



The Role of English Education in Promoting Cross-Cultural Communication in the Housing Industry

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SUMMARY: *Under the background of global combination, cross-culture communication has already become an always more important component in people's daily life. The present research regards the English education degree of housing industry working personnel as the independent variable, and regards their cross-cultural communication ability as the dependent variable. At the same time, cultural consciousness and cultural interactive capacities are thus set to be the middle-borne variables. Through the utilization of structural equation modeling, this research probes the mediating influences of these variables upon the cross-cultural communication ability of professionals who work in the housing industry. Our analysis carries out a discovery that both the direct effect model and the mediating effect model have extremely good fitting degree. Cultural consciousness and cultural interaction capacities have a notable mediating effect upon the cross-cultural communication capability of housing field workers ($p < 0.05$). For further promoting their cross-cultural communication abilities, therefore, we need to cultivate students' consciousness about culture by means of culture immersion, and strengthen their cross-cultural communication abilities through practice activities.*

KEYWORDS: *structural equation modeling; mediating effect; model fit; cross-cultural communication*

1 Introduction

Along with globalization going forward and international communication and cooperation become more many times, the housing domain has step by step changed from a local domain to a internationalized domain. It is widely acknowledged that China is usually called the “infrastructure giant,” and its construction companies have set up work places in very many countries. In the same period, the requirement for housing-connected services, which include property renting and purchasing, is in the increase. This increment is caused by the moving, study-seeking activities, and job demands of persons from many different nations. But, cross-cultural communication problems exist among different transnational individuals or groups [1-3]. Inside the housing industry, the special language includes policy, law, technique, and market fields, thus it requests a high level of special knowledge in industry-specific words. Effective interchange of ideas in this domain demands precise consensus on specialized phrases, understanding of various provisions in overseas agreements, and abidance by unified wording in the course of network contacts [4 - 6]. English acts as the global shared language, and the effect of English teaching has a direct connection with the efficiency and quality of contract carrying out, business talks, project pushing forward, building guides, and spot management

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inside transnational projects. Economic losses stemming from cross-cultural communication issues are well-documented [7-9]. Therefore, enhancing English education serves as an effective pathway to facilitate cross-cultural communication.

Effective English education requires not only linguistic knowledge but also understanding cultural differences, racial and religious variations, temporal distinctions, formal versus informal communication protocols, and disparities in the hierarchy of responsibilities and rights. It must also encompass dynamic, networked terminology and emoticon variations emerging with internet development, thereby reducing cultural conflicts and enhancing communication efficiency [10-13]. Currently, many universities collaborate with social organizations and enterprises to offer specialized English education programs for the construction industry, including industry-education integration designs and engineer English proficiency certification schemes [14-16]. Furthermore, the advancement of social platforms and digital technologies provides virtual simulation environments and authentic communication scenarios for cross-cultural exchange within English education [17, 18]. These newly-made methods in English language teaching are to strengthen cross-cultural communication inside the house building trade even more. This research uses the structural equation modeling to carry out empirical examination, and it focuses on four factors: English language level, cross-cultural communication abilities, cultural consciousness, and cultural communication skills among working persons in the housing field. At the beginning, the information about English level ability, culture consciousness, culture communication abilities, and cross-culture communication ability of housing business professionals was collected through question papers given out among them. After that, Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis was conducted by means of SmartPLS 3.0 to measure the model's fitness and evaluate the direct and indirect effect routes among variables. Finally, according to the results of the analysis, intercultural communication strategies which are rooted in English education have been put forward by us.

2 The Housing Industry and Cross-Cultural Communication

2.1 The Importance of Comprehensive Competency for Housing Industry Personnel

After the development of nearly thirty years in China's real estate domain, one mode has already appeared that the powerful ones therefore become still more powerful, hence the gaps among different participants are continuously growing. The 19th National Congress of Communist Party of China and Central Conference of Economic Work have again confirmed the principle that "houses are for people to live in, not for making speculative profits." They also put forward the opinion that we should continuously strengthen the housing market mechanism and the housing guarantee system, therefore to provide more good housing situations for the masses. In current times, real-estate enterprises, that are capital-consuming industries, are required to cultivate high-level talents in order to get stronger ability, bigger scope, and better working results. These persons ought to have a solid base in theoretical knowledge, skilled technical abilities, a fine comprehension of working processes, and they must show loyalty, dedication, honesty, and a feeling of responsibility. In the essential substance, they ought to combine the moral correctness with the professional ability. In the current stage, the comprehensive ability of persons who work in the housing field still has certain shortcomings. Therefore, it is necessary that well-structured and step-by-step training programs are carried out by us. These actions set the goal to continuously promote the promotion of their comprehensive abilities, thus enabling them to satisfy the transforming demands of housing domain's progress in the new epoch.

