Sensitizing Cultural Intelligence Amongst Students: Drivers and Measuring Instruments

Authors: Mugdha Chandrachud[1], Jatinder Kumar R. Saini[2]*

[1]Email: mugdha.chandrachud@siu.edu.in | ORCID: 0000-0001-5205-5263
[2]Email: jatinder_kumar@siu.edu.in | ORCID: 0000-0002-7906-0027
Symbiosis Institute of Computer Studies and Research, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune, Maharashtra, India

Abstract

The internationalization of higher education has evolved through diverse mechanisms such as student and faculty mobility, program exports, offshore campuses, and curriculum internationalization. A parallel strategy, *Internationalization at Home*, offers culturally immersive experiences for non-mobile students and faculty via conferences, MOOCs, intercultural programs, and global learning environments. Such practices foster sustained interactions among culturally diverse groups, prompting critical questions regarding adaptability, multicultural competence, and the development of *Cultural Intelligence* (CQ).

This study investigates the capacity of students to understand, empathize, and adapt to culturally distinct environments. It examines the impact of internationalization efforts on shaping students' cultural competencies and the potential for quantifying these attributes through a cultural sensitivity scale. The research draws upon existing cultural quotient metrics and evaluates their applicability within higher educational institutions (HEIs).

Purpose:
To identify the key drivers that enhance cultural intelligence among students and to propose a reliable instrument to measure cultural sensitivity in the context of internationalization.

Design/Methodology:
The study employs a descriptive, exploratory methodology. A comprehensive review of literature from academic databases was conducted, focusing on research from countries including Spain, Colombia, the USA, Greece, Australia, South Africa, and India. Quantitative data were collected from students at HEIs in Pune, India.

Findings:
The findings underscore the importance of a culturally diverse student body and the effectiveness of various internationalization strategies in fostering cultural intelligence. The study confirms that internationalization initiatives contribute significantly to the development of cultural intelligence and identifies multiple validated instruments for its measurement.

Originality:
This interdisciplinary study integrates principles from management and psychology, highlighting the role of cultural

intelligence in cultivating globally competent students. It also offers a consolidated reference of tools used to assess CQ.

Research Scope:
The scope is limited to published literature and empirical data from Pune, India, without targeting specific disciplines or faculties.

Practical Implications:
The paper provides insights for HEIs and policymakers on strategies to attract international students and create culturally diverse academic ecosystems. The study's findings apply to both national universities with inter-state student bodies and institutions hosting international students.

Keywords:
Internationalization; Cultural Intelligence (CI); Cultural Quotient (CQ); Higher Education Institutions (HEIs); Cultural Sensitivity; Student Mobility; Global Competence

Conflict of Interest
The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Introduction

International activities have gained popularity to enhance internationalization at HEI (E.Jones et al., 2016). The activities are primarily dominated by student and faculty mobility, curriculum development, research, and conferences. In addition to this, a concept called 'Internationalization at Home 'is drawing attention. The mere fact that not all stakeholders will be able to participate in mobility or research or development across borders, a unique opportunity for cultural immersion is created at home universities. This enables all the students and staff to get international exposure. The main characteristic of internationalization is the fact that it cherishes cultural diversity. None other activity aims to enhance this aspect in an organization [1]. The melting pot of diverse cultures gives rise to the imperative necessity of managing cultures via implementation of specific competencies involving language skills, accommodative behavior, acceptance of diverse perspectives & religions, etc. The cultural intelligence concept was first propounded by Earley, P. C., and Ang, S. (2003). The authors presented a conceptual framework on cultural intelligence as different from known social and emotional intelligence constructs. According to Earley and Ang, it is a vital skill and aptitude that helps understand and interpret unknown gestures and actions to the same perceptions as the cultures. Some of the factors of the construct are innate to an individual but can be enhanced by motivation and behavioral training (Earley, P.C. and Ang.S.,2003). Cultural intelligence is considered a multidimensional construct defined as the capability to function effectively across different cultural situations and contexts from a foreign nationality, gender, generation, ethnicity, organization, etc [2]. (Soon Ang and Ling Dyne, 2008).

Cross-cultural intelligence or multicultural competence is an important skill set to sustain in a globally competitive environment. The sensitization towards diverse cultures in the student fraternity is relevant in current times of internationalization & globalization. Students, when allowed to express different ideas, divergent beliefs, values, traditions, costumes, food habits, educational systems, and communication languages, leading to a vibrant international community. This has an immense academic impact on the culture of any HEI. Further to cross-cultural awareness, the measurement of cultural quotient or cultural intelligence is an essential antecedent to a students' competency. The metrics may be helpful in the staffing of culturally agile professionals [3].

