



The Development and Challenge of Comparative Educational Research Methodology from the Perspective of Educational Modernization

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Abstract. In the process of educational development in China, comparative education has played an irreplaceable role in promoting educational opening and modernization, and at the same time, it is constantly facing methodological challenges. Foreign comparative education research methods are mainly based on Schreier and Luhmann's systematic functionalism, which advocate theoretical analysis framework, while China's comparative pedagogy is unique. In the development prospect of educational modernization, comparative education research methodology has gradually changed from quoting foreign research methods to constructing a knowledge system that pays more attention to localization and autonomy. In such a multi-dimensional development process, the challenges we face are also multifaceted. For example, the methodological research paradigm is increasingly questioned and challenged by the uniqueness of identity, and it is necessary to continuously expand the research field and serve the needs of national development, and the "bottleneck" problem caused by the interdisciplinary integration of historical problems. These challenges need to be solved by continuous practice in order to promote the modernization of Chinese education and the vigorous development of comparative education research.

Keywords: Comparative education, educational research methods, educational modernization.

1 Introduction

In the process of China's educational development, comparative education has played an irreplaceable role in promoting educational opening and modernization, and at the same time, it is constantly facing methodological challenges. Foreign comparative education research methods are mainly based on Schreier and Luhmann's systematic functionalism, which advocate theoretical analysis framework, while China's comparative pedagogy is unique. In the development prospect of educational modernization, the vision of comparative education research has changed from macro to micro, and the research object has changed from mainly focusing on developed countries such as Britain and America to globalization and multi-center. At the same time, the research field has changed from single and regional research to diverse and holistic research. These

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changes reflect the new trend of comparative education development from the perspective of gradual modernization of China's education, that is, paying more attention to in-depth research, localization and diversification. In such a multi-dimensional development process, the challenges we face are also multifaceted. For example, the methodological research paradigm is increasingly questioned and challenged by the uniqueness of identity, and it is necessary to continuously expand the research field and serve the needs of national development, and the "bottleneck" problem caused by the interdisciplinary integration of historical problems. These challenges need to be solved by continuous practice in order to promote the modernization of Chinese education and the vigorous development of comparative education research.

2 Evolution and Development

2.1 The Evolution of Comparative Educational Research Methodology

The evolution of comparative educational research methodology has experienced a transformation from positivism to humanism, and then to pluralism. In the early 19th century, positivist methodology provided the basis for the study of comparative education. By the beginning of the 20th century, however, research methods began to tilt towards humanism. After the middle of the 20th century, positivist methodology became the mainstream again, but in the late 20th century, humanistic methodology rose again on the basis of critical positivism, which marked that comparative educational methodology entered a diversified period. In addition, the methodological transformation of comparative education research from the perspective of post-structuralism also reflects the transformation from certainty to uncertainty.

So, what is the concrete transformation process from positivism to humanism to pluralism? According to literature survey,

The research method of comparative education was initially influenced by positivism, emphasizing scientificity and objectivity. Julian is the representative figure of this stage. He put forward the ideal of establishing comparative pedagogy that is "almost empirical science", designed the educational comparison table, and put forward the idea of perfecting the components of comparative education. During this period, comparative education research methods mainly depended on empirical methodology and experimental pedagogy. The application of positivist methodology in comparative education enables this discipline to establish a scientific research model, showing modern scientific characteristics such as monism, objectivity, confirmation, universality and authority. With the development of society and the deepening of disciplines, the research method of comparative education began to change from positivism to humanism. As a representative figure in the transitional period, Beredi's thoughts not only critically inherited the early historical humanism, but also made original innovations in scientific positivism. At this stage, comparative educational research methods begin to focus on cultural, historical and social contexts, emphasizing the humanistic value of understanding and explaining human behavior and educational phenomena. After 1970s, comparative education research methodology has entered a diversified period. During this period, comparative education thought showed the characteristics of

pluralism, systematization, scientificity, development and practice. With the emergence of new theories such as postmodernism, critical theory and constructivism theory, the research methods of comparative education show a diversified trend. At the same time, comparative education began to get rid of the positivist social science method of pure "comparison", returned to the cultural horizon, and emphasized that it should be based on local practice in the process of globalization.^[4]

To sum up, the transformation process of comparative education research methodology is a gradual evolution process from positivism to humanism, and then to diversification. This process not only reflects the self-renewal and self-transcendence of the internal methodology of the discipline, but also reflects the sensitivity and adaptability of the discipline to external social changes and cultural differences.

2.2 The Future Development of Comparative Educational Research Methodology from the Perspective of Educational Modernization

After the above rich evolution, under the background of Chinese-style educational modernization, the new development trends of comparative educational research methodology are mainly reflected in the following aspects.

First, with the in-depth development of globalization, the research field of comparative education has been continuously expanded, and the research horizon has also been significantly expanded. This includes not only the comparison of traditional educational systems among countries, but also new research directions such as transnational and cross-cultural educational issues and global educational governance. Second, compared with the influence of the development prospects of Chinese-style educational modernization, comparative educational research methodology has also been influenced by globalization, and has begun to shift from traditional state-centrism to paying more attention to global and regional educational issues.^[9] This transformation requires researchers to have a broader international vision and deeper cross-cultural understanding ability.^[3] Third, the arrival of China's big data era provides new opportunities for comparative education research. Researchers began to make more use of massive data for analysis to explore global solutions to problems such as educational quality and educational equity. This innovation of methodology not only improves the accuracy of research, but also enhances the practical application value of research. Fourthly, comparative education research from the perspective of Chinese-style educational modernization pays more and more attention to educational reform and practical improvement.^[7] By comparing the educational policies and practices of different countries and regions, researchers try to find an effective way to promote educational equity and improve educational quality. This research orientation is helpful to provide scientific decision support for global educational governance. Fifthly, with China's increasingly important position in the process of globalization, comparative education research has begun to pay more attention to China's educational development. Through high-level talent training and participation in global governance, comparative education research aims to contribute Chinese wisdom to the development of global education. Finally, supplementary education, a branch of comparative education research, became an important part of family budgets.^[5] Comparative education research began to focus on the nature

of supplementary education, its development trends and its impact on the formal education system, especially its potential in reducing educational inequality.

