

The Necessary Value and Path of Teaching Case Library Construction for Education Master in Western Local Universities

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Received: 15 April 2025; **Accepted:** 5 May 2025; **Published:** 28 May 2025

Abstract:

This study explores the value and approaches of constructing a case library for Master of Education programs at western regional universities. The development of a case library holds multiple values, including addressing the resource challenges in western regions, enhancing the practical skills of Master of Education students, promoting reforms in teaching methods, and serving regional educational development. The study identifies key elements such as high-quality case development, digital platform construction, scientific classification and indexing, and teacher training mechanisms. The implementation path emphasizes demand orientation, inter-university collaboration, technological empowerment, and team operation and maintenance. It is recommended to develop local cases tailored to the characteristics of western regions, build a regional shared platform, introduce intelligent technologies, and cultivate professional management teams. This research provides theoretical and practical guidance for the cultivation of Master of Education students at western universities, which is significant for promoting balanced educational development.

Keywords:

Local Universities in Western China, Master of Education, Teaching Case Base

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of higher education in our country and the continuous expansion of the Master of Education program, its quality has become one of the key indicators for measuring the level of higher education. However, due to uneven regional development, universities in western regions still face significant shortcomings in terms of educational resources and faculty strength. According to statistics from the China Professional Degree Case Center (2022), the average case resources per Master of Education student in western universities are only 37% of those in eastern regions, [1] which seriously hinders the improvement of the quality of Master of Education programs in western universities. To address this issue, the Ministry of Education, the National Development and Reform Commission, and the Ministry of Finance clearly stated in the “Opinions on Accelerating the Reform and

Development of Graduate Education in the New Era” that they will strengthen support for degree authorization in central and western regions and high-level private universities, [2] aiming to promote balanced allocation of educational resources through policy incentives. In this context, the construction of teaching case libraries has become a critical path for improving the quality of Master of Education programs in western universities. By integrating typical problems and solutions from real educational scenarios, these case libraries can effectively make up for the lack of practical teaching resources in western regions, facilitate the deep integration of theoretical knowledge with educational practice, and thus provide high-quality talent support for regional education development. Therefore, exploring a model for constructing teaching case libraries that meets the needs of local universities in western regions not only holds significant theoretical value but also has practical implications for promoting educational equity and high-quality development in western regions.

2. The Necessary Value of Teaching Case Library Construction for Education Master in Western Local Universities

2.1. Key measures to solve the dilemma of regional education resources

The uneven distribution of educational resources in the western region is a prominent issue that hinders the quality of Master of Education programs. Building a teaching case library can effectively alleviate this dilemma and provide new pathways for regional education development. The construction of a case library can integrate high-quality educational resources, addressing the resource shortages at western universities. By systematically collecting excellent cases from developed regions and adapting them to local conditions in the west, a distinctive resource system can be formed. For example, for information-based teaching cases, tiered implementation plans can be proposed based on the hardware conditions of western schools. Establishing a regional sharing platform is a significant measure. It is recommended that provincial education departments coordinate efforts to establish a “university alliance + basic education” collaborative mechanism to promote resource sharing. This model can maximize resource efficiency, avoid redundant construction, and provide practical paths to narrow the gap between eastern and western education. Through comparative analysis of cases from different regions, suitable educational reform plans for the west can be explored. Particular attention should be paid to collecting characteristic cases such as bilingual education in ethnic areas and mixed-grade teaching in rural areas, which have important reference value. Practice has shown that the systematic application of a case library can significantly enhance the ability of Master of Education students to solve practical problems. This initiative not only alleviates current resource shortages but also lays a foundation for the long-term development of regional education.

2.2. The construction of teaching case library provides an innovative way for the training of education master in western universities.

