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Teachers' Perceptions of Culturally Responsive Teaching in International Programs in Vietnamese Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

This article explores teachers' perceptions of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) within international programs in Vietnam's universities. In-depth interviews were conducted with 26 teachers from 13 international programs across 8 universities. The thematic analysis of the qualitative data revealed three key themes: promoting cultural diversity and ecosystem-based teaching approaches; contextualising curricula, teaching approaches, assessments and learning environments to ensure the relevance of international programs for students; and fostering equal positions between Vietnamese and foreign teachers, as well as between students in international and mainstream programs. These findings offer valuable insights for stakeholders in Vietnam's higher education system, highlighting the need to support educators' professional development in applying CRT effectively within a highly internationalised education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Internationalisation is a key priority in higher education development strategies globally, serving as a catalyst for enhancing education and training competences and developing human resources that align with regional and global socio-economic demands (Tran et al., 2018). In Vietnam, this global shift and local demands have led to the robust expansion of international programs, enabling Vietnamese students and educators to collaborate with international peers and faculty. These initiatives are instrumental in preparing learners for success in a globalised workforce while reinforcing the competitiveness of Vietnam's higher education institutions (HEIs) in attracting international students and professionals.

However, the demands of teaching in internationalised programs go beyond delivering professional knowledge in English or adopting international curricula. Culturally responsive teaching (CRT), which incorporates and values the cultural identities and experiences of diverse learners, is essential in such contexts (Luong, 2024). For Vietnamese HEIs, CRT offers not only a framework for engaging multicultural classrooms but also a strategic approach to achieving transformative learning outcomes and improving students' employability in increasingly globalized environments (Luong et al., 2023; Luong et al., 2024). With the integration of Vietnamese and international students and teachers in international programs, the adoption of CRT practices has become a pressing need. Despite its importance, the understanding and implementation of CRT in these multicultural environments remain fragmented and insufficiently developed (Pham et al., 2019). The research gap in the existing CRT literature specific to Vietnamese higher education further underscores the need for more comprehensive studies in this area. Additionally,

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a deeper contextualisation of Vietnam's unique opportunities and challenges in implementing CRT is necessary to develop culturally relevant and practical strategies for higher education institutions.

To address this gap, our study investigates teachers' perceptions of CRT in Vietnamese universities' international programs. The research aims to provide actionable insights for teacher education programs and institutional strategies, contributing to a more inclusive and effective educational environment in Vietnam's rapidly evolving higher education sector.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT)

CTR is a pedagogical approach that leverages students' cultural knowledge, experiences, identities, and perspectives to create relevant and effective learning experiences (Gay, 2018). CRT emphasises teaching through the strengths of ethnically diverse learners by recognising and valuing their cultural backgrounds while fostering a classroom environment where students feel empowered and included (Taylor & Sobel, 2011). CRT further entails practical actions, such as embedding students' cultural contexts in curriculum design, addressing systemic biases, modelling respect for diversity, and collaborating with out-of-school stakeholders (Muñiz, 2020). It calls for teachers to serve as intermediaries between academic content and students' lived experiences, fostering mutual respect, understanding, and meaningful connections in increasingly diverse educational settings (Castillo-Montoya, 2019).

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) in higher education

Within the higher education context, CRT is a pedagogical approach that prioritises the recognition and integration of students' cultural backgrounds, experiences, and identities into the teaching and learning process. It encourages educators to reflect on their own cultural perspectives and teaching practices while embracing students' diverse cultural frames of reference to make learning more relevant and inclusive (Luong, 2024). In internationalized higher education contexts, CRT not only helps educators develop culturally inclusive curricula but also fosters an environment where all students feel valued, engaged, and empowered (Hutchison & McAlister-Shields, 2020; Liao et al., 2021). In practice, CRT requires educators to adjust their teaching methods, curriculum content, and assessment strategies to meet the diverse needs of students from various cultural backgrounds (Mizzi, 2017).