Therefore, the new trend of comparative educational research methodology in the context of Chinese-style modernization is mainly reflected in the expansion of research fields, the transformation of research paradigms, the innovation and application of methodology, the focus on educational reform and practice improvement, the focus on the development of China's education and the globalization of supplementary education.^[2] In many aspects such as the model, the development prospects are complex and multi-dimensional, but the fundamental development trend is moving towards localization and autonomy.

3 Challenges of Comparative Educational Research Methodology

Although the methodology of comparative education research has undergone rich evolution and the development of disciplines shows new trends, it still faces a series of challenges.

First of all, the discipline of comparative education and its methodological research paradigm are increasingly questioned and challenged by the uniqueness of identity. However, according to the research on comparative education in recent five years, relevant comparative scholars have adopted a variety of coping strategies.^[8] For example, comparative education deals with these challenges by emphasizing interdisciplinary cooperation. This interdisciplinary collaboration not only crosses disciplinary, cultural, linguistic, and organizational boundaries, but also enhances the potential for discovery and produces impactful research outcomes. In addition, the discipline of comparative education also solves the identity crisis by strengthening the construction of discipline methodology and research team, which includes having a correct understanding of the crisis itself, correctly understanding comparative pedagogy, and strengthening the construction of discipline methodology.^[6] The discipline of comparative education also responds to challenges by expanding research topics and methods. For example, the era of globalization has brought new development opportunities and challenges to comparative education, which requires the corresponding transformation and expansion of the research paradigm and research topics of comparative education. At the same time, the discipline of comparative education is constantly exploring new research methods, such as the combined use of qualitative research and quantitative research, and the use of digital media and technology as tools to reflect and promote global citizenship. The discipline of comparative education also enhances the clarity of its disciplinary identity by emphasizing its higher-order pursuit in serving the development of human education and contributing Chinese wisdom. This includes paying more attention to its contemporary significance, exploring its compatibility value vertically, and making unremitting efforts in building an academic community and enhancing the endogenous motivation of the discipline.^[1]

Secondly, with the social development and changes in research topics, comparative education research needs to continuously expand research fields and serve the needs of

national development. For example, use the "the belt and road initiative" initiative to deepen educational exchanges and cooperation: by promoting the construction of the "Silk Road Economic Belt" and the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road", it will provide new horizons and tasks for comparative educational research and promote educational exchanges and cooperation among countries along the route. This will not only help to open up new fields of comparative education, but also help to realize people-to-people communication and interconnection. In addition, promote the integration of educational internationalization and comparative education research: educational internationalization is a new trend in the development of world education, and its influence on comparative education is mainly manifested in the expansion of research fields and the development of internationalism spirit. Therefore, comparative education research should conform to this development trend, pay attention to seeking advantages and avoiding disadvantages, and play its important role in inheriting and innovating traditional culture.

In addition, the research of interdisciplinary integration has important methodological significance for comparative education research, but it also constitutes a "bottleneck" for the development of contemporary comparative education disciplines. The role of interdisciplinary integration in comparative educational research is mainly reflected in the ability to understand and analyze educational phenomena more comprehensively through interdisciplinary and interdisciplinary research methods. This integration helps to overcome the limitations of a single disciplinary perspective and promotes a deeper understanding of educational issues. For example, the advent of the information age requires comparative education research to be conducted not only at the national or regional level, but also to consider the spread and impact of educational phenomena on a global scale. In addition, the study of comparative education also needs to take into account the relationship between education and broader social contexts such as politics, culture, religion, law and economy. However, interdisciplinary integration faces the following main obstacles in comparative education research from the perspective of Chinese-style education modernization due to problems left over from history. First of all, traditional comparative education research often relies too much on national or regional data and cases, which limits its application and promotion worldwide. Secondly, there are differences in theories and methods among different disciplines, which may lead to difficulties in understanding and interpretation when interdisciplinary integration. In addition, although the information age provides new research tools and means, it also brings challenges to data quality and comparability. Finally, cultural consciousness and localization in comparative education research are also an important obstacle. Under the background of globalization, how to balance international vision with local practice, and how to deal with the conflicts and integration between different cultures and values are important issues that current comparative education research needs to face.

4 Conclusion

Developments and challenges in comparative educational research methodologies are intertwined. On the one hand, the evolution of methodology and the new trend of discipline development provide a new perspective and tool for comparative education research; On the other hand, the uniqueness of disciplinary identity, the expansion of research fields and the challenge of interdisciplinary integration also need to be taken seriously. In order to meet these challenges and promote the sustainable development of comparative education disciplines, scholars need to continue to explore and innovate research methods, and at the same time strengthen international exchanges and cooperation to realize the transformation from "borrowing" to "understanding". In short, the historical evolution of comparative educational research methodology has promoted the development of educational disciplines by constantly absorbing and integrating new theories and methods. This is not only reflected in the diversification and innovation of research methods, but also in the in-depth understanding and analysis of the particularity of educational research objects.

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