

Challenges in Learning from Literature amongst the Business Management Students: A Comparative Study of the Students of India and Selected European Countries

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Abstract

Business management education focuses primarily on honing the analytical abilities and specialised domain skills, often relegating literature to a marginal role. However, literature can enhance critical thinking, communication, cultural sensitivity and empathy which are much needed for global citizens. This study explores the challenges business management students in India and selected European countries face when navigating the landscape of literature as part of their curriculum, highlighting cultural, educational and institutional differences. In this study, data was gathered through questionnaire from 200 students of India and 200 students of Europe and analysed using ANOVA. Findings indicate that Indian students struggle with language, relevance of literature to the study of management, comprehension and application; while European students struggle to manage interdisciplinary demands.

Keywords: Business management education, literature, critical thinking, cultural sensitivity, sustainable education, leadership

Introduction

The inclusion of literature into business management education has gained interest in both, academia and industry. As global businesses emphasise the significance of soft skills such as emotional intelligence, communication skills, conflict resolution, ethics and cross cultural sensitivity in its employees, use of literature emerges as a valuable pedagogy in inculcating and honing these attributes. However, adult learners pursuing the study of business management find the study of literature as unnecessary and less beneficial.

Unlike domains like finance and marketing, the study of literature fosters reflection and helps students gain meaningful insights from human experiences, ethical and personal predicaments, societal and organizational issues, all of which are critical for a strong and effective leadership and success in the professional and personal sphere. Despite numerous benefits, integrating literature into business management education remains far-fetched and full of challenges. Students and teachers often perceive literature as woolly woozy and is relevant to their primary academic and professional goals leading to not just disengagement but also resistance. Additionally, the teaching methodologies for literature perceived to be significantly different from those currently used in management studies, creating a deep divide between expectations and outcomes. India and Europe offer contrasting Context for examining these challenges.

Indian education system, with its emphasis on rote learning and standardized tests, often leaves little room for creative and critical engagement with texts. Indian business management students, therefore, may find literature studies particularly difficult. In contrast, European educational frameworks, which generally value interdisciplinarity, may still encounter resistance from students who prioritize specialized knowledge over broader intellectual pursuits.

This study aims to explore the learning issues business management students face in engaging with literature, comparing the experiences of students in India and selected European countries, and provide practical recommendations for educators, policymakers, and curriculum designers by examining the factors that contribute to these challenges.

Review of Literature

The merging of literature and business education creates a distinctive academic environment where creativity meets practicality. Ghoshal (2005) highlighted the transformative capability of literature in inculcating critical thinking, ethical judgment, and empathy in future business leaders. Similarly, Nussbaum (1997) emphasized literature's importance in deepening the understanding of human experiences, an important skill for managing complex business contexts and advocated for integrating literature into curriculum aimed at promoting global citizenship. According to Greene (1988), literature offers an infinite resource of perspectives on the human experience and insights into leading a more meaningful life.

Peltier, Hay and Drago (2005) suggest that the higher education institutes are driven by market and economy and thus do not prioritise independent and critical thinking, Porter and McKibbins 1988 report 'Management Education and Development: Drift or Thrust In The 21st Century' pointed out that students struggle to recognise business problems, understand decision making and develop skills required for sustainable learning. Richards - Wilson 2002, Stevens 2000, Pfeffer and Fong 2002 echo the same thought process and suggest that lot of focus is on analysis. Mintzberg and Gosling 2002 also argue that business management programmes put emphasis solely on business functions and not on practical aspects of management and business and complex decision-making scenarios. As a result of this, the business management students step into the business world with no reflective thinking abilities and practical comprehension of the experiences which are required for lifelong learning (Bowner 2003 and Braun 2004). Didactic teaching approach has led to learners being either incapable or reluctant to engage in critical thinking, hindering their ability to analyze and assess content and establish meaningful links between theory and practice. Business schools have come under the hammer for not being able to impart quality education, inculcate the much needed soft skills and ethics to survive in the VUCA world. Leavitt 1989 criticises business management programme for creating narrowly focussed graduates, "critters with lopsided brains, icy hearts and shrunken souls."