The structure of the paper is in five sections. The introduction gives an intro and explores the need and significance of having experiences in a cross-cultural environment [4]. The second section provides background knowledge and the existing literature in developing instruments to measure students' cultural quotient. The subsequent paragraphs emphasize the sensitization of cross-cultural possibilities and enlist the various drivers that enable intercultural diversity in an HEI. Also, the impact on interpersonal relationships, cultural identities, experiences is illustrated. The third section gives the methodology adopted for the study. The fourth section provides the data with analysis and its findings. Lastly, the paper reveals the implications and benefits of teaching cultural intelligence through curriculum-based courses on cross-cultural management. The section gives the path forward to probable research areas in this domain [5].

Literature Review

Internationalization has been an accepted phenomenon rather than a popular choice in the higher education sector since globalization. It has spread its scope and modes of operation since then. Students opted for cross-national mobility for better learning opportunities, while professors have ventured into new countries for teaching, research, or collaboration. On the other hand, India is also home to 70000 foreign nationals per year [6]. Though India stands at the 26th position as a preferred study destination, most of the foreign nationals are attracted to study for its engaging curriculum, cost-effective living and educational choices, rich cultural heritage, emerging markets experience, English language as a mode of communication, etc. (Destination India,2019). The significant implication of international mobility is a non-cohesive, culturally diverse classroom(Ludwikowska, K.,2014). There is a beautiful mix of people from different nations, ethnicities, languages, gender identity, beliefs, and religions. This practically challenges the traditional teaching &learning environment developed in any University.

Drivers of Academic Mobility under Gats (General Agreement on Trade in Services) Leading To Cultural Intelligence

Under the GATS agreement, all the countries can facilitate the movement of programs, consumers, and services across borders (OECD, 2004, National Education Association,2004). The countries, who are the members of WTO, under the GATS agreement, implement via following options:

Cross Border Supply

All the distance education courses(e-learning) and franchising of courses and degrees fall under this category. The consumer or the education provider may not require undertaking the physical movement. Universities offer high quality and affordable programs through digital platforms, e.g., MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), a recently popular COIL model (known as Collaborative Online International Learning Model), LMS system (Learning Management Systems), OER (Open Education Resources), Coursera, Edx, Udacity, Indian Government initiated SWAYAM, MITOCW, NPTEL, etc. Academic, industrial and research Collaborations help strengthen the quality of such programs [7].

Consumption Abroad

In this category, the students or stakeholders, or consumers move across borders (mobility):

The HEIs adapt to various vehicles to facilitate and enhance internationalization through activity approach and quality approach [8]. Student and faculty mobility support systems are developed across borders through popular frameworks like DAAD, UKERI, Erasmus+, Obama-Singh Initiative, Fulbright grants, Study India Programs, Study Tours (Yeravdekar, V.R., and Tiwari, G., 2014). The full-time international students seek degrees through embassy scholarships (EDCIL, Asia Foundation), Government scholarships (ICCR Study in India SII), University-funded scholarships, etc. Global student mobility can be achieved through branch campuses across borders,   collaborative academic agreements within foreign universities, special degree programs for international students, offering English language-based programs and degrees (Altbach, P.G., Knight Jane, 2007). The presence of natural persons-academia or researchers temporarily travels across borders to provide educational services, attend conferences, conventions, symposiums being prevalent academic mobility vehicles (Yeravdekar, V.R., and Tiwari, G., 2017)

(Destination India,2020) [9]. The corporate sector also utilizes these opportunities for interaction with diverse cultures. The expatriate population existing in an ecosystem fosters diversity in cultures.

Commercial Presence

 In this category, the educational facilities are established in foreign countries as offshore campuses in a joint venture with local institutions. A prominent study about the possibilities of establishing Education Hubs is an essential addition to the literature (Yeravdekar, V.R. &Tiwari, G (2014). Doha is a well-established Education Hub of the Middle East. Indian HEIs like Bits Pilani, Dubai, and S.P. Jain Global Management program in Singapore & Dubai have also established their footprint on foreign shores [10]. In the era of family-owned and managed universities, it is found that focus on international student diversity plays a vital role in the enhancement of cultural diversity on campus (Philip Altbach, 2020) infused with capital investment, international partnerships, and a global curriculum.