2.2 The Impact of Cross-Cultural Communication

As an abstract concept, “culture” in its broadest sense refers to the mindset, values, behavioral norms, customs, traditions, and all social activities derived from the collective consciousness of any group (nation, ethnicity, enterprise, family, etc.) formed through long-term creation. Cross-cultural communication refers to interpersonal interactions between individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Significant disparities in cultural context, social environment, thought patterns, and communication styles between native and target language groups result in distinct “cultural imprints” within enterprises. These imprints manifest as differences in corporate philosophy, management systems, business models, and communication practices. Consequently, the emphasis placed on cultural differences and the ability to adapt to and respect diverse cultures play a pivotal role in the success or failure of a company's international expansion.

Ideal cross-cultural communication combines positive cultural transfer, cultural priming, and moderate cultural empathy to positively influence both parties' cognition and emotions, effectively achieving communication objectives. As cross-cultural management plays an increasingly vital role in corporate decision-making and execution, its profound impact extends across three key areas: the reconstruction of cultural values, employee linguistic communication, and management-operational collaboration strategies. Both corporate managers and employees have adapted to each other's cultures and management models. By absorbing the essence of the other's culture and bridging cultural differences, they simultaneously examine and address cross-cultural communication issues through new cultural value frameworks [19]. Organizations should assist employees in mastering the structures and expressions of both their native and target languages, understanding deep cultural connotations, overcoming the negative transfer effects of their mother tongue, and avoiding operational losses stemming from linguistic misunderstandings. Employing cooperative strategies in external communications facilitates moderate cultural empathy between parties, resolves misunderstandings and conflicts arising from cultural differences, achieves cultural integration, and fosters a “win-win” resonance in both cognition and emotion.

2.3 The Role of English Education in Cross-Cultural Communication

As an international lingua franca, English not only facilitates cross-cultural communication but also promotes cultural understanding and international cooperation. First, English provides a common platform for people from diverse cultural backgrounds, enabling them to better comprehend each other's perspectives and values. This method can reduce possible wrong explanations and arguments in cross-cultural communication, at the same time it pushes the spread of cultural diversity. Secondly, the wide use of English has the function of promoting international cooperation hence. In global organizations, meetings and all kinds of programs, English is usually used by people as the official language. This lets representatives who come from many kinds of countries and regions carry out cooperation together more effectively, thus promoting progress on international affairs [20]. Therefore, prioritizing English education not only broadens horizons and fosters multicultural perspectives but also deepens understanding of one's own culture through comparative studies of cultural differences, thereby enhancing the overall competence and quality of professionals in the housing industry.

3 Research Methods

3.1 Structural Equation Modeling

Based on the relationships between latent variables and observed variables, as well as among latent variables themselves, structural equation models can be divided into two components: the measurement model and the structural model.

3.1.1 Measurement Model

The measurement model consists of latent variables and observed variables, also known as the external model or confirmatory factor model [21].

The measurement model primarily measures the relationships between latent variables and their corresponding observed variables, with specific matrix equation forms shown in Equations (1) and (2):

$$x = \Lambda x \xi + \delta \quad (1)$$

$$y = \Lambda y \eta + \varepsilon \quad (2)$$

where:

x — Vector of exogenous observed variables in the measurement model.

ξ — Vector of exogenous latent variables in the measurement model.

Λx — Factor loading matrix of the exogenous observed variables in the measurement model onto the exogenous latent variables, representing the relationship between exogenous observed variables and exogenous latent variables.

δ — Error term vector of the exogenous variables in the measurement model.

y — Vector of endogenous observed variables in the measurement model.

η — Vector of endogenous latent variables in the measurement model.

Λy — Factor loading matrix of the endogenous observed variables in the measurement model onto the endogenous latent variables, representing the relationship between the endogenous observed variables and the endogenous latent variables.

ε — Error term vector of the endogenous variables in the measurement model.

3.1.2 Structural Model

Structural models describe path analysis or causal relationships among latent variables, also known as internal models or latent variable models.