Standard management tools are effective in teaching and learning strategies for perhaps, supply chain and logistics or financial valuation. But when it comes to marketing or organizational behaviour, students would learn more from literature. Experts opine that business management students would be more successful if they were exposed to literature which is a mirror of life with all its complexities. As per Warren G. Bennis and James O'Toole scientific model

dominates business research and teaching leading to business graduates failing to get the desired corporate roles or sustain them.

Literature enables students to develop critical thinking skills and enhance their critical awareness and serves as a driving force, as it mirrors both life and the world.

According to Gerrig (1993), the cognitive aspect of literature enables us to address present and future challenges by reshaping our perceptions of ourselves, our communities, and individuals who are marginalized or excluded from society. Literature helps us foster a curriculum that focusses on developing culturally sensitive thinkers who can go above and beyond the narrow confines of gaining a domain specific knowledge. Badaracco uses literature to provide a complete picture of leaders. Literature provides us with practical insights about all aspects of business ranging from leadership to how to effectively use available resources. When business management students read about the literary characters or situations, they learn from their struggles and manage themselves in a far more effective manner. Analytics and formulas cannot guide us about how to deal with the volatile and extremely unpredictable human nature. It is human who is at the centre of all the issues the world is facing today - be it that of power, sustainability or crises. We get more insights from literature about human nature and endeavours than from any other domain. Literature encourages us to imagine, reflect and question, and develop critical thinking skills. Muriel Rukeyser rightly says, "The universe is made of stories, not of atoms." Several experts have opined that literature can provide business management students with detailed perspectives on complex business situations compared to tradition management literature. They have expressed concerns about the shallow concept of business manager as taught in the business management programme and how this can be rectified by reading fictional literature (Knights and Wilmott 1995, Phillips 1995). But this integration of literature with management studies is not so easy and has its own challenges which are deeply rooted in cultural, linguistic and pedagogical contexts.

How students engage with literature is significantly impacted by culture. Hofstede's (1980) dimensions of culture reveal that Indian students, operating within a collectivist and high-context culture, often perceive literature as a tool for moral and social instruction. On the other hand, their European counterparts, shaped by individualist and low-context traditions, treat literature as a medium for intellectual exploration and personal expression. This difference highlights the need for region-specific teaching methodologies that respect cultural sensibilities while promoting universal skills. Moreover, differences in how literature is historically perceived in these cultures also influence how it will be or is received in business curriculum. In India, literature usually is taken as a repository of tradition and ethical guidance, whereas in Europe, it is celebrated as a means for intellectual liberation and critique.

Linguistic Barrier

Language acts as a barrier further complicating the scenario. For Indian students, literature in English often represents a dual challenge. They struggle with the complexity of the language and the unfamiliarity of Western cultural narratives adds to their woes. These barriers are increased manifold by rote learning and its dominance over critical analysis, leaving students ill-prepared. European students, particularly those from non-Anglophone regions, face similar struggles, although to a lesser degree, necessitating the use of translations and culturally adaptive pedagogical tools. Translation, however, introduces its own challenges, as the essence of literary works often gets diluted or altered, further complicating comprehension and engagement.

Pedagogy

Effective pedagogy must address the perceived disconnect between literature and business management. Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model suggests that participatory methods, such as role-playing and group discussions, can make literary studies more engaging and relevant for business students. Teachers can demonstrate the practical relevance of literature by using them to explore leadership dilemmas or understand organizational ethics. Gupta and Sharma (2020) highlight that while European universities often adopt interdisciplinary curricula integrating literature, Indian institutions treat it as supplementary. The rigid compartmentalization of disciplines in Indian education creates silos that discourage holistic learning.