Teachers' perceptions of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) in higher education

Teachers' perceptions of CRT in higher education have been widely studied, reflecting a growing awareness of its potential to enhance student engagement and performance in culturally diverse settings. The current literature highlights several key themes of teachers' views on CRT and its implementation in diverse educational contexts, including Southeast Asia and Vietnam. Firstly, the *culturally responsive pedagogy* is valued by many educators in improving learning outcomes, particularly for students from marginalized backgrounds. By acknowledging students' cultural identities and experiences, CRT fosters a sense of belonging, which can lead to greater academic achievement and personal growth (Hutchison & McAlister-Shields, 2020; Lynch & Rush, 2024). Teachers see CRT as a way to make learning more relevant to students' lives, addressing their unique needs and promoting engagement. For instance, a study in Vietnam's Central Highlands found that despite lacking formal training in CRT, teachers autonomously engaged with ethnic minority communities to understand their cultures and languages and integrated this knowledge into their pedagogical practices. This approach led to more inclusive and effective educational experiences for ethnic minority students (Nguyen & Huynh, 2021).

Secondly, *the ongoing professional development* in applying CRT enables teachers to reflect on their own cultural biases and to develop the skills needed to create inclusive learning environments (Lynch & Rush, 2024). In Vietnam, research indicates that teachers' awareness and concerns about intercultural integration are influenced by their exposure to culturally diverse educational materials and training (Pham et al., 2019). It has been noted that multicultural education in Vietnamese universities is often superficial, fragmented, and predominantly focused on national traditions, lacking a holistic approach to promoting cultural awareness, diversity, and tolerance. This finding underscores the importance of providing educators with resources and professional learning that promote self-reflection and cultural responsiveness (Pham et al., 2019).

Thirdly, *adapting curricula and teaching practices* is considered a requirement for teachers to co-construct lessons with students, using culturally relevant materials and incorporating diverse perspectives into course content (Yembergenova et al., 2024). Existing studies have shown that both Vietnamese teachers and students perceive a gap

between traditional teaching methods and the need for more culturally responsive approaches. Educators who actively engage with students' cultural backgrounds and adapt their teaching strategies accordingly can bridge this gap, leading to more effective learning experiences and outcomes (Luong et al., 2023; Luong, 2024).

Fourthly, *systemic inequities in education* are addressed in CRT that represents a teaching practice for fostering more inclusive classrooms for all students, regardless of their cultural background (Childs & Lett, 2024). Teachers in Vietnam have expressed concerns about curriculum and management practices that may not align with the goals of intercultural education. By advocating for systemic changes that support CRT, educators can help address educational disparities and foster equity within the higher education system (Pham et al., 2019; Luong, 2024).

Teachers' perceptions of CRT in higher education

Existing literature on teachers' perceptions of CRT in higher education underscores its significant potential to enhance student engagement, learning outcomes, and inclusivity in culturally diverse settings. Teachers view CRT as instrumental in addressing systemic inequities, improving academic achievement, and promoting personal growth, particularly for marginalised student populations (Tran, 2013; Tran & Nguyen, 2015). Teachers also attach the importance of professional development to enabling themselves to reflect on their own cultural biases and equip them with the skills needed to create inclusive learning environments (Tran & Le, 2018). The need for adapting curricula and teaching strategies to incorporate culturally relevant materials and diverse perspectives is emphasised as a way to co-construct meaningful learning experiences with students (Tran, 2011).

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This qualitative study explores teachers' perceptions of CRT in international programs in Vietnam's increasingly internationalised higher education.

Research Context and Participants

26 teachers from 13 international programs across eight universities in three regions of Vietnam participated in in-depth interviews. Using a purposive sampling technique, we selected the participants based on key criteria including the teaching disciplines, gender, geographical location, and country of partnership within their international programs. The sample comprises 17 Vietnamese and 9 foreign teachers involved in international programs. 11 teachers teach in natural sciences and 15 in social sciences. Among them, there were 14 male and 12 female lecturers, including 2 foreign female and 7 foreign male participants. The average age of the participants was 38 years. The majority of these lecturers obtained their master's and doctoral degrees from developed countries such as Australia, Germany, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