Structural models primarily represent the structural relationships between latent variables, described by a set of linear regression equations as shown in Equation (3):

$$\eta = B\eta + \Gamma\xi + \zeta \quad (3)$$

B — Path coefficients between endogenous latent variables within the structural model, representing the relationships among endogenous latent variables.

Γ — Path coefficients between exogenous latent variables and endogenous latent variables in the structural model, indicating the influence of exogenous latent variables on endogenous latent variables.

ζ — Error term vector for latent variables or endogenous variables in the structural model.

3.1.3 Structural Equation Modeling

Structural equation modeling is an integrated framework comprising factor analysis models that represent relationships between observed variables and latent variables, and path analysis models that depict relationships among latent variables [22].

Broadly speaking, a complete structural equation model includes several measurement models and one structural model. The matrix equation form of the structural equation model is shown in Equation (4):

$$\begin{cases} \eta = B\eta + \Gamma\xi + \zeta \\ x = Ax\xi + \delta \\ y = Ay\eta + \varepsilon \end{cases} \quad (4)$$

To present the measurement model, structural model, and other components of the structural equation model more intuitively and clearly, a schematic diagram of the structural equation model was created using AMOS 24.0 software and Microsoft Visio drawing software. This diagram includes 4 latent variables (2 exogenous latent variables and 2 endogenous latent variables) and 12 observed variables (6 exogenous observed variables and 6 endogenous observed variables), as shown in Figure 1.

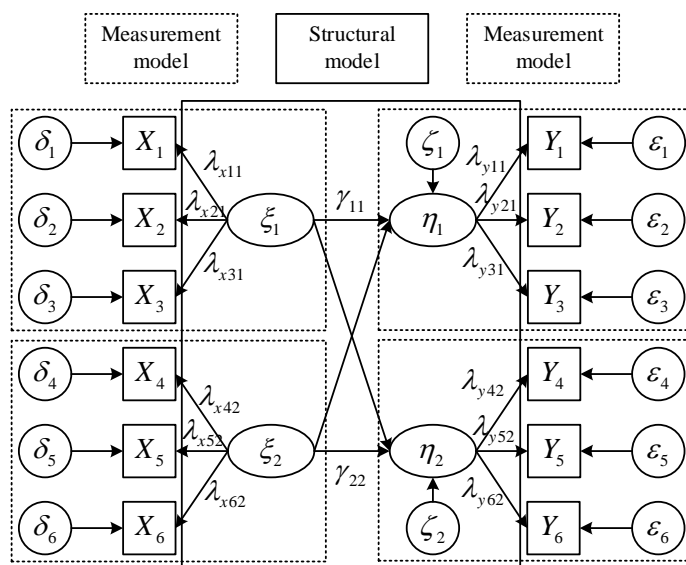


Figure 1: Schematic diagram of the structural equation model

The relationships among variables in the structural equation model diagram of Figure 1 are expressed in matrix equation form, as shown in Equations (5) to (7):

$$\begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \\ x_4 \\ x_5 \\ x_6 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \lambda_{x11} & 0 \\ \lambda_{x21} & 0 \\ \lambda_{x31} & 0 \\ 0 & \lambda_{x42} \\ 0 & \lambda_{x52} \\ 0 & \lambda_{x62} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \xi_1 \\ \xi_2 \\ \xi_2 \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} \delta_1 \\ \delta_2 \\ \delta_3 \\ \delta_4 \\ \delta_5 \\ \delta_6 \end{bmatrix} \quad (5)$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} y_1 \\ y_2 \\ y_3 \\ y_4 \\ y_5 \\ y_6 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \lambda_{y11} & 0 \\ \lambda_{y21} & 0 \\ \lambda_{y31} & 0 \\ 0 & \lambda_{y42} \\ 0 & \lambda_{y52} \\ 0 & \lambda_{y62} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \eta_1 \\ \eta_2 \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} \varepsilon_1 \\ \varepsilon_2 \\ \varepsilon_3 \\ \varepsilon_4 \\ \varepsilon_5 \\ \varepsilon_6 \end{bmatrix} \quad (6)$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} \eta_1 \\ \eta_2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ \beta_{21} & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \eta_1 \\ \eta_2 \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} \gamma_{11} & \gamma_{12} \\ \gamma_{21} & \gamma_{22} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \xi_1 \\ \xi_2 \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} \zeta_1 \\ \zeta_2 \end{bmatrix} \quad (7)$$

Among these, Equations (5) and (6) represent the matrix equations of the measurement model. The matrix equation of the structure model is given depiction by Equation (7).