Budget constraints

Knight and Yorke (2003) observed that universities prioritizing STEM and business management disciplines often underfund humanities programmes, restricting access to resources and opportunities for literary engagement. In India, this issue is particularly acute, as the perceived value of literature is less in comparison to science and management. Due to limited financial resources and the focus of current policies, a significant portion of funding and attention is being directed towards technical and vocational education. European institutions, while not lacking in funds and recourses, have challenges of their own, including the growing trend of specialization that leaves little room for interdisciplinary studies. Albrecht and Sack (2000) further noted that students' career-centric mindset, especially prevalent in India, intensifies the marginalization of literature in management studies. This mindset is reinforced by societal expectations that equate education with employability, leaving little appreciation for the intrinsic value of humanities.

Technology

Technological advancements also pose both, challenges and opportunities for integrating literature into business education. Digital platforms, e-books, and online discussion forums have democratized access to literary resources, enabling students from diverse backgrounds to engage with texts. However, the over-reliance on technology can dilute literary analysis, reducing complex works to mere summaries or bullet points. The challenge lies in leveraging technology to enhance, rather than replace, traditional modes of literary engagement.

Perception

Student perceptions and attitudes toward literature are another critical factor. Studies by Albrecht and Sack (2000) indicate that business students often perceive literature as irrelevant to their career goals. This perception is particularly strong among Indian students, who view education primarily as a means to secure employment. European students, while more open to interdisciplinary learning, may still prioritize technical skills over humanities. Changing these perceptions requires a concerted effort to reframe literature not as an academic discipline for the idyllic but as a vital tool for personal and professional development. Case studies of successful business leaders who credit their literary background for their success could serve as powerful motivators.

Finally, the globalized nature of today's business environment necessitates a rethinking of how literature is taught. As corporates increasingly operate beyond and across cultural and linguistic borders, the ability to understand diverse perspectives becomes a strategic asset. Literature,

with its ability to transcend geographical and cultural divides, offers a unique platform for inculcating this skill. Comparative studies, such as those by Gupta and Sharma (2020), underscore the importance of exposing students to a diverse range of literary works, from classic Western canon to contemporary Indian authors, to build a truly global mindset. These challenges and opportunities requires creative solutions that are customized to fit specific regional and institutional contexts. By understanding these dynamics, educators can unlock the benefits of literature to enrich business education, preparing business management students for the challenges of global leadership. A more inclusive and adaptive approach to teaching literature, one that respects cultural nuances while emphasizing universal values, has the potential to transform the educational landscape, bridging the gap between creativity and practicality in business management education.

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to gain a comprehensive understanding of the learning issues faced by business management students. Participants included 200 business management students from India and Europe each, equally divided between the two regions. Indian participants were drawn from well-known management institutes, while European participants represented universities in Germany, France, and The Netherlands. The selection of these regions was based on their distinct educational frameworks and cultural orientations. India represents a system heavily influenced by traditional rote learning, while Europe reflects a more interdisciplinary and liberal approach to education. This contrast provides a robust basis for comparative analysis. Key variables examined include linguistic proficiency, cultural attitudes toward literature, teaching methodologies, and institutional support. Differences in these variables were analysed to identify region-specific challenges. Total on 15 category 43 questions were included in the primary data collection on 5 points Likert scale. Surveys consisted of Likert-scale questions measuring students' attitudes toward literature, perceived relevance to their studies, and self-reported difficulties. Semi-structured interviews explored these themes in greater depth, allowing for nuanced insights into students' experiences. The surveys focused on identifying recurring themes like students' perceptions of literature's role in their curriculum and the challenges they face in engaging with literary texts. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were coded thematically to identify recurring patterns and themes. Cross-regional comparisons were drawn to highlight differences in learning approaches, emphasizing how cultural and institutional factors influence students' engagement with literature.

