“Education Plus” Project Model Innovation of the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week Empowered by Digital Intelligence

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Abstract: The China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week is an important platform for educational cooperation, youth exchange, and mutual cultural learning between China and ASEAN countries. Its “Education+” project model uses educational cooperation as a link to integrate digital technology, industrial needs, cultural exchange, and regional governance. Through cross-sector, multi-actor, and cross-regional project design, it aims to shift educational exchange from short-term interaction to sustained joint development. Taking “Education+” projects of the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week as the research object, this paper uses literature review to analyze practical challenges they face and explore the internal logic and practical paths of their model innovation empowered by digital intelligence. The study finds that these projects still face problems such as weak continuity, clear differences in digital infrastructure and institutional standards, insufficient industry-education integration, and relatively shallow cross-cultural interaction. In the future, digital-intelligence technologies should be used to promote model innovation in four areas: “Education+ digital platforms”, “Education+ regional governance”, “Education+ industrial needs”, and “Education+ cultural exchange”, so as to improve the continuity, precision, and effectiveness of China-ASEAN educational cooperation.

Keywords: digital intelligence empowerment; China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week; educational internationalization; project model innovation

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1.Introduction

The China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week (hereinafter referred to as the “Cooperation Week”) is a key mechanism for educational and people-to-people exchanges between China and ASEAN, and has become an important platform for regional educational cooperation, youth exchanges, inter-institutional collaboration and policy dialogue.

With the deepening of bilateral relations, its cooperative functions have been continuously expanded, integrating diverse areas such as the digital economy, vocational skills and scientific and technological innovation through the “Education +” project model. Against the backdrop of digital intelligence technology development, this model can drive the transformation of educational cooperation towards a cross-domain, integrated and application-oriented paradigm, providing new practical paths and cooperation space for both sides to address emerging demands including digital transformation and industrial upgrading.

In recent years, scholars have extensively examined AI in education, cross-border collaborative learning, and university–industry–government innovation. Batista, Mesquita, and Carnaz (2024) note that generative AI can support teaching, learning feedback, and institutional governance, while also posing challenges related to academic integrity and ethics.[1] Vahed and Rodriguez (2021) argue that Collaborative Online International Learning promotes students’ communication and teamwork skills through virtual exchange. [2] Drawing on the Triple Helix model, Hailu (2024) finds that collaboration among universities, industry, and government helps advance technology transfer and collaborative innovation [3].

Studies on the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week mainly focus on brand building, the internationalization of local universities, and educational exchange. Peng Qianrong (2025) analyzes the development stages, brand effects, and optimization paths of the Cooperation Week from the perspective of brand building. [4] Wang Tingting (2024), based on international Chinese language education in Guizhou universities, discusses the role and problems of the Cooperation Week in promoting internationalization at home, cultural exchange, and

international communication. [5] Shao Qi and Zhang Yimin (2022), in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, note that the Cooperation Week has helped promote bilateral educational cooperation, build an institutionalized exchange platform, and expand people-to-people exchange[6].

Existing studies provide an important theoretical basis for this research, but they have not examined the Cooperation Week in relation to artificial intelligence, digital transformation, industry-education integration, and regional collaborative governance. Therefore, this paper takes the "Education+" project of the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week as its research object. It analyzes the practical challenges facing these projects and explores the internal logic and practical paths of model innovation empowered by digital intelligence, with the aim of providing reference for the high-quality development of regional educational cooperation.

2.The Internal Logic of Innovation in "Education+" Project of the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week Empowered by Digital Intelligence

Essentially, "Education +" project innovation empowered by digital intelligence relies on digital technologies to reconstruct the operational logic and development pathways of educational exchange programs, driving the iteration of cooperation modalities from shallow activities to in-depth co-construction. Through digital-intelligent tools, "Education +" projects can break through temporal and spatial constraints, extending cooperation intentions reached during conference periods into a year-round project implementation chain.

"Education +" project innovation empowered by digital intelligence emphasize the spillover and integration of educational functions. Digital and intelligent technologies align educational cooperation with platform development, industrial demands, people-to-people and cultural exchanges, and cross-border collaborative governance, expanding education's value beyond talent cultivation to cover platform upgrading, cultural understanding and regional coordinated development. This drives "Education +" projects to shift from formal innovation to connotation-oriented quality improvement, and elevates the Cooperation Week into a cross-domain public value generation platform.