3.2 Research Hypotheses

This research adopts structural equation modeling to evaluate the effect that English language teaching exerts on the capability of cross-cultural communication in the housing domain. This analysis points out two basic qualities that the working persons in this area need to have when they carry out cross-cultural interactions: cultural consciousness and cross-cultural communication capabilities. Following this step, it therefore puts forward the related hypotheses.

H1: Among the persons who work in the housing profession, the consciousness of culture plays a role of go-between in the relation that is between English language teaching and the ability of cross-cultural communication.

H2: Among professional persons who work in housing industry, the mastery level of cultural communication plays a mediating role in the relation between English language education and the capability to carry out cross-cultural communication.

3.3 Questionnaire Design

This experience-based study uses a method that bases on questionnaire investigation. Because the research topics include both cross-cultural comparison analyses and the housing field, when we choose survey participants, we put emphasis on the diversity of housing business activities that are conducted by the respondents. This method is for the purpose of collecting more deep-going culture communications from diverse standpoints. Therefore, the investigation sample is constituted by Chinese managers who come from many different Sino-foreign joint ventures. The multifarious method which is employed in questionnaire design enhances the all-sidedness of result analysis, and therefore reveals both the common characters among the subjects and the individual distinctions. For the purpose of decreasing the uncertainties that exist in the progress of fieldwork and for mitigating the response bias, one pre-test has been conducted by us with 10 managers. After we carried out discussions with related experts and did team discussions, the structure and content of the questionnaire were changed in corresponding ways. The finally confirmed edition was spread and got through email. In all, 263 investigation forms were gotten back, among which 258 were regarded as effective, hence leading to a reply rate of 98.1%. For the simplification of data handling and examination work, the characteristics of our sample have been classified and summarized by us. Table 1 displays the basic basic information of the sample. The proportion of male persons who answered the questionnaire is 2.32 percent higher than the proportion of female persons who answered the questionnaire. A quite big part (36.05%) of the

sampling was under 35 years old in age. High-level management personnel constituted merely 39.15% of the whole sample, and 23.64% of the persons had above five years of working experience in the related situation.

Table 1: The basic case of the sample

	Variable	Sample	Proportion (%)
Gender	Male	132	51.16
	Female	126	48.84
Age	≤35	93	36.05
	36~45	79	30.62
	>45	86	33.33
Position	Middle manager	157	60.85
	Senior manager	101	39.15
Tenure	≤3	112	43.41
	4~5	85	32.95
	>5	61	23.64

3.4 Variable Measurement

In this study, a 5-point Likert scale is employed by us. This scale extends from the position of Strongly Disagree to the position of Strongly Agree, and every point on this scale is given a score that ranges from 1 to 5. Our investigation questionnaire carries out evaluation on four basic variables: English Ability in Teaching (EPE), Culture Consciousness (CA), Culture Interactive Ability (CIA), and Cross-Culture Communicative Ability (CCCA). This evaluating work includes 12 observable variables: self-assessed English language ability, English learning experience in education, purpose-directed English teaching, acknowledgement of cultural differences, attitudes on cultural tolerance, and mastery of cultural knowledge, mastery of language usage, mastery of non-verbal reciprocal action, ability for conflict handling, enthusiasm to join in communication, effectiveness of communication, and ability for culture adaptation. The 12 questions were representative and comprehensive throughout the study. Measurement results are presented in Table 2. The survey results indicate that the mean scores for all indicators of respondents' English education levels exceeded 3 points, suggesting that most respondents had received a solid foundation in English education.

Table 2: Variable measurement

Latent variable	Observed variable	M	SD
EEL	English language ability self-evaluation	3.22	0.56
	English education background	3.01	0.96
	Professional English training	3.19	0.81
CS	Cultural differences	2.19	0.4
	Cultural inclusion	2.28	0.78
	Cultural knowledge	2.2	0.45
CCS	Language ability	2.07	0.88
	Nonverbal communication	2.2	0.7
	Conflict handling ability	2.72	0.87
C-CCL	Exchange will	2.05	0.58
	Communication effect	2.34	0.65
	Cultural adaptation	2.86	0.9

4 Analysis of Research Findings

This chapter will analyze the questionnaire and reveal how English education influences the cross-cultural competence of housing industry professionals in business communication based on the findings.