Data Analysis and Discussions

The data for the study gathered is analysed directly for the purpose of identifying the differences between the students of two continents. The data analysis is done with the statistical tool ANOVA. The basic statistical null hypothesis remains same that there is insignificant difference in the views of the students selected. The results of the test is presented in table 1 as under:

Table-1: ANOVA results

Particular	Cont.	N	Mean	SD	SE
Engaging with literature is crucial for comprehending human behaviour in business management	India	200	4.3200	.87259	.06170
	Europe	200	4.3000	.88539	.06261
	Total	400	4.3100	.87797	.04390

Literature enhances my critical thinking abilities relevant to commercial contexts.	India	200	4.1000	.79572	.05627
	Europe	200	4.0900	.79059	.05590
	Total	400	4.0950	.79218	.03961
The incorporation of literature into the curriculum is pertinent to my professional aspirations.	India	200	1.4100	.66642	.04712
	Europe	200	3.6750	1.2796	.09049
	Total	400	2.5425	1.5244	.07622
I enjoy studying literature as part of my business management curriculum.	India	200	1.6800	.83130	.05878
	Europe	200	3.3900	1.2228	.08647
	Total	400	2.5350	1.3503	.06752
I take pleasure in studying literature inside my business management education.	India	200	1.9800	.77628	.05489
	Europe	200	3.6400	1.2279	.08683
	Total	400	2.8100	1.3203	.06602
Literary writings facilitate the connection of abstract business principles to tangible real-life scenarios.	India	200	1.4800	.70147	.04960
	Europe	200	3.3500	1.2349	.08732
	Total	400	2.4150	1.3720	.06860
I find it simple to relate topics from literature to business techniques.	India	200	1.5750	.77289	.05465
	Europe	200	3.5100	1.2954	.09160
	Total	400	2.5425	1.4399	.07200
I find the cultural background of literary writings comprehensible.	India	200	1.8000	.98225	.06946
	Europe	200	3.3550	1.0267	.07260
	Total	400	2.5775	1.2700	.06350
I encounter difficulties stemming from cultural disparities in the interpretation of literary texts.	India	200	1.7950	.75220	.05319
	Europe	200	3.6100	1.0408	.07360
	Total	400	2.7025	1.2837	.06419
The course comprises literature that is culturally pertinent to me.	India	200	1.7450	.65737	.04648
	Europe	200	3.5750	1.1228	.07939
	Total	400	2.6600	1.2975	.06488
I possess confidence in comprehending the language employed in literary works.	India	200	1.7650	.74333	.05256
	Europe	200	3.4200	1.1490	.08125
	Total	400	2.5925	1.2729	.06365
The linguistic intricacy in literary compositions frequently obstructs my comprehension.	India	200	1.5450	.84946	.06007
	Europe	200	3.4700	1.1858	.08385
	Total	400	2.5075	1.4106	.07053
I need further materials (translations, summaries) to understand literary literature.	India	200	2.2950	.93935	.06642
	Europe	200	3.2550	1.0981	.07765
	Total	400	2.7750	1.1280	.05640
The pedagogical approaches employed in literary studies render the topic captivating.	India	200	2.0550	1.0035	.07096
	Europe	200	3.4200	1.2128	.08576
	Total	400	2.7375	1.3049	.06525
Group conversations and role-playing exercises improve my comprehension of books.	India	200	1.9500	.87827	.06210
	Europe	200	3.6100	1.3442	.09505
	Total	400	2.7800	1.4059	.07029
Literature courses efficiently illustrate the connection between literature and business principles.	India	200	2.3400	.91575	.06475
	Europe	200	3.6200	1.2260	.08669
	Total	400	2.9800	1.2564	.06282
My institution offers sufficient resources for the study of literature.	India	200	4.4000	.60151	.04253
	Europe	200	4.3800	.62253	.04402
	Total	400	4.3900	.61142	.03057
	India	200	4.4450	.69959	.04947