It is increasingly imperative for students to acquire global competencies in the interconnected world. To be a part of the worldwide workforce, HEI needs to prepare students with a global skillset. One of the critical skill sets required to be a global citizen is interacting with diverse is cultural intelligence. One of the significant attributes sought is cultural adaptability or cultural intelligence (Hannover Research, 2015). The global competencies typically include research mindset, lifelong learning ability, a professional aptitude that will help employability, ethical & socially relevant sustainable professional practices, and contribution to society. To succeed in a globally progressive environment, every student should be adaptable to diverse cultures and have rich perspectives across geographical boundaries irrespective of political ideologies [11]. This is highlighted via cultural intelligence. There is a growing awareness of including cross-cultural or multicultural management courses in the curriculum of degree-seeking programs in HEI.

Furthermore, this will help establish a cultural framework and develop new strategies to evolve in an interconnected world. An acclaimed researcher, Prof. Dr. Fernando Reimers, Global education, Harvard University, developed a model for global competencies (Reimers, F.,2010). It is a tri-dimensional model including a disposition to understand and respect different cultures and possessing fluency in new languages (Reimers, 2010) . A study in interculturality of Higher education specific to South Korea highlights four significant themes in the learning environment [12]. The learning environment is facilitated by using the English language for intercultural personal experiences in the presence of international students and faculty(Jae-Eun Jon,2009).

Measuring-Instruments of Cultural Intelligence

The competencies involved in cross-cultural interactions can be classified based on worldviews, personal traits, attitudes, capabilities, or a combination of these dimensions. The study of literature disseminates unique models based on psychological, behavioral, and performance-based outcomes. The models have helped formulate the metrics towards CQ.

A study on cultural intelligence specific to business was conducted across five countries (Ilan Alon, 2016). This was shown in Austria, the USA, Colombia, Greece, and Spain to explore how the ability to speak different languages, frequency of international travel, and level of education affected the cultural intelligence specific to Business (BCIQ) [13]. BCIQ, developed by Alon, Boulanger, Myers, Taras (2016), is primarily an assessment instrument and a desirable construct for business professionals measuring their attitude, knowledge, and skills in a multicultural environment.

Apart from BCIQ, there are several other instruments to measure cultural competence. The GMI (Javidan& Teagarden, 2011) is for the Global mindset inventory based on three components intellectual capital, social capital& psychological capital. GMI (Global Mindset Inventory invented by Thunderbird School of Global Management at ASU Arizona State University). It is 76 questions derived from psychometric analysis [14]. This assessment toolis used to quantify and predict performance in global leadership. It has established its success across multiple languages with a perspective from 70 countries.

A few more domain-specific instruments include Cultural Intelligence Scale CQS(Early & Ang,2003, Johnson, B.&Buko, S.,2013), IDI known as Intercultural Development Inventory(Hammer, B.et al.,2003), International Cultural Competence ICC(Lily A. Arasaratnam, 2008). A new instrument in intercultural competence, specifically in communication, is created by Arasaratnam in Southern Cross College Australia. The researcher surveyed over 350 sample respondents across different cultures for specific parameters [15].

CQS (Cultural Intelligence Scale) is a construct measuring four primary factors. The distinct CQ capabilities include drive, knowledge, strategy, and action. It is based on 20 questions involving these factors. The study in Ukraine established that CQS transferability could be achieved in different situations in Ukraine (Johnson, B.&Buko, S.,2013). Ang. et al. (2003) developed the multidimensional model of CQ, which is popular till now. It covers four dimensions related to cognitive, metacognitive, motivational & behavioral [16].

GELI (Global Executive Leadership Inventory) examines 12 dimensions of leadership traits. It is an online 360deg leadership assessment tool that gives a benchmark of being a world-class leader. It has 100 questions developed to explore facets like vision,design and alignment strategy, reward recognition and feedback, empower and energize employees, resilient team-spirit, tenacity, stakeholder orientation, emotional quotient, mindset towards global issues, work-life balance, etc. Although it doesn't mention cultural intelligence specifically, the international mindset dimension could be assumed to have including its characteristics (KDVI The Kets De Vries Institute Ltd, 2020).

These instruments will be helpful as diagnostic tools to locate and select the required talent for an organization [17]. There is a high probability of adapting or transferring these instruments to other sectors or countries(Johnson, B.&Buko, S.,2013).