4.1 Direct Effect Model Testing

Data obtained through questionnaire surveys were processed using partial least squares regression with SmartPLS 3.0. Model reliability and validity were examined sequentially through a stepwise approach. First, the model examining the influence of English Education Level (EEL) on Cross-Cultural Communication Level (C-CCL) was tested. After confirming this model's good fit, the factors Cultural Sensitivity (CS) and Cultural Communication Skills (CCS) were sequentially incorporated into the model to assess the fit of the new model.

Cronbach's alpha was selected to assess internal consistency and structural validity of the items, with specific criteria shown in Table 3. Items with factor loadings below 0.7 were excluded.

Table 3: Scale reliability table

Type	Cronbach's a	Scale rating	Sample size
Suitability	$a \geq 0.9$	Very high reliability	Very ideal
	$0.8 \leq a < 0.9$	High reliability	More ideal
	$0.7 \leq a < 0.8$	Normal height	Acceptability
	$0.6 \leq a < 0.7$	Grudging	Need to add and delete the items
	$a < 0.6$	Low reliability	Recompile

The model fit for the influence of English education level on cross-cultural communication proficiency is shown in Table 4. The combined reliability of two variables has achieved above 0.8, which greatly surpasses the standard threshold value of 0.7, hence this indicates a comparatively high degree of internal coherence. Generally speaking, people hold the view that it is the best situation when average variance extracted (AVE) values are above 0.5. In this model, each AVE value has exceeded 0.5, this hence shows strong convergent validity.

Table 4: Direct effect model reliability test

Variable	CR	AVE
EEL	0.863	0.955
C-CCL	0.961	0.714

According to the Fornell-Larcker criteria [23], a variable exhibits good discriminant validity when the square root of its average variance extracted (AVE) is greater than its correlation coefficients with other variables. Table 5 shows the connection between the level of English education teaching and the level of cross-cultural communication ability. To these two variables, the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVEs) are larger than every other value in their corresponding rows and columns. This therefore indicates that the model displays strong discriminant validity.

Table 5: Direct effect model validity test

Variable	EEL	C-CCL
EEL	0.722	-
C-CCL	0.375	0.932

Indicator reliability reflects the extent to which indicator variables explain latent variables, as measured by factor loadings. In order that an indicator may be regarded as dependable, the factor loadings which are connected with latent variables must achieve no less than 0.7.

Figure 2 gives the description of the path which starts from the English education level and arrives at cross-cultural communication ability. To these two latent variables, the factor loadings all exceed the proposed threshold value. This hence indicates that the indicators which are inside this model possess very high reliability. The result of the path analysis which is shown in Figure 2 shows that the degree of English education has an obviously positive influence on cross-cultural communication ability (beta = -0.736, $p < 0.001$). These consequences have verified the effectiveness of the model, which therefore permits a mediation analysis to be conducted.

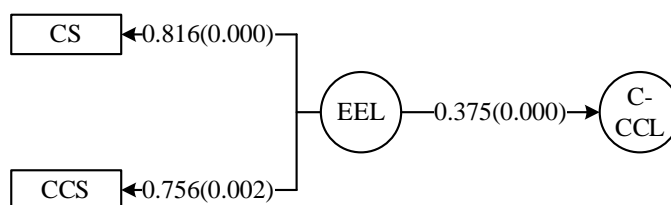


Figure 2: The influence of education level on cross-cultural communication level

4.2 Testing the Mediated Effect Model

Table 6 and Figure 3 show the reliability and inner consistency of the one-step multiple mediation model, and also the connections between variables that are inside the mediation model. It is necessary to be emphasized that the composite reliability values of each variable are larger than 0.7. Additionally, the numerical values of average variance extracted (AVE) are all bigger than 0.5, and the square root value of the AVE is larger than the correlation coefficient values between every individual variable and other variables. These result points very clearly give forward that the mediation model has an extremely good fitting degree.