I can readily obtain online or offline resources to further my literary studies.	Europe	200	4.4500	.67808	.04795
	Total	400	4.4475	.68806	.03440
The scarcity of resources hinders my capacity to interact with the designated literature.	India	200	4.2300	.58206	.04116
	Europe	200	4.2750	.60098	.04250
	Total	400	4.2525	.59128	.02956
Digital resources (e-books, online forums) enhance the accessibility of literary study.	India	200	4.5600	.69917	.04944
	Europe	200	4.5250	.70131	.04959
	Total	400	4.5425	.69958	.03498
An excessive dependence on technology diminishes the profundity of my literary interpretation.	India	200	4.4650	.78220	.05531
	Europe	200	4.4250	.79848	.05646
	Total	400	4.4450	.78964	.03948
Literature cultivates competencies that are essential for my professional advancement.	India	200	3.3800	.92187	.06519
	Europe	200	3.6550	1.0731	.07589
	Total	400	3.5175	1.0085	.05043
Engaging with literature equips me to navigate interpersonal issues in the professional environment.	India	200	3.2400	1.0668	.07544
	Europe	200	3.7000	1.1430	.08082
	Total	400	3.4700	1.1279	.05640
Literature enhances my comprehension of global business dynamics.	India	200	3.1550	.97763	.06913
	Europe	200	3.6250	1.2006	.08490
	Total	400	3.3900	1.1184	.05592
I have challenges in comprehending intricate literary compositions.	India	200	3.2700	1.0876	.07691
	Europe	200	3.7800	1.1995	.08482
	Total	400	3.5250	1.1716	.05858
Integrating literary studies with other academic disciplines is arduous.	India	200	3.1350	1.0499	.07424
	Europe	200	3.5050	1.2877	.09106
	Total	400	3.3200	1.1879	.05940
I perceive literature-related homework as more stressful than other activities.	India	200	3.1950	1.0642	.07525
	Europe	200	3.7750	1.2578	.08895
	Total	400	3.4850	1.1993	.05997
Literature aids in comprehending various cultural viewpoints in business.	India	200	3.3100	1.2004	.08489
	Europe	200	3.3050	1.2448	.08803
	Total	400	3.3075	1.2213	.06107
Engaging with literature expands my world outlook.	India	200	1.7350	.77315	.05467
	Europe	200	2.0500	1.1977	.08470
	Total	400	1.8925	1.0190	.05095
Literature cultivates empathy, essential for leadership positions in business.	India	200	1.9950	1.0297	.07281
	Europe	200	2.2650	1.1924	.08432
	Total	400	2.1300	1.1208	.05604
I consider literature a crucial element of my academic program.	India	200	2.2700	.98077	.06935
	Europe	200	2.3400	1.0630	.07517
	Total	400	2.3050	1.0220	.05110
I am driven to pursue literature beyond academic obligations.	India	200	1.7750	.98449	.06961
	Europe	200	2.1000	1.1819	.08358
	Total	400	1.9375	1.0984	.05492
Literature appears to be more of a hindrance than an advantage to my academic pursuits.	India	200	1.8600	.91903	.06499
	Europe	200	1.9450	1.0134	.07166
	Total	400	1.9025	.96713	.04836
My colleagues provide assistance in comprehending books.	India	200	2.0750	1.1070	.07828
	Europe	200	2.1950	1.1239	.07948

	Total	400	2.1350	1.1157	.05579
Faculty members proficiently resolve my challenges in literary studies.	India	200	2.0500	.93910	.06640
	Europe	200	2.9200	1.5016	.10618
	Total	400	2.4850	1.3244	.06622
Faculty advocate for the integration of literature with practical business contexts.	India	200	2.1850	1.0029	.07092
	Europe	200	2.9000	1.4665	.10370
	Total	400	2.5425	1.3047	.06524
The duration designated for literary study within the program is enough.	India	200	2.1050	.99444	.07032
	Europe	200	2.8900	1.4896	.10533
	Total	400	2.4975	1.3245	.06623
I feel constrained by the time necessary to comprehend literary works.	India	200	1.9700	1.0169	.07191
	Europe	200	2.8150	1.5979	.11299
	Total	400	2.3925	1.4029	.07015
Increased emphasis should be placed on the instruction of literature within the business curriculum.	India	200	2.1250	.88504	.06258
	Europe	200	3.1650	1.0787	.07628
	Total	400	2.6450	1.1144	.05572
I consider the literary works in the curriculum to be easily interpretable.	India	200	2.1900	1.0242	.07243
	Europe	200	3.2350	1.4664	.10369
	Total	400	2.7125	1.3673	.06837
The intricacy of literary works renders them challenging to connect with commercial studies.	India	200	2.0450	.92044	.06508
	Europe	200	2.0350	.92088	.06512
	Total	400	2.0400	.91952	.04598
The study of literature has enhanced my critical thinking skills.	India	200	2.4050	.88026	.06224
	Europe	200	2.3800	.93808	.06633
	Total	400	2.3925	.90857	.04543
Literature has improved my ethical thinking abilities.	India	200	2.4050	.87453	.06184
	Europe	200	2.3700	.92595	.06547
	Total	400	2.3875	.89965	.04498