3.Practical Challenges Facing the "Education+" Project of the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week

3.1 Insufficient Project Continuity and Incomplete Achievement Transformation Chain

After years of development, the Cooperation Week has developed a strong platform effect and played an active role in policy dialogue and institutional connection. However, in project operation, some "Education+" projects still emphasize initiation over continuation and display over transformation. Although the Cooperation Week forms many cooperation intentions and agreements, cooperation often becomes less stable at the regular implementation stage due to personnel changes, funding arrangements, and institutional differences.

In addition, the transformation of outcomes in cross-border educational cooperation involves many links, such as curriculum development, credit recognition and quality evaluation, which cannot be completed by a single institution alone. Without sustained tracking mechanisms and specialized coordination bodies, early cooperation agreements may remain only on paper and fail to become stable joint training programs or concrete talent development outcomes. Therefore, the main challenge facing current "Education+" projects is not a lack of willingness to cooperate, but the incomplete transformation chain from cooperation intentions to actual outcomes.

3.2 Disparate Digital Infrastructure and Institutional Standards, Poor Regional Coordination

Digital intelligence provides new opportunities for China-ASEAN educational cooperation. However, ASEAN countries and institutions differ significantly in digital infrastructure and the level of educational informatization.[7] These differences directly affect the implementation of projects such as "Education+ digital platforms" and "Education+ virtual training".

Meanwhile, insufficient digital platform compatibility and standardization also restrict cross-border educational

cooperation. Cross-border educational projects involve multilingual teaching, course resource sharing, and student data management. Without shared standards for platform interfaces, data formats, and curricula, problems may arise, including difficulties in resource sharing, barriers to learning outcome recognition, and weak process tracking.

In addition, China-ASEAN educational cooperation faces serious digital security risks. These include conflicts over data sovereignty and institutional rules in cross-border data flows, as well as mismatches between cultural identity and regulation in digital industry collaboration. [8] These issues create serious challenges for the implementation of "Education+" projects under the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week.

3.3 Low Industry-Education Integration and Weak Multi-Actor Coordination Mechanisms

The value of "Education+" projects lies in strengthening the connection between education and the needs of industry, technology, culture, and social development. Current China-ASEAN regional cooperation is closely linked to the digital economy, cross-border e-commerce, and green development, which provides broad space for the Cooperation Week to expand industry-education integration projects. However, in practice, some projects still focus mainly on exchanges between institutions, while the participation of enterprises, industry organizations, industrial parks, and local governments remains limited.

Besides, multi-actor coordination mechanisms are not yet well developed. The roles, responsibilities, resource input, and benefit-sharing mechanisms of governments, universities, enterprises, and social organizations need to be further clarified. Projects without stable coordination mechanisms often depend on individual institutions or specific project leaders. Once external conditions change, their continuity may be affected. Therefore, to achieve high-quality development, "Education+" projects should move beyond single-institution cooperation and develop a collaborative governance model guided by government, led by universities, involving enterprises, and supported by society.

3.4 Superficial Cross-Cultural Interaction and Underdeveloped Educational Value

China-ASEAN educational cooperation is not only an exchange of knowledge, technology, and talent, but also an interaction among different cultures, values, and social experiences. At present, the Cooperation Week includes many youth exchanges, cultural exhibitions, and student visits. However, some projects still mainly take the form of visits, lectures, and short-term exchanges, with limited sustained, task-based, and generative interaction design. As a result, cultural exchange may remain at the level of surface understanding and fail to address the social contexts and values behind cultural differences.

At the same time, some activities lack clear educational objectives. They do not fully define the intercultural communication, teamwork, and problem-analysis skills that students should develop during exchanges, and they also lack process-based evaluation mechanisms. As a result, cultural exchange is difficult to turn into a structured learning process, and its deeper educational value in improving students' international understanding, regional identity, and overall competence still needs further exploration.

4.Practical Paths for Innovation in the "Education+" Project of the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week Empowered by Digital Intelligence

4.1 Building an "Education+ Digital Platform" Model to Form a Year-Round Project Cycle

The primary path for empowering "Education+" projects with digital intelligence is to upgrade the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week from an annual centralized activity platform into a year-round digital cooperation platform. This would turn short-term activities into a long-term mechanism covering demand collection, resource matching, project incubation, process management, and outcome evaluation.