A case study conducted by Ludwikowska(2017) revealed five multicultural competencies necessary for academic teachers. These revolved around the awareness of cultures and understanding of ideologies, biases & prejudices, acceptance of these, and finally adopting different pedagogy suitable to the needs of the diverse student population. This perspective helped the HEI achieve better class performance and also resolve conflicts caused due to regional biases.

An extensive study on multicultural settings was conducted for South Africa's demographic profile of managers (Yvonne du Plessis, 2011) [18]. The study checked the effectiveness of South African Managers using cultural intelligence on parameters like misunderstandings, insulting or awkward moments, relationship conflicts, workplace problems. The questionnaire developed included 3 components of cultural intelligence as a multidimensional construct (Figure 1)viz. Cognitive, Motivational, and Behavioral. The study did conclude that the competency related to cultural intelligence is desirable and valuable in managers to be successful.As per the definition of Cultural Intelligence (Ahn&Ettner, 2013), it comprises mental abilities (Cognitive and Meta-cognitive and a behavioral dimension shown in Table 1.
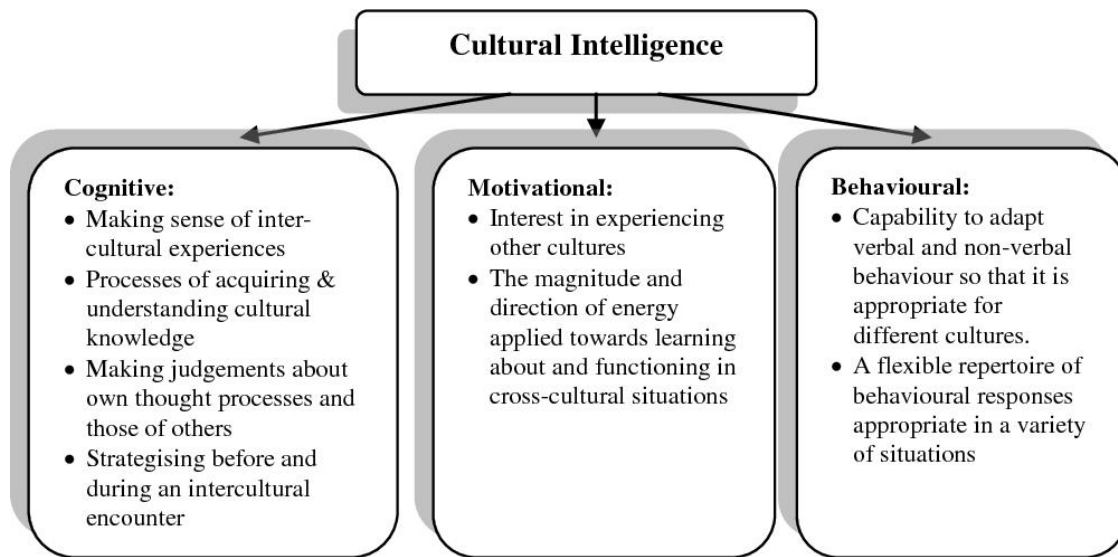
FIGURE 1. Cultural Intelligence model (adapted by Du Plessis et al. 2007 from Earley&Ang 2003; Tan 2004:19–21; Van Dyne &Ang 2005).

TABLE 1. Dimensions of Cultural Intelligence (measured in components of Cultural Quotient CQ)

Components of CQ	Competency description
Metacognitive	Ability to reinvent, revise and monitor the knowledge and understanding of different cultures.
Cognitive	Ability to possess the knowledge and understanding of values, beliefs, traditions, depiction, skills related to other cultures.
Motivational	Ability to enthusiastically learn, comprehend various aspects of cultures, and seeking an opportunity to do so.
Behavioral	Ability to modify behavior that suits cultural interactions by adjusting communication language, tone, speed, gestures, practices, habits, rituals, etc.

Source: Ahn, M. J., &Ettner, L. (2013), Multicultural Education & Technology Journal, 7(1)

Recent developments have shown that positive intercultural management within the community will foster a solution-oriented approach and positively skewed psychology relevant in the Industry4.0 (Barmeyer, Christoph and Mayer, Claude-Hélène,2020).