Table 6: The reliability and internal consistency of the mediation model

Variable	CR	AVE
CS	0.808	0.644
CCS	0.783	0.659
EEL	0.85	0.693
C-CCL	0.875	0.641

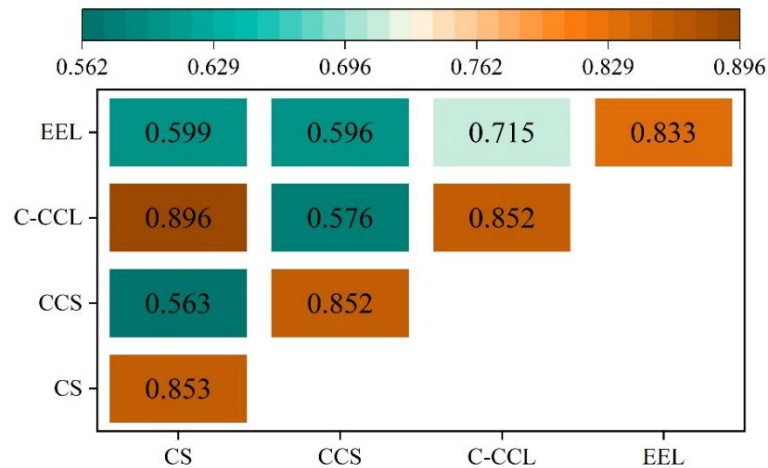


Figure 3: Correlation between intermediate model variables

4.3 Structural Equation Analysis Results of the Mediating Model

The calculated values for the direct and indirect effects in the mediation model are presented in Table 7. Within the mediation model, the effects of the mediating variables—Cultural Sensitivity (CS) and Cultural Communication Skills (CCS)—on the relevant paths were both found to be significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the corresponding indirect effects are significant. Table 7 indicates that the direct effect of English education level on cross-cultural communication level is not significant ($p > 0.05$). The presence of a significant indirect effect alongside an insignificant direct effect suggests that the influence of cultural sensitivity and cultural communication skills should be fully mediated effects.

Table 7: Analysis of the structure equation of the mediation model

Total effect	M	SE	T	P
CS->C-CCL	-0.374	0.174	2.248	0.021**
CCS->C-CCL	0.228	0.087	2.425	0.011**
EEL->CS	0.704	0.051	13.048	0.001***
EEL->CCS	0.481	0.094	5.487	0.000***
EEL->C-CCL	0.158	0.106	1.474	0.153

The analysis results indicate that the mediating effect model exhibits a good fit, with cultural sensitivity and cultural communication skills significantly mediating the cross-cultural communication ability of housing industry personnel. Hypotheses H1 and H2 are supported.

The mediating effect analysis reveals that cultural sensitivity and cultural communication skills are significant factors influencing the cross-cultural communication ability of housing industry personnel. To further enhance their cross-cultural communication proficiency, one approach involves cultivating cultural sensitivity through cultural integration training. Language learning inherently carries cultural information. By analyzing news reports or literary works from English-speaking countries during instruction, housing industry professionals can naturally gain insights into Western social cultures and value systems. This helps them understand and respect different cultures, therefore laying a foundation for communication among different cultures. For instance, in the course of classroom activities, the analysis of how China and the United States report the identical incident permits scholars to discover subtle differences in thinking modes. This comprehension is of help for lessening the communication barriers which come from cultural differences, and hence it even can bring about the settlement

of disputes in future work. On the opposite side, the activities that let people do things by hand have the possibility to promote the abilities of cross-cultural communication. English language study classes employ teaching methods such as role acting and scenario simulation exercises. These approaches permit those who engage in real-estate work to polish their abilities inside environment which can give immersive experience. For instance, in the process of simulation international conferences, the participating persons are required to express their viewpoints and reply to opposite opinions by means of English. They through the study know how they can adjust their communication ways according to the different culture environments. In simulation news report exercises, participants are demanded to quickly organize materials and produce articles, which therefore helps to cultivate their capability of giving quick responses and grasping the background. This curriculum arrangement provides opportunities for active participation and mutual exchanging. The work personnel who engage in housing work obtain the abilities that can in actual real life situations carry out information transmission in a proficient way. They have obtained training to carry out active listening, which therefore enables them to completely understand the replies that other people give. In addition, they are given teaching on how to carry out communication through the utilization of appropriate language. Through these procedures, hence their abilities in cross-culture intercourse are thus obviously promoted.

5 Conclusion

This research makes use of structural equation modeling to carry out empirical study on the mechanism through which the level of mastery in English education raises the effect of cross-cultural communication inside the housing field. This situation happens through the intermediary functions of culture consciousness and culture communication abilities. We here present the main research findings in the manner below:

- (1) The grasping degree of English education may act as an essential foundational stone for the promotion of the capacity of communication among various different cultures.
- (2) The combined actions of culture consciousness and culture exchange abilities clarify the basic mechanism that English language teaching influences the effect of cross-culture communication inside the housing industry.
- (3) Through the carrying out of cultural fusion projects and practical work activities, the cultural ability and cross-cultural communication skills of housing field staff can be greatly promoted. This, therefore, brings about an overall promotion of their cross-culture communication abilities.

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