By carefully selecting typical teaching cases, we promote the organic connection between theory and practice. For instance, in the “Classroom Management” course, accompanying conflict resolution cases help students transform abstract principles into concrete solutions. The case library strengthens the cultivation of problem-solving skills, including educational challenges such as “Motivation for Left-Behind

Children's Learning," requiring students to propose solutions using their professional knowledge. Data from a school shows that after using the case library, the rate of excellent practical assessments increased by 23%. The case library drives innovation in distinctive training models, systematically collecting typical experiences from western regions like "Rural Compound Teaching," fostering students' ability to innovate education based on local realities. It also supports the construction of a diversified evaluation system; a university increased the weight of case analysis assessments to 40%, providing a more comprehensive assessment of professional competence. Practice has shown that the development of the case library has shifted from knowledge transmission to capability development, significantly enhancing the quality of training. In the future, it is necessary to optimize the case classification system and deepen integration with courses.

2.3. Practical support for promoting the reform of teaching methods

The construction of a teaching case library provides crucial support for the innovation and reform of teaching methods in universities in western regions. The rich collection of teaching examples in the library serves as a material foundation for teachers to implement new teaching models such as case-based teaching and situational teaching. [3] By analyzing typical cases like "differentiated instruction" and "classroom interaction" within the library, teachers can gain a clear understanding of the key points of advanced teaching methods. For instance, a teacher at one university successfully implemented a new teaching model in the "Secondary School Physics Teaching Methods" course by drawing on the "project-based learning" case from the library, significantly increasing student participation in class. Additionally, the library specifically includes unique teaching innovation cases specific to western regions, such as "multimedia teaching applications in western regions" and "mobile classroom organization in pastoral areas." These localized cases offer direct references for teachers to improve their teaching methods. Through regular case teaching seminars, universities in western regions have established a mechanism for promoting teaching reforms based on the case library, effectively enhancing the overall quality of classroom instruction.

2.4. Professional platforms for serving local education development

The construction of a teaching case library can create a professional platform to serve the educational development of western regions. These platforms not only gather successful experiences in regional education but also promote the optimal allocation of educational resources. By collecting distinctive cases such as "basic education in ethnic areas" and "management of rural schools," they provide reference for local educational decision-making. Some provincial education departments have used excellent practical cases from the library to develop regional teacher training programs, effectively enhancing the teaching abilities of grassroots teachers. The platform can also establish a rapid response mechanism for educational issues, addressing new situations and problems in western education development, such as "psychological counseling for left-behind children" and "implementation of distance education," by promptly organizing experts to develop solutions and form cases for inclusion. This dynamic update mechanism ensures the timeliness and practicality of the platform's content, making it a true think tank for promoting the development of education in western regions.

2.5. Resource guarantee to help teachers' professional development

The teaching case library provides continuous resource support for the professional growth of teachers in western regions. Special topics such as “Teaching Reflection” and “Professional Development” in the library offer valuable paths for teachers’ career development. Through case studies, teachers can transcend geographical limitations and acquire advanced teaching concepts and methods. Follow-up surveys show that teachers who regularly use the case library have significantly improved their innovative teaching awareness and practical skills, providing new avenues for teacher team building in western regions. The case library also features a “Mentor-Apprentice” module, which includes complete case studies of experienced teachers guiding new teachers, covering aspects like lesson preparation guidance, classroom observation, and reflective exchanges. These cases are not only suitable for individual teacher learning but can also serve as high-quality resources for school-based training programs. A county education bureau has integrated the case library into the continuing education system for teachers, with participants generally reporting that this approach based on real cases better aligns with actual work needs, yielding significantly better training outcomes compared to traditional theoretical lectures.

3. Key Elements of Teaching Case Library Construction for Education Master’s Degree in Western Local Universities

3.1. The quality and quantity of teaching cases

The effectiveness of a teaching case library largely depends on the quality and quantity of its cases. Teaching cases should be representative, practical, and inspiring, fully reflecting real-world teaching scenarios and issues, providing teachers with insights when they draw upon them. [4] For example, cases can include instructional designs, activity arrangements, student interaction methods, and strategies and approaches teachers take in response to problems across different teaching contexts. At the same time, the number of cases in the library should be sufficiently diverse, covering various disciplines and teaching fields to meet the needs of different teachers. The diversity and richness of teaching cases can offer teachers more options and references, helping them better address various teaching challenges and issues. Research shows that the broader the range of disciplines covered by a case library, the higher the teacher satisfaction. Additionally, teaching cases should have a certain degree of timeliness and practicality, effectively supporting teaching practices and reforms. As educational philosophies and teaching methods continue to evolve, teaching cases must also be updated promptly to reflect the latest concepts and methods. The practicality of teaching cases means that they should be easily applicable by teachers in their own teaching practices, helping them solve problems encountered in actual teaching and improving teaching outcomes.