ANOVA						
		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Engaging with literature is crucial for comprehending human behaviour in business management	Between Groups	.040	1	.040	.052	.820
	Within Groups	307.520	398	.773		
	Total	307.560	399			
Literature enhances my critical thinking abilities relevant to commercial contexts.	Between Groups	.010	1	.010	.016	.900
	Within Groups	250.380	398	.629		
	Total	250.390	399			
The incorporation of literature into the curriculum is pertinent to my professional aspirations.	Between Groups	513.023	1	513.023	492.892	.000
	Within Groups	414.255	398	1.041		
	Total	927.278	399			
I enjoy studying literature as part of my business management curriculum.	Between Groups	292.410	1	292.410	267.477	.000
	Within Groups	435.100	398	1.093		
	Total	727.510	399			
I take pleasure in studying literature inside my business management education.	Between Groups	275.560	1	275.560	261.126	.000
	Within Groups	420.000	398	1.055		
	Total	695.560	399			
Literary writings facilitate the connection of abstract business	Between Groups	349.690	1	349.690	346.711	.000
	Within Groups	401.420	398	1.009		

principles to tangible real-life scenarios.	Total	751.110	399			
I find it simple to relate topics from literature to business techniques.	Between Groups	374.423	1	374.423	329.068	.000
	Within Groups	452.855	398	1.138		
	Total	827.278	399			
I find the cultural background of literary writings comprehensible.	Between Groups	241.803	1	241.803	239.519	.000
	Within Groups	401.795	398	1.010		
	Total	643.598	399			
I encounter difficulties stemming from cultural disparities in the interpretation of literary texts.	Between Groups	329.423	1	329.423	399.513	.000
	Within Groups	328.175	398	.825		
	Total	657.598	399			
The course comprises literature that is culturally pertinent to me.	Between Groups	334.890	1	334.890	395.661	.000
	Within Groups	336.870	398	.846		
	Total	671.760	399			
I possess confidence in comprehending the language employed in literary works.	Between Groups	273.903	1	273.903	292.515	.000
	Within Groups	372.675	398	.936		
	Total	646.578	399			
The linguistic intricacy in literary compositions frequently obstructs my comprehension.	Between Groups	370.563	1	370.563	348.320	.000
	Within Groups	423.415	398	1.064		
	Total	793.978	399			
I need further materials (translations, summaries) to understand literary literature.	Between Groups	92.160	1	92.160	88.259	.000
	Within Groups	415.590	398	1.044		
	Total	507.750	399			
The pedagogical approaches employed in literary studies render the topic captivating.	Between Groups	186.323	1	186.323	150.383	.000
	Within Groups	493.115	398	1.239		
	Total	679.438	399			
Group conversations and role-playing exercises improve my comprehension of books.	Between Groups	275.560	1	275.560	213.754	.000
	Within Groups	513.080	398	1.289		
	Total	788.640	399			
Literature courses efficiently illustrate the connection between literature and business principles.	Between Groups	163.840	1	163.840	139.932	.000
	Within Groups	466.000	398	1.171		
	Total	629.840	399			
My institution offers sufficient resources for the study of literature.	Between Groups	.040	1	.040	.107	.744
	Within Groups	149.120	398	.375		
	Total	149.160	399			
I can readily obtain online or offline resources to further my literary studies.	Between Groups	.003	1	.003	.005	.942
	Within Groups	188.895	398	.475		
	Total	188.898	399			
The scarcity of resources hinders my capacity to interact with the designated literature.	Between Groups	.203	1	.203	.579	.447
	Within Groups	139.295	398	.350		
	Total	139.498	399			
Digital resources (e-books, online forums) enhance the accessibility of literary study.	Between Groups	.123	1	.123	.250	.617
	Within Groups	195.155	398	.490		
	Total	195.278	399			
An excessive dependence on technology diminishes the profundity of my literary interpretation.	Between Groups	.160	1	.160	.256	.613
	Within Groups	248.630	398	.625		
	Total	248.790	399			
	Between Groups	7.563	1	7.563	7.557	.006
	Within Groups	398.315	398	1.001		