Research Methodology

Although the research in cultural quotient has long attracted the interest of researchers, little is known on the CQ-metrics and its implications concerning the education sector concerning international of state cultures existing in Indian HEI. Standing on this gap, the paper explores whether the HEIs are preparing culturally aware students through international exposures and does internationalization help in enhancing cultural intelligence components for

international students [19]. The methodology adopted is quantitative, and a questionnaire is administered to content validate the CQ components. The questionnaire is developed to explore all the components of CQ. The sample size is 176 . The respondents are students from various cultural backgrounds studying in different programs.

A descriptive, exploratory research methodology was adopted. A qualitative exploration was done to study various practices adopted in HEI towards internationalization and their impact on cultural competence. Research papers from multiple online databases are sourced. The research published in this domain concerning the countries like Spain, Columbia, the USA, Greece, Australia, South Africa, and India was considered. The in-depth study of the literature helped locate the research gap and identify the factors for a quantitative research study. A quantitative approach in data collection with respondents from HEI was administered in Pune, India. This survey was randomly allocated to 350 students, out of which 176 were valid responses. Respondents were made aware of the objective of the study and its implications. A Cultural Sensitivity scale was developed based on the literature review and discussion with researchers in this domain. For internal consistency and viability using Cronbach Alpha testing, a scale was tested. The coefficient of alpha gave high reliability with a measure of 0.994885. The scale is derived from CQS and is well adapted to the education sector. The ranking covers all components of cultural intelligence, i.e., cognitive (CQ), meta-cognitive(MQ), motivational (MoQ), and behavioral factors(BQ). The partial set of scales used is given as follows(refer to Table 2).

TABLE 2.Measuring Instrument of CQ: Cultural Sensitivity Scale (CS)

Sl.No.	Question	Component Category
1	Do you like to interact with students from other cultures, including foreign countries or different states other than yours?	Q
2	Do you agree that for an organization to succeed, the organization needs to encourage diversity?	CQ, MQ
3	Understanding different cultures, beliefs, traditions, values, and perspectives are significant in successful relationships?	MQ, MoQ
4	How frequently do you make efforts to comprehend the behavior of international students and the students from different states?	BQ, MoQ
5	Have you experienced any awkward situations while dealing with foreign nationals?	BQ
6	Do you like to learn different languages?	MQ, BQ, MoQ
7	Do you like to eat different cuisines?	MQ, BQ, MoQ
8	Do you like to share a meal with international students?	BQ
9	Do you change your behavior(body language/speech/language) according to the people you interact with, especially foreign nationals.?	BQ
10	Do you like to offer a homestay for international students?	BQ, MoQ
11	Do you want to study with international students?	BQ, MoQ

12	Do you think national culture influences the work culture of an organization?	MQ
13	Do you have friends in different countries?	MQ
14	Do you know some values or beliefs related to other cultures or religions?	MQ, CQ
15	I do not consider it offensive to stereotype an international student and do not mind cracking jokes about gender, dressing, eating habits.	BQ, MoQ
16	I tend to exclude foreign nationals from our group/discussion/clubs/parties due to their different culture?	BQ
17	I am tempted to violate other cultures' values in some situations	BQ
18	I feel empathetic towards culturally diverse persons	CS
19	I easily extend help to the foreign students	CS
20	I offer solutions to the issues faced by international students. If it is beyond my scope, I suggest a probable person who can help resolve the problem.	CS

Source: formulated by authors

Data Analysis & Results

The total valid responses were176, of which 81 were female and 95were male respondents with an average age of 20 displayed in Table 3. The demographics of the students are listed in Table 4. The respondents hail from India and different Countries like Ghana, Ethiopia, the USA, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Nepal, Kuwait, Tanzania, etc.

TABLE 3. Summary Statistics of Age of respondents

Age	
Mean	20.59090909
Standard Error	0.232193483
Median	20
Mode	19
Standard Deviation	3.080394645
Sample Variance	9.488831169
Kurtosis	13.77465673
Skewness	3.02392034

Range	23
Minimum	16
Maximum	39
Sum	3624
Count	176

TABLE 4.Demographics of respondents

Student demographics			
Regions(Country/State)	**Number of students**		
Row Labels	**Female**	**Male**	**Grand Total**
Afghanistan	**3**		**3**
Ghor	3		3
Ethiopia		**3**	**3**
Somali		3	3
Ghana		**3**	**3**
Greater Accra Region		3	3
India	**65**	**76**	**141**
BIHAR	2		2
Delhi1	2	6	8
Goa		3	3
Hyderabad		2	2
IN-Mah	1		1
Jammu And Kashmir		2	2
Jharkhand	2		2