The construction of a teaching case library should focus on the quality and quantity of teaching cases, as well as their timeliness and practicality. Only by ensuring that teaching cases are of high quality, diverse, and up-to-date, and can be practically applied, can we effectively improve teaching quality, promote educational reform, and enhance teachers’ professional development. Therefore, in the process of building a teaching case library for Master of Education programs at local universities, it is essential to emphasize these key elements to ensure the effectiveness and practicality of the case library.

3.2. Technical support and platform construction

The technical support and platform construction of the teaching case library are key components in this development. First, it must be built on a stable and secure information technology platform to ensure that the storage, retrieval, and sharing functions of teaching cases can be effectively realized. The stability and security of the platform directly impact the reliability and usability of the teaching case library. It is recommended to use cloud computing architecture (such as Alibaba Cloud Education Solutions) for resource storage and sharing. [5] Second, the platform should have a user-friendly interface and ease of operation, making it convenient for teachers and students to use. The user interface should be simple and clear, with a well-organized layout and straightforward procedures, allowing users to quickly find the required teaching cases and perform effective searches and shares. Additionally, the platform needs continuous updates and maintenance to keep up with the times and meet user needs. As educational informatization continues to advance, the platform must promptly introduce new technologies and features to enhance user experience and platform performance. At the same time, regular system maintenance and security updates are necessary to ensure stable operation and information security. Technical support and platform construction are essential parts of building a teaching case library, requiring attention and ongoing improvement to enhance teaching quality and promote educational reform.

3.3. Classification and indexing of teaching cases

The classification and indexing of teaching cases is a crucial aspect in the construction of a teaching case library. Its scientific rigor and comprehensiveness directly impact the management efficiency of the case library and the effectiveness of teaching practices, thereby promoting improvements in teaching quality and the deepening of educational reforms. Classification should be based on actual needs, allowing for multi-dimensional categorization according to disciplines, teaching methods, and teaching objectives. Discipline-based classification helps teachers quickly locate relevant cases, while categorization by teaching methods and objectives aids teachers in better utilizing cases to achieve their teaching goals. Indexing accurately reflects key information, including teaching content, objectives, applicable grades, and teaching methods. Accurate indexing enables users to swiftly locate and search for cases, enhancing the utilization efficiency of the case library. Reasonable classification and indexing are essential for the efficient use of a teaching case library. Through scientific classification and indexing, the teaching case library can be more easily managed and used, providing teachers with more effective support, thus promoting improvements in teaching quality and the deepening of educational reforms. In the construction of teaching case libraries for Master of Education programs at local universities, significant attention should be paid to classification and indexing work to ensure its scientific rationality and enhance the practicality and influence of the teaching case library.

3.4. Teacher training and use promotion

Teacher training and promotion are crucial components in the construction of teaching case libraries for Master of Education programs at local universities. Effective training and promotion can enhance teachers' understanding and utilization of the case library, thereby promoting its development and construction. First, teacher training should focus on methods for building the case library, techniques for case analysis, and applications of cases in teaching. The content should align with

teachers' actual needs, emphasizing practicality and operability to help them better understand and master the methods of constructing and using the case library. Second, promotion efforts should be multifaceted, including publicity, demonstration applications, and incentive rewards. Activities such as campus promotions and teaching demonstrations can increase teachers' attention and recognition of the case library; organizing case teaching competitions and selecting outstanding cases can inspire teachers' enthusiasm for participating and contributing to the library, fostering a positive culture of case sharing. Additionally, a dedicated case library management team can be established to oversee the operation and management of the case library. Team members should possess certain information technology and instructional design skills, capable of assisting teachers in case analysis and instructional design, providing professional support and guidance.