Literature cultivates competencies that are essential for my professional advancement.	Total	405.878	399			
Engaging with literature equips me to navigate interpersonal issues in the professional environment.	Between Groups	21.160	1	21.160	17.311	.000
	Within Groups	486.480	398	1.222		
	Total	507.640	399			
Literature enhances my comprehension of global business dynamics.	Between Groups	22.090	1	22.090	18.429	.000
	Within Groups	477.070	398	1.199		
	Total	499.160	399			
I have challenges in comprehending intricate literary compositions.	Between Groups	26.010	1	26.010	19.841	.000
	Within Groups	521.740	398	1.311		
	Total	547.750	399			
Integrating literary studies with other academic disciplines is arduous.	Between Groups	13.690	1	13.690	9.918	.002
	Within Groups	549.350	398	1.380		
	Total	563.040	399			
I perceive literature-related homework as more stressful than other activities.	Between Groups	33.640	1	33.640	24.782	.000
	Within Groups	540.270	398	1.357		
	Total	573.910	399			
Literature aids in comprehending various cultural viewpoints in business.	Between Groups	.003	1	.003	.002	.967
	Within Groups	595.175	398	1.495		
	Total	595.178	399			
Engaging with literature expands my world outlook.	Between Groups	9.923	1	9.923	9.764	.002
	Within Groups	404.455	398	1.016		
	Total	414.378	399			
Literature cultivates empathy, essential for leadership positions in business.	Between Groups	7.290	1	7.290	5.874	.016
	Within Groups	493.950	398	1.241		
	Total	501.240	399			
I consider literature a crucial element of my academic program.	Between Groups	.490	1	.490	.468	.494
	Within Groups	416.300	398	1.046		
	Total	416.790	399			
I am driven to pursue literature beyond academic obligations.	Between Groups	10.563	1	10.563	8.928	.003
	Within Groups	470.875	398	1.183		
	Total	481.438	399			
Literature appears to be more of a hindrance than an advantage to my academic pursuits.	Between Groups	.723	1	.723	.772	.380
	Within Groups	372.475	398	.936		
	Total	373.198	399			
My colleagues provide assistance in comprehending books.	Between Groups	1.440	1	1.440	1.157	.283
	Within Groups	495.270	398	1.244		
	Total	496.710	399			
Faculty members proficiently resolve my challenges in literary studies.	Between Groups	75.690	1	75.690	48.260	.000
	Within Groups	624.220	398	1.568		
	Total	699.910	399			
Faculty advocate for the integration of literature with practical business contexts.	Between Groups	51.123	1	51.123	32.391	.000
	Within Groups	628.155	398	1.578		
	Total	679.278	399			
The duration designated for literary study within the program is enough.	Between Groups	61.623	1	61.623	38.419	.000
	Within Groups	638.375	398	1.604		
	Total	699.998	399			
	Between Groups	71.403	1	71.403	39.803	.000

I feel constrained by the time necessary to comprehend literary works.	Within Groups	713.975	398	1.794		
	Total	785.378	399			
Increased emphasis should be placed on the instruction of literature within the business curriculum.	Between Groups	108.160	1	108.160	111.111	.000
	Within Groups	387.430	398	.973		
	Total	495.590	399			
I consider the literary works in the curriculum to be easily interpretable.	Between Groups	109.203	1	109.203	68.259	.000
	Within Groups	636.735	398	1.600		
	Total	745.938	399			
The intricacy of literary works renders them challenging to connect with commercial studies.	Between Groups	.010	1	.010	.012	.914
	Within Groups	337.350	398	.848		
	Total	337.360	399			
The study of literature has enhanced my critical thinking skills.	Between Groups	.063	1	.063	.076	.784
	Within Groups	329.315	398	.827		
	Total	329.378	399			
Literature has improved my ethical thinking abilities.	Between Groups	.123	1	.123	.151	.698
	Within Groups	322.815	398	.811		
	Total	322.938	399			