Specifically, a project database and a cooperation resource database can be established to dynamically release the needs of China and ASEAN partners in talent training, vocational education, and teacher-student exchange. This would support more precise connections among universities, enterprises, and institutions. The platform should also include functions for project application, progress tracking, and outcome presentation, enabling full-process

management from project approval to project implementation. Through digital tools, resource allocation can become more efficient, allowing the Cooperation Week to move beyond conference-based display and become an important carrier for continuously incubating cooperation outcomes and supporting regular project operation.

4.2 Constructing an "Education+ Regional Governance" Model to Improve Multi-Actor Coordination Mechanisms

The "Education+ Regional Governance" model aims to shift educational cooperation from isolated institutional exchanges to regional collaboration involving governments, universities, enterprises, industry organizations, and social institutions. The Cooperation Week can play a coordinating role by establishing regular communication mechanisms and stable rules for project application, resource sharing, joint curriculum development, credit recognition, and outcome evaluation, thereby improving the continuity of cooperation.

Against the backdrop of digital-intelligence empowerment, all parties should build consensus on funding standards, platform interfaces, data formats, and evaluation methods. They should also improve operational standards for cross-border educational projects and strengthen data security, privacy protection, and risk warning. In particular, as generative artificial intelligence is increasingly used in educational cooperation, clear rules should be established for tools such as intelligent translation, automated assessment, learning analytics, and content generation, so as to avoid new ethical risks caused by technology use[9].

4.3 Establishing an "Education+ Industrial Needs" Model to Deepen the Link Between Talent Training and Regional Development

China-ASEAN cooperation should respond closely to regional industrial development needs and cultivate interdisciplinary, application-oriented, and international talent. Project design may include project clusters such as "Education+ Intelligent Manufacturing", encouraging the joint participation of universities, enterprises, and industry organizations. Enterprises should be involved in designing curriculum standards, practical training tasks, and learning assessment to improve the industrial relevance of talent training.

In addition, the two sides may jointly develop online course modules based on real enterprise needs and granting micro-credentials. These courses can reduce learning costs for cross-border learners and provide more flexible and personalized learning opportunities. [10] Practical teaching can integrate virtual simulation, online collaboration, and real enterprise tasks to enhance students' professional competence, intercultural collaboration, and innovation ability.

4.4 Formulating an "Education+ Cultural Exchange" Model to Enhance the Educational Value of Youth Exchange

Cultural exchange is an important basis for mutual understanding and communication, and cross-cultural exchange is a key form of international interaction. [11] Young people are central participants in this process. "Education+ Cultural Exchange" should go beyond cultural displays and short-term visits. With the support of digital-intelligence technologies, it should develop sustained, interactive, and co-creative exchange projects. For example, Chinese and ASEAN students can form cross-border teams on topics such as intangible cultural heritage protection, rural education, and sustainable development, and work together through online meetings, shared documents, and digital exhibition halls.

Additionally, clear educational goals should be set, including the development of intercultural communication, teamwork, and problem-analysis skills. Learning journals, peer assessment, and reflective reports can be used for process-based evaluation. In this way, cultural exchange can become a structured learning process and improve the depth and quality of youth exchange.

5.Conclusion

Empowering innovation in the "Education+" project model of the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week through digital intelligence is not simply about applying artificial intelligence, big data, or online platforms to

Education+ projects. Rather, it requires a systematic restructuring of project organization, resource allocation, quality evaluation, and cooperative governance.

This study finds that current Education+ projects still face problems such as insufficient continuity and an incomplete chain for transforming cooperation outcomes. In response, the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week should make better use of digital-intelligence technologies to promote four types of model innovation, including “Education+ digital platforms”. Only when digital intelligence is deeply integrated with platform upgrading, industrial needs, cultural exchange, and regional governance can Education+ projects achieve stronger continuity and effectiveness. Future research may further examine specific project cases or collect feedback from university teachers, students, enterprises, and administrators through interviews and questionnaires, so as to strengthen the empirical basis and explanatory power of the study.

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