Students' Perceptions of Culturally Sensitive Classrooms: A Case Study of Delhi Schools

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Abstract

India is known for its motto of unity in diversity. Delhi classrooms are mirrors of this diversity. The researchers, being in the capacity of teachers and educators, received regular feedback from trainee teachers regarding the classroom environment of secondary schools in Delhi. During those feedback sessions and in submitted reports on reflections, there were frequent entries on cultural alienation and cultural clashes. These entries forced the researchers to study the status of cultural sensitivity in secondary classrooms in Delhi. The study discusses the perceptions of students regarding their own cultural identity, their peers' cultural identity, and shared experiences of cultural alienation, bullying, or conflicts in their classrooms. The study also discusses students' expectations of their teachers in creating culturally sensitive classrooms. This is a descriptive study. Ex post-facto survey design was chosen for the study of culturally sensitive classrooms. The sample consists of 445 students in 12 schools in Delhi (five public and seven private). The self-prepared questionnaire for students called the Cultural Sensitivity Questionnaire for Students (CSQS) with CVR 0.68 was used as the tool. The study concluded that cultural alienation, bullying, and conflicts occur because of mutual ignorance of each other's culture.

Keywords: Cultural Alienation, Cultural Bullying, Cultural Conflicts, Cultural Identity, Culturally Sensitive Classrooms.

Abstrak

India dikenal dengan moto persatuan dalam keberagamannya. Ruang kelas di Delhi merupakan cermin dari keragaman ini. Peneliti yang berada dalam kapasitas sebagai pendidik guru mendapatkan umpan balik secara teratur dari para guru peserta pelatihan mengenai lingkungan kelas di sekolah-sekolah menengah di Delhi. Selama sesi umpan balik tersebut dan laporan yang dikirimkan mengenai refleksi, sering kali terdapat masukan mengenai keterasingan budaya & bentrokan budaya. Masukan-masukan ini memaksa para peneliti untuk mempelajari status sensitivitas budaya di kelas-kelas sekolah menengah di Delhi. Penelitian ini berusaha untuk mengedepankan persepsi para siswa mengenai identitas budaya mereka sendiri, identitas budaya rekan-rekan mereka dan pengalaman bersama mengenai keterasingan budaya, intimidasi atau bentrokan di kelas mereka. Penelitian ini juga menyoroti harapan siswa dari guru mereka dalam menciptakan ruang kelas yang peka budaya. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif. Desain survei expost-facto dipilih untuk ruang kelas yang peka terhadap pembelajaran. Sampel terdiri dari 445 siswa di 12 (5 sekolah negeri dan 7 sekolah swasta) di Delhi. Kuesioner yang disiapkan sendiri untuk siswa yang disebut Kuesioner Kepekaan Budaya untuk Siswa (CSQS) dengan CVR 0,68 digunakan sebagai alat. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa, keterasingan budaya, intimidasi dan bentrokan muncul sebagai hasil dari ketidaktahuan terhadap budaya masing-masing.

Kata Kunci: *Bentrokan Budaya, Identitas Budaya, Keterasingan Budaya, Perundungan Budaya, Ruang Kelas Yang Peka Budaya.*

Introduction

India seems to be a homogenized mass of humanity, but it is possibly the oldest melting pot in the world, with a diverse populations that can be classified into caste, religion, language, and gender. Ironically, owing to these distinctions, every Indian is a member of a minority group. Indian culture is diversified and fluid. The Hindu system itself creates a matrix in which integration

is feasible because of its inherent multiplicity and tolerance. Several immigrant groups, such as the Parsis, Baha'is, and others, have complemented Indian culture while also becoming more and more integrated into it, like sugar in milk. India is incredibly resilient because of the extensive dDiaspora of Indians.[1] [2]

The cultural plurality and religious harmony of India are mirrored in Delhi, the country's capital. Delhi's culture and religion is difficult to categorise. People from all across India are constantly moving in; thus cultural diversity is prominent. The blending of many cultures, customs, and faiths imported from all around India has given Delhi a kaleidoscopic character. The same is true within the schools of Delhi, where cultural diversity is a natural component and context of the classrooms. Classrooms with more diversity should be recognised and appreciated. But the interactions between instructors and students may be impacted by the accompanying cultural differences. Too much diversity frequently causes cultural identities to get muddled, which in turn can lead to cultural alienation, cultural disparities, and cultural conflicts.[3] [4] These disagreements and disputes are also apparent in classes. What happens when cultural differences between students and teachers make it difficult for them to communicate with one another and compromise their relationships? This is a challenging and occasionally painful subject. How can we handle it? We must first comprehend the definition of culture in order to grasp the essence of this issue.