Analysis

The ANOVA analysis highlights notable differences between Indian and European students in their perceptions of literature within the business management curriculum. With the value of $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. This revealed that the European students generally reported finding the integration of literature more aligned with their professional aspirations and exhibited higher levels of enjoyment and engagement. This could be attributed to the interdisciplinary approach prevalent in many European educational systems, where literature is often seamlessly integrated with various fields, including business, to foster critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and cultural awareness. European students, having been exposed to diverse pedagogical methods, such as case studies and experiential learning, may find it easier to draw connections between literary concepts and business scenarios, enhancing their appreciation for the subject.

In contrast, Indian students demonstrated more significant challenges in comprehending and engaging with literary texts, especially those rooted in Western cultural contexts. These difficulties are likely influenced by linguistic and cultural barriers, as Indian students are often required to study literature in a second language (English). Moreover, the traditional Indian education system, which heavily emphasizes rote learning and textbook-based approaches, may not adequately prepare students for the interpretive and analytical thinking required to engage with literature. As a result, many Indian students may struggle to connect abstract literary themes with practical business applications, which could explain their comparatively lower levels of enjoyment and perceived relevance of literature in their studies.

Cultural differences further amplify this divide. European students, hailing from individualistic and low-context cultures, may approach literature as a tool for personal exploration and intellectual growth. They are likely to view literary studies as an opportunity to enhance their understanding of human behaviour, leadership dynamics, and organizational ethics, all of which are critical in a globalized business environment. Conversely, Indian students, coming from a collectivist and high-context culture, might perceive literature primarily as a medium for moral instruction or cultural preservation, which could limit their ability to relate it to business contexts.

Another significant factor is institutional support and resource availability. European universities, with their well-funded humanities programs and access to diverse literary resources, provide an environment conducive to interdisciplinary learning. In contrast, Indian institutions often prioritize technical and vocational education, leading to a relative lack of focus on humanities and literature. This disparity in institutional emphasis can affect how students perceive the importance of literature in their overall education. The pedagogical approaches employed also play a critical role. European universities frequently adopt innovative teaching methods, such as role-playing, group discussions, and real-world case studies, to make literary studies more engaging and relevant. Indian students, however, often experience a more rigid and compartmentalized curriculum, where literature may be treated as supplementary rather than integral to business education. This difference in teaching methodology can further influence students' ability to connect literary studies with practical business applications. Overall, the findings underscore the need for tailored approaches to teaching literature in business management programs. Addressing the linguistic and cultural challenges faced by Indian students and adopting more engaging and contextualized pedagogical methods can enhance their appreciation for literature. Simultaneously, leveraging the strengths of European students in interdisciplinary learning can provide a globalized perspective on the role of literature in business education, fostering a richer and more inclusive academic experience for all.

Conclusion

The study underscores the critical role of literature in enhancing the holistic development of business management students. While Indian students face linguistic and cultural barriers, European students grapple with balancing interdisciplinary demands. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach involving tailored pedagogy, institutional reforms, and cultural sensitivity. By overcoming these hurdles, educators can unlock the transformative potential of literature, equipping future managers with the empathy, creativity, and ethical reasoning needed to navigate an increasingly complex global business environment.

The ANOVA analysis reveals significant differences between Indian and European students in their perceptions of literature within the business curriculum. European students found the integration of literature more relevant to their professional goals and reported greater enjoyment, while Indian students faced more challenges in understanding the cultural and linguistic aspects of literary works. These disparities likely stem from differences in cultural exposure, educational approaches, and language proficiency, which shape how students engage with and relate to literature in a business context.

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