In the study's sample, the international programs in cooperation with the foreign partners from different continents were selected, specifically: the USA (four), Asia (Malaysia) (two), Australia (three) and Europe (four) were selected.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected through semi-structured, audio-recorded interviews over five months. Each interview lasts 60-90 minutes. The participants provided informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality. The transcribed interviews were analysed using NVIVO 12 software. Thematic analysis, following Creswell and Poth's (2018) six-phase framework, was employed to identify, analyse, and report patterns within the data. Initially, open coding was conducted to generate preliminary codes, which were then iteratively refined through axial coding to establish relationships between themes. To ensure reliability and validity, two independent researchers cross-checked the coding structure, and discrepancies were resolved through discussion. The final themes were validated by reviewing coded excerpts, member-checking with select participants, and maintaining an audit trail, including memos and field notes, to document analytical decisions and enhance transparency. This rigorous approach ensured the credibility and trustworthiness of the thematic analysis. With this analysis approach, three key themes about teachers' perceptions on CRT emerged. The data were repeatedly coded and cross-validated to identify recurring patterns. Memos and field notes were used throughout the process to deepen the analysis and interpretation of the analysed data.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Results

The data indicate that CRT is perceived through three key themes: (i) Promoting cultural diversity and integrating an ecosystem-based teaching approach; (ii) Contextualising curriculum, teaching methods and assessment, and learning environments to ensure the relevance of international programs for students; (iii) Establishing equal positions between Vietnamese teachers and foreign ones; and students of international program and those of mainstream ones in the pedagogical practice.

4.1.1. Cultural diversity and ecosystem-based teaching approaches

The culturally diverse and ecosystem-based teaching approaches in Vietnam's higher education are commonly disclosed by the teachers in the study.

The culturally diverse approach is enacted in terms of the cultural localisation with the inclusion of local and regional contexts and the promotion of cultural comparisons in teaching and learning. The teachers provide examples relevant to Vietnam's socio-cultural contexts or/and integrate case studies and examples from transnational companies operating in Vietnam or the Asia-Pacific region. These efforts make contents more relatable to Vietnamese students and the local context. However, the teachers revealed that teaching international programs requires them to adhere to standardised foreign curricula and materials. As such, it leaves limited room for localisation of the teaching and learning contents. Adjustments typically involve adding localised examples rather than modifying the core syllabus. For example, one teacher revealed:

"I deliver the international program provided by Coventry University. I understand that I am not allowed to change the curriculum and syllabus. Instead, I added some examples related to Vietnam or Asian contexts. For example, with the International Business Environment course, I facilitated students to explore cultural differences manifested in the business models between Vietnam, Europe, and the UK, etc. Based on the same theoretical business framework, students can gather materials and analyse the cultures of Vietnam and other countries, not just focusing solely on analysing the cultural environment model of the UK as exclusively designed in the curriculum. This helps students understand the nuances of global versus local business practices." (A Vietnamese lecturer in university 05).

The ecosystem-based teaching approach enhances the integration of global and local perspectives, crossdisciplinary focus, and diverse stakeholders into courses. In the international programs, exercises and assignments are often designed to enhance students' critical thinking and analytical skills. Teachers address global issues while incorporating national and regional dimensions, encouraging students to understand both local challenges and global trends. The teachers in the study emphasised their experience in *international and dynamic* environments, which has enhanced their ability to teach and connect with diverse groups. This reflects a fundamental principle of the ecosystem approach – "adapting" to and "thriving" within diverse and interconnected systems. By working in international teams and teaching in various cultural contexts (e.g., Vietnam, Uzbekistan, Austria, USA, etc.), the teachers demonstrate how they draw on their own global experiences to address cultural nuances and dynamics in their teaching, thereby fostering a richer learning environment.

Furthermore, the introduced concepts or instructional contents emphasise the analysis of the intersections of culture, economics, politics, and society, providing a holistic view of the global and domestic environments. This interconnectedness aligns with the ecosystem-based approach, which emphasises the interaction between different elements within a system to achieve holistic outcomes. For example, the "tourism and hospitality" course in the IMC Krems program shows a blend of technical and interpersonal skills, combining tourism systems (e.g.multi-channel distribution systems) with intercultural competencies. This multidisciplinary approach reflects how the ecosystem-based method integrates various fields to address complex challenges in this industry.

Engaging diverse stakeholders into teaching was highlighted as a crucial element of the ecosystem-based approach to CRT. It is noted in our study that bringing together professionals and teachers from diverse backgrounds (i.e. hospitality, academia, management) fosters collaboration and learning in CRT. It is also underscored that teachers with CRT ability are capable of adapting courses and pedagogical approaches to fit the cultural and professional backgrounds of students in order to meet their diverse needs. The involvement of those with real-world experiences (businesses, manufacturers, practitioners, etc.), professionals and academics and local authorities (policy makers or government agency representatives, etc.) aims at depicting the real landscapes of theoretical concepts in practice. Moreover, it also creates a micro-ecosystem within the education and training system that enables knowledge exchange and collaborative problem-solving, subsequently resulting in practical, integrative solutions that benefit the entire system.