"Culture is [...] the core of who we are and how we exist in the world," writes Hollins.[5] Barrett (2009) defines culture as "the set of learned beliefs, rituals, and behavioural patterns that are shared among members of each human civilization," as cited in Hollins.[6] "Culture or Civilization" is a complex totality that comprises of knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, traditions , and other characteristics and habits acquired by a human being as a member of society. A person's sense of belonging to a specific culture or community is referred to as their cultural identity. Lustig[7] adds that a person's sense of self is strongly influenced by their cultural identities. Since cultural identities "are fundamental, dynamic, and diverse components of one's self idea." The "web of identity" according to Livesey[8] is an illustration of the intricate and multi-layered relationship between identity and social structure. People live with little alternatives open to them while making decisions since they are surrounded by strong societal pressures.
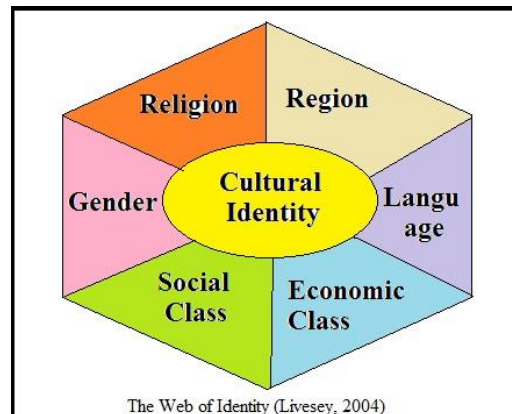

Figure 2. Web of Identity

[1] Narayan Gopalkrishnan, "India: A Country Report," *Nation State and Ethnic Diversity* (2013): 19–36.

[2] Robert L Hardgrave Jr, "The Challenge of Ethnic Conflict: India-The Dilemmas of Diversity," *Journal of Democracy* 4, no. 4 (1993): 54–68.

[3] James A Banks and Cherry A McGee Banks, *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives* (John Wiley & Sons, 2019).

[4] James A Banks, *Cultural Diversity and Education: Foundations, Curriculum, and Teaching* (Routledge, 2015).

[5] Etta R Hollins, "Relating Ethnic and Racial Identity Development to Teaching," in *Racial and Ethnic Identity in School Practices* (Routledge, 1999), 193–204.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Myron W Lustig, Jolene Koester, and Rona Halualani, *Intercultural Competence: Interpersonal Communication across Cultures* (Pearson/A and B Boston, 2006).

[8] C Livesey, "Culture and Identity: Sociological Pathways," *Journal of Sociology. http://www. sociology. org. uk/pathway2. htm* (2008).

"It is my hypothesis that the basic source of conflict in this new world will not be essentially ideological or principally economic," says Huntington in his 1993 paper for Foreign Affairs.[9] Cultural differences will be the leading source of conflict and the foundation of the greatest alienation within humanity. The "differences" are the primary cause of a cultural conflict. It denotes differences across civilizations and sets them apart from one another in terms of their own histories, languages, cultures, traditions, and—most importantly—religions. These are the legacy of generations, and they will vanish very soon. In addition, language reveals a person's culture, regard for others, and sense of belonging.[10]

Michelle LeBaron asserts that culture has a significant influence on "name, fame, blame, and attempts to tame tensions." He continues, "Cultures are like subsurface rivers that flow through our lives and relationships, delivering messages that affect our perceptions, attributions, judgements, and concepts of self and other." What is typical for one group may strike another as unusual, paradoxical, or incorrect. Despite its strength, education frequently acts as an unconscious mediator, subtly affecting attempts at conflict resolution.[11]

Culture and education are two complicated phenomena with a causal relationship that resembles the "chicken or the eEgg" paradox.[12] [13]

Culture is a civilisation's way of life, and education is the mechanism through which cultural heritage is passed down from generation to generation. In reality, the substance of educational programmes is shaped by society's culture. The development of identity as an integrative notion occurs between the self and the social environment. The processes of forming an identity and of learning academic material overlap and support one another since this particular "point" has developmental and learning implications. The higher the quality of the academic material, the easier it will be for a student to form a character that will lead to the formation of a strong identity.

In a culturally sensitive classroom, both students and teachers acknowledge, embrace, appreciate, and capitalise on diversity to enhance the educational process. Everyone, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, financial background, sexual orientation, or political convictions, are encouraged to establish personal connections and master useful intercultural skills. This is achieved by fostering a culturally sensitive learning environment. Garcia[14] provided some practical suggestions for creating a learning environment that appreciates cultural plurality, respect for others, and inclusion.
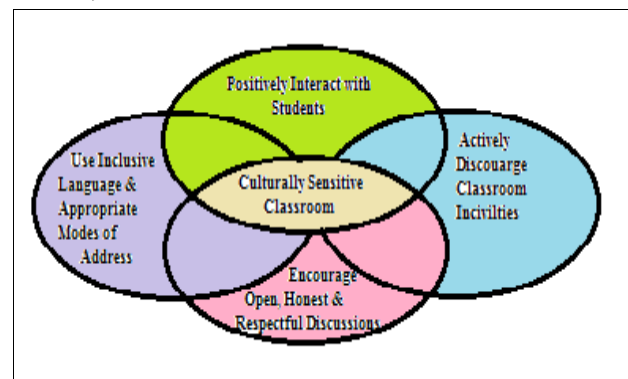
Figure 2. Garcia, E.[15]: Recommended strategies to assist with creating a culturally sensitive classroom

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[9] Samuel P Huntington, "Why International Primacy Matters," *International security* 17, no. 4 (1993): 68–83.

