requires systemic support, including teacher training, administrative backing, and community involvement.

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