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"There are interlinked topics for all the subjects in our training program. The courses are themselves evolved by time in a fast-changing world. For example, my training course was initially called 'tourism reservation system', then it is now called 'multi-channel distribution system'. Students are required to develop their intercultural competencies after this course. To deliver this course, we engage a mixed group of professionals coming from hospitality, academics and also those with expertise in tourism management courses in the hospitality industry. Importantly, I have been in a highly international team owing to opportunities of teaching in China, Uzbekistan, Austria, etc. For me, that's something very important. This international environment is very dynamic and requires me to be flexible and adapt to diverse cultures in my teaching via this vibrant teaching ecosystem" (A foreign lecturer of university 01, Discipline: Tourism management).

The culturally diverse and ecosystem-based approaches underscore the contextual adaptability in education systems with an emphasis on the local environment in a globally interconnected and dynamic world. Within international programs, these teaching approaches demonstrate a balancing act between adhering to standardised international curricula and addressing the cultural and contextual needs of local students. Moreover, these approaches have the potential to equip students with analytical and interdisciplinary skills, enabling them to operate effectively in both global and domestic contexts, where cultural, economic, political, and social aspects are interconnected, thus preparing them for complex real-world challenges.

4.1.2. Contextualising curriculum, teaching methods, and learning environments

It is underlined by the teachers that contextualising core concepts through localised examples enhances student understanding and engagement in their learning activities. As noted, the cultural, social, and environmental contexts of learners determine their ability to acquire foundational concepts in international programs. For example, it is acknowledged that core concepts like supply and demand, elasticity, public goods, and externalities remain unchanged across economics curricula worldwide. The theoretical basis of economics is globally consistent, but its teaching requires contextualization to ensure relevance to the students' lived experiences. Locally tailored examples and enhanced students' prior experience in CRT helps secure a better understanding and application of such learnt concepts into practice. This bridges gaps between abstract theories and practical understanding, making the lessons relatable.

"When teaching the concept "externality" in economics courses, the textbook and syllabus in our international program refer to the case study about "wildfires" that is popular in Australia. However, it's hard for students in Vietnam, especially in urban areas, to relate to this case study. Alternatively, I found a video about a pig farm in Thanh Hoa province where the owner didn't properly handle waste, causing serious pollution of rivers around the area. After showing that kind of video, I posed a question on how externalities in production impact the environment, and since they had seen those examples, the students were able to relate to the concept much better." (A Vietnamese lecturer in university 01, Discipline: Business administration)

The evidence supports the argument that localisation of examples and case studies is crucial for contextualising core abstract concepts in international programs. As a result, the culturally relevant teaching materials bridge the gap between global theories and local realities, ensuring the curriculum is both engaging and meaningful for students' better understanding and discussion. In this way, students are better equipped to relate abstract concepts to their environment, enhancing learning experiences and outcomes.

Adapting teaching methodology and assessment to students' learning styles and characteristics is perceived to be critically important for CRT in international programs. From a CRT perspective, active learning strategies are essential to shift students from passive reception of knowledge to active participation in knowledge construction. To achieve this, the teaching methodology should adopt practical, real-world examples that significantly foster students' critical analysis, problem-solving, and engagement. Moreover, it is also shared that the flip-flop teaching method is commonly promoted by instructors of international programs, particularly foreign ones. However, Vietnamese students are used to the traditional method of teaching since their general educational levels. As a result, teachers with flip-flop teaching methods need to gradually educate students to make transformation in their traditional learning habits. In this regard, they can design participatory learning activities such as group work, situational analyses, real-world case-studies, simulations and debates to stimulate students' initiative and active learning. Besides, welcoming and incorporating student feedback can help teachers refine their teaching methodologies. This iterative process ensures that teaching strategies evolve to meet diverse student needs, improving overall effectiveness.