Overall, teacher training and promotion are key components in the construction of teaching case libraries for Master of Education programs at local universities. Through training and promotion, teachers' ability to use cases can be enhanced, promoting the widespread application of case libraries and driving educational reform and improvement in teaching quality. Therefore, during the process of building case libraries, it is essential to emphasize teacher training and promotion, continuously improving and elevating teachers' teaching skills and levels.

4. Implementation Path of Teaching Case Library Construction for Education Master's Degree in Western Local Universities

4.1. Build a perfect teaching case library system

It is recommended to adopt the "trinity" construction model, which draws on the application of "co-governance theory" in the integration of educational resources. In local universities in western regions, due to less accumulated teaching experience, the content of the case library should focus on local educational practices and solving practical problems. This can be achieved by setting up special projects and organizing teaching seminars, encouraging teachers to actively participate in writing and organizing cases, ensuring the richness and diversity of the case library. At the same time, local universities should emphasize cooperation with other domestic and international universities, enhancing the overall level of the case library through the introduction of high-quality external resources. The richness and quality of the case library's content directly affect its application effectiveness; therefore, in content design, emphasis should be placed on combining theory with practice, showcasing classic educational theories as well as a large number of practical cases. These cases should have local characteristics, reflecting the educational features and actual needs of the western region, especially in ethnic education and rural education, where they should be notably representative.

4.2. Strengthen cooperation and coordination between schools

Local universities in the western region are relatively scattered, with limited educational resources. By establishing a regional master's education teaching case library platform, it promotes cooperation and resource sharing among institutions, fostering a win-win situation. Universities can collaborate to develop teaching cases based on local educational characteristics and needs, enhancing their relevance and practicality. Cooperation between institutions not only improves the quality of the teaching case library but also facilitates the exchange of talent and teaching outcomes

through shared resources. Through collaboration, universities in the west can standardize aspects such as curriculum design and course scheduling, further advancing the improvement of educational quality within the region.

4.3. Promoting the application of information technology

Currently, many universities in the western region face a situation of insufficient application of information technology. To address this issue, a digital platform for building a teaching case library can be established, introducing modern information technologies such as artificial intelligence and cloud computing to enhance the informatization level of education and teaching in the western region. The digital platform for the teaching case library not only facilitates management and updates but also significantly improves resource utilization efficiency, allowing teachers and students to access cases anytime and anywhere. The application of digital platforms can also drive the transformation of teaching models. For example, advanced methods like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) enable teachers to simulate teaching scenarios for case analysis, further enhancing teaching effectiveness. The introduction of these technologies not only improves the efficiency of educational resource utilization in the western region but also increases students' interest and learning outcomes.

4.4. Cultivate a case library management and operation team

The construction of a teaching case library requires a professional team for management and maintenance. Local universities can collaborate with educational research institutions to cultivate specialized teams for managing the teaching case library, regularly updating its content to ensure it stays current with educational developments, especially focusing on the specific needs of educational practices in western regions. The maintenance team for the case library must not only have a strong background in educational theory and practice but also possess certain technical skills to handle data updates and management tasks on the platform. Additionally, schools should regularly organize training and seminars to help teachers better understand and utilize the resources in the case library, thereby enhancing teaching effectiveness.

5. Conclusions

In the western region, local universities face a series of unique challenges in cultivating Master of Education students. The construction of a teaching case library for Master of Education programs undoubtedly provides a practical solution to these issues. By optimizing teaching resources, promoting teacher development, and driving educational innovation, local universities can better meet the demands of future educational development. This is especially true in the western region, where improvements in teaching and learning quality will directly contribute to the long-term economic and social development of the area. Therefore, local universities should place great emphasis on building teaching case libraries and explore paths suitable for the western region, aiming to contribute more to the development of China's education sector.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Funding

The phased results of the research project “Study on the Content and Path of Building a Teaching Case Library for Master’s Degree Education in Local Universities” (JGGG2023108) under the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Graduate Education Teaching Reform Research Project; and the phased results of the project “Research on Bullying Cognition and Improvement Paths for Preschool Teachers (2024JKQLYB17)” under the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Student Bullying Prevention and Control Research Center Project.

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