Kerala	2		2
Madhya Pradesh		2	2
Maharashtra1	39	31	70
Maharashtra 2	4	9	13
New Delhi2	4		4
Orissa		2	2
Rajasthan		7	7
Telangana	3	5	8
Uttar Pradesh	4	4	8
West Bengal	2	3	5
Gujrat	**2**	**3**	**5**
Maharashtra 3	2	1	3
Uttar Pradesh		2	2
Indonesia	**2**		**2**
Jawa Barat	2		2
Kuwait		**3**	**3**
Salmiya		3	3
Nepal	**5**	**2**	**7**
Bara1	3	1	4
Nuwakot	2	1	3
Nepal	**1**	**1**	**2**
Bara2	1	1	2
Tanzania	**3**	**2**	**5**
Dar-es-Salam	2		2
Ilala	1	2	3
USA		**2**	**2**

Texas		2	2
Grand Total	81	95	176

The descriptive statistics of Cultural Sensitivity (CS) is as in Table5:

TABLE 5. Descriptive Statistics of CS

[I feel empathetic towards culturally diverse persons]		[I easily extend help to the international students]		[I offer solutions to the issues faced by international students. If it is beyond my scope, I suggest a probable person who can help resolve the problem.]	
Mean	3.142045	Mean	4.073864	Mean	4.176136
Standard Error	0.092134	Standard Error	0.066946	Standard Error	0.073754
Median	3	Median	4	Median	4
Mode	3	Mode	4	Mode	5
Standard Deviation	1.22229	Standard Deviation	0.888143	Standard Deviation	0.978453
Sample Variance	1.493994	Sample Variance	0.788799	Sample Variance	0.95737
Kurtosis	-0.70019	Kurtosis	0.564375	Kurtosis	1.988274
Skewness	-0.37007	Skewness	-0.83873	Skewness	-1.39752
Range	4	Range	4	Range	4
Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1
Maximum	5	Maximum	5	Maximum	5
Sum	553	Sum	717	Sum	735
Count	176	Count	176	Count	176

The independent variables are cultural knowledge, cultural understanding, motivation (action-oriented learning), and adaptability. The Cultural sensitivity CS is a dependant variable on these variables. The data analysis reveals a positive correlation between CQ, MQ, MoQ, BQ with CS. The correlation coefficient is 0.7163(Table6).

TABLE 6. Correlation Coefficient

the correlation coefficient between CQ MQ MoQ	*[I like to interact with students from other cultures, including foreign countries or different states other than my own culture?]*	*[I agree with the fact that for an organization to succeed, the organization needs to encourage diversity.]*
[I like to interact with students from other cultures, including foreign countries or different states other than my own culture?]	1	
[I agree with the fact that for an organization to succeed, the organization needs to encourage diversity.]	0.716307032	1

The correlation coefficient is 0.7163 reveals that there is a strong correlation between CQ, MQ, and MoQ in case students are exposed to international experiences.

TABLE 7. Correlation with BQ, MoQ, and CS

correlation with BQ, MoQ, and CS	*[I like to study with international students]*	*[I offer solutions to the issues faced by international students. If it is beyond my scope, I suggest a probable person who can help resolve the problem.]*
[I like to study with international students]	1	

[I offer solutions to the issues faced by international students. If it is beyond my scope, I suggest a probable person who can help resolve the problem.]	0.568330913		1

The correlation coefficient is 0.5683reveals that there is a strong correlation between BQ, MoQ with CS in case students are exposed to international experiences shown in Table 7.

Conclusion And Further Research

Multicultural competence often determines the effectiveness of other quotients in a global setting. The cultural intelligence acquired throughout the student life cycle in an institution helps the student lay the foundation for being a global citizen.The study has revealed the significance of cultural sensitivity amongst students who have experienced internationalization, whether within their campus of HEI or byways of different drivers of internationalization. There is a strong correlation between internationalized experiences of the student and the exhibit of cultural sensitivity and hence the presence of a significant Cultural Quotient. The measuring scale Cultural sensitivity CS has proven to be a good measurement of cultural quotient within the HEI student fraternity that offers diverse internationalization ways. The presented study is a small step in the vast interdisciplinary research field and will require further research. The other research can steer towards capacity building in cultural sensitivity, the teachers' efficacy to impart knowledge in a culturally sensitive environment, measurement of the impact of CQ on specific cognitive abilities, etc.

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