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"High school students in public schools in Vietnam have traditionally been very accustomed to following whatever their teachers say without much questioning. When transitioning to an international program where they are expected to take initiatives, it's a gradual process. It's not something that can happen instantly, so I promote active-learning-driven activities such as group-work assignments, real-world scenarios, discussion questions, simulations and debate for students. For example, in the global entrepreneurship course, we examine how culture impacts business. In Vietnam, some foreign companies invest in the country and cause environmental pollution, such as the Formosa case or instances of dumping goods. Students find these examples fascinating. They're familiar with these cases from the news, so it feels like they're talking with friends, and they become very engaged." (A Vietnamese lecturer in university 03, Discipline: Economics)

Traditionally, students may still favour exams as the primary form of assessment, which are teacher-led activities. However, the international programs in Vietnam often value both formative and summative assessments and student-led tasks. Accordingly, formative assessments such as group discussions, case studies, and projects are commonly used. Teachers often design assessments like case analysis, debates, or problem-solving exercises based on these real-life scenarios. Notably, peer evaluations are promoted in the international programs so as to encourage accountability and active participation. To promote peer interaction, teachers assign group projects or tasks with assessment guidelines about detailed rubrics for assessments and roles for students. In order to reduce students' anxiety about assessment in international programs, teachers combine traditional assessments (e.g., written tests) with alternative methods like presentations, portfolios, and open-book exams. Notably, teachers also emphasise self-assessment by introducing simple reflective practices, like journals or short reflection essays. As noted, self-assessment and reflective learning are not common in traditional Vietnamese education. Therefore, teachers use formative assessments to reduce the pressure of high-stakes exams and encourage participation. Meanwhile, constructive and encouraging feedback is provided to boost students' confidence. By carefully designing assessments that respect Vietnamese students' background while gradually introducing international standards, some teachers in international programs can foster a more inclusive and effective learning environment.

Teachers view the contextualisation of the learning environment - making it relevant to students' cultural, social, and personal experiences - as a vital component of CTR in international programs. They recognise that creating a culturally responsive (CR) learning environment involves fostering a sense of belonging and building meaningful connections with students. For many instructors in international programs, this means prioritising supportive and caring relationships from the very beginning. Encouragement and continuous communication ensure an inclusive and engaging learning environment. The use of small group chats is another key strategy, fostering students' feeling of being supported throughout their academic journey.

"As a teacher, I recognized the importance of fostering encouragement throughout the learning process. A priority for teachers in international programs is to build a supportive and caring environment from the very beginning. Sometimes, I even invite them out for coffee to work together in a more relaxed and open setting. It helps create a bond and lets them know I'm here to support them. To keep the process smooth and inclusive, I stay in constant communication with them, often using small group chats. These chats create a space for students to ask questions, share their progress, and receive helpful resources that I share to guide them. I also involve technical students to ensure that everyone has access to the support they need. I carefully monitor progress so nothing important gets overlooked." (A foreign lecturer in university 06, Discipline: Information communication technology)

This example illustrates how contextualising the learning experience to meet students' needs - by integrating personal mentorship and culturally sensitive communication - can effectively build a culturally responsive learning environment. With such a perception about CRT, teachers have highlighted CTR as a cornerstone of international programs.

Establishing equal positions for teachers and students in culturally responsive teaching

The data highlight the importance of establishing equal positions between foreign teachers and Vietnamese ones, and between students of international programs and those of mainstream programs as a foundational element of CTR. This is seen as essential for fostering mutual respect, trust, and self-confidence in an open learning environment, where both teachers and students feel empowered to actively engage in their education. By positioning themselves not only as instructors but also as collaborators and mentors, teachers could create a more inclusive and equitable classroom environment.

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For teachers, it is essential to recognise both foreign and Vietnamese students equally in international programs, viewing them as equally valuable contributors to the teaching and learning process. This can be achieved through equal academic exchange and providing equal input in decision-making related to international programs, such as curriculum design, delivery, and assessment adjustments. This approach helps teachers, regardless of their institutional status and ethnicity, feel heard, valued, and encouraged to deliver CRT in an effective manner. In practice, equal positioning is further supported through professional development with small group discussions, opportunities for peer feedback, and consistent communication channels. This collaborative framework allows teachers to take ownership of their professional progress in CRT.

For students, those in international programs should be equally acknowledged and placed in positions on par with peers in mainstream programs. In this regard, more exchanges and joint programs should be promoted for students of both programs. These efforts can foster their empathy, mutual respect, trust and self-confidence in a culturally responsive environment.

"As Vietnamese teachers in international programs, we often feel that our voices carry less weight in decisionmaking processes. Key aspects such as the curriculum, syllabus, assessment methods, and even grading standards are typically determined by our international partners. Therefore, it is crucial to foster a sense of being valued and empowered as equal contributors alongside our international counterparts. This recognition not only affirms our professional worth but also strengthens our commitment and dedication to the success of these international programs." (A Vietnamese lecturer in University 02, Discipline: Chemical engineering).

"Students in international programs often perceive themselves as being in a subordinate position compared to their peers in regular programs. This perception stems from the fact that many were unable to enroll in regular programs and instead opted for international ones. As a result, they are sometimes viewed as less capable or academically inferior, with the added stereotype that they come from wealthy families due to the high tuition fees of international programs. It is essential for teachers to actively dismantle these self-imposed barriers and societal prejudices, fostering an environment of equality and mutual respect for students in both programs." (A Vietnamese lecturer in university 04, Discipline: Environmental Management).

The findings of the study shed light on Vietnamese higher education teachers' perceptions of CTR, underscoring its potential to enhance educational quality and inclusivity. The three identified dimensions reflect the teachers' recognition of the importance of addressing cultural diversity and fostering equitable and relevant learning environments for a globalised student population.

4.2. Discussion

Teachers in international programs of Vietnamese higher education perceive CRT as cultural diversity and integrating ecosystem-based teaching approaches to fostering inclusivity and relevance in education. With such approaches, the curriculum and pedagogy are ensured to reflect a broad spectrum of cultural perspectives, supporting an inclusive learning environment where students feel represented and engaged. Moreover, through recognising and celebrating cultural diversity, teachers help bridge the gap between global academic standards and local cultural realities, making international programs more accessible and relevant. Meanwhile, the ecosystem-based approach equips students with a holistic understanding of knowledge, enabling them to apply what they learn to real-world contexts in a globally interconnected society. It is resonated by teachers that through such approaches, international programs can better prepare students to thrive in multicultural settings while preserving and respecting their own cultural identities. The contextualisation of international programs and mainstream ones) in CRT practice fosters their mutual respect, trust and self-confidence. These insights highlight CRT's critical role in creating inclusive, culturally attuned, and impactful learning environments in Vietnam's globalized higher education landscape.

5. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study contribute to the ongoing discourse on the implementation of CRT in international education settings. They highlight the significance of adapting pedagogical approaches to the cultural and contextual needs of diverse student populations. Prior research supports this perspective, as Castillo-Montoya (2019) emphasises the role of pedagogical strategies in teaching through diversity, while Gay (2018) provides a theoretical framework for CRT implementation. Additionally, Hutchison and McAlister-Shields (2020) explore how CRT is applied in

higher education environments, reinforcing the need for inclusive teaching methodologies. In particular, Luong et al. (2024) discuss intercultural adaptability and student agency in international programs, aligning with the study's findings on contextualising curriculum and pedagogy. Liao, Wang, and Qin (2021) further highlight the importance of preparing educators to be culturally responsive in internationalized settings. Meanwhile, Lynch and Rush (2024) advocate for developing inclusive learning environments through CRT, reinforcing the necessity of equal positioning between teachers and students in diverse educational contexts.

Teachers' insights into CTR in Vietnam's international higher education programs offer valuable guidance for improvement. HEIs should redesign their curricula to integrate diverse cultural perspectives alongside localized content, ensuring inclusivity and relevance for all students. Teacher education and professional learning programs should consider prioritising CRT principles, enabling educators to embrace cultural diversity and bridge the gap between global academic standards and local cultural contexts. This will enhance the accessibility and impact of international programs. Policymakers should also embed CRT frameworks into higher education standards, making cultural responsiveness a cornerstone of internationalised education. By fostering equitable and collaborative relationships between Vietnamese and foreign educators, as well as between students in international and mainstream programs, HEIs can build an environment rooted in mutual respect, trust, and confidence. Future research should investigate CRT's long-term impact on student experiences, outcomes and teaching efficacy, contributing to the broader discourse on internationalised education.

Conflict of Interest: No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

Limitations of the study: Although the 26 in-depth interviews offer valuable qualitative insights, the findings may not be fully generalisable. Additionally, the study's geographic focus may limit the broader applicability of the results.

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