[10] Hilma Pami Putri, Widya Syafitri, and Febria Sri Artika, "Language Relativity of the SumandoTribute in Pariaman Culture," in *BiCED| Bukittinggi International Conference on Education*, vol. 1, 2019.

[11] Michelle LeBaron, *Bridging Cultural Conflicts: A New Approach for a Changing World* (Jossey-Bass, 2003).

[12] Filiz Meşeci Giorgetti, Craig Campbell, and Ali Arslan, "Culture and Education: Looking Back to Culture through Education," *Paedagogica Historica* (Taylor & Francis, 2017).

[13] Catherine Lammert et al., "Is Epistemic Orientation the Chicken or the Egg in Professional Development for Knowledge Generation Approaches?," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 116 (2022): 103747.

[14] Eugene E García, *Understanding and Meeting the Challenge of Student Cultural Diversity* (Houghton Mifflin, 1994).
[15] Ibid.

Thus, culturally sensitive classrooms is a major desiderata. But do they actually exist? The researcher received regular input about the learning environment in Delhi secondary schools from trainee teachers while serving as a teacher educator. These inputs often originated from five key observations and reflections on student participation in the classroom: 1) Language used in student-student conversations inside and outside of classrooms; 2) Language used by teachers and students during conversations inside and outside of schools; 3) Observations of pupils playing both inside and outside of classrooms; 4) Teacher-led classroom management techniques; 5) Teachers' strategies for managing co-curricular activities.

During those feedback sessions and submitted reports on their reflections, there were frequent entries on cultural alienation and cultural clashes. Every teacher trainee had an incident to tell regarding cultural alienation or even cultural bullying. The language of the observation studies conducted by student teachers inside and outside of the classrooms raise serious concerns about the relationship between cultural identification and insensitive bullying.

The majority of research on learning in multicultural classrooms focuses on how well kids from various cultural backgrounds perform academically and linguistically at the elementary and secondary education levels.[16] [17] [18] Very few studies investigate how cultural diversity affects the interactions between teachers and students, as well as the teaching and learning processes. According

to certain studies[19] [20] [21], collaborative learning is used by teachers and students in settings that values cultural diversity and competency. These studies analysed current practices and student and teacher views. They found that children in a multicultural classroom are primarily concerned with their own performance, which leads to poor peer collaboration. Nonetheless, teachers do not appear to be conscious of their own influence over students' conduct or the impact of students' cultural backgrounds on group learning activities.

However, several studies have regarded the issue from the viewpoint of the teachers. In their study on the increasing cultural diversity in the classroom, Ladson and Billing [22] came to the conclusion that society expects from their teachers to acclimatise their knowledge, skills, and perceptions to the challenges that emerge in diverse contexts to stimulate the learning of all students in their classes. Schools also need to be aware of the unique needs of students from different cultures and know how to create a conducive learning environment and be aware of interpersonal cues in order to foster a good learning environment and meet their needs.[23] In addition, teachers in diverse classrooms must be conscious of the fact that pupils from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds have certain requirements that must be met in order to prevent

[16] Mariëtte de Haan and Ed Elbers, "Peer Tutoring in a Multiethnic Classroom in the Netherlands: A Multiperspective Analysis of Diversity," *Comparative education review* 49, no. 3 (2005): 365–388.

[17] Maaike Hajer, "Kleurrijke Gesprekken. Interactie in Een Multiculturele School." (2003).

[18] Maaike Hajer, Yvonne Leeman, and Carol Van Nijnatten, "Interactie in de Multiculturele Klas: Inleiding Op Het Themadeel," *Pedagogiek* 22, no. 2 (2002): 125–130.

[19] Hester Radstake, *Teaching in Diversity: Teachers and Pupils about Tense Situations in Ethnically Heterogeneous Classes* (Garant Antwerp/Apeldoorn, 2009).

[20] Hajer, "Kleurrijke Gesprekken. Interactie in Een Multiculturele School."

[21] Kennedy Tielman et al., "Collaborative Learning in Multicultural Classrooms: A Case Study of Dutch Senior Secondary Vocational Education," *Journal of Vocational Education & Training* 64, no. 1 (2012): 103–118.

[22] Gloria Ladson-Billings, "Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy," *American educational research journal* 32, no. 3 (1995): 465–491.

[23] Theo Wubbels et al., "Teacher Interpersonal Competence for Dutch Secondary Multicultural Classrooms," *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice* 12, no. 4 (2006): 407–433.

cultural confrontations or alienation in the classroom.[24]

Teachers in multicultural classrooms frequently deal with conflicts involving pupils from various origins. Teachers might benefit from more sensitivity to multicultural issues in order to better handle such situations as their skills in this regard are frequently poorly developed. [25] [26]

These responses have compelled the researcher to address the issue of cultural sensitivity in Delhi's secondary schools. The study presents the students' perception of their own cultural identity, their peers' cultural identity, the shared experiences of cultural alienation, and bullying or clash in their classrooms. The study also brings to light students' expectations of their teachers in creating culturally sensitive classrooms.

This study will offer an overview of the level of cultural variety in Delhi's secondary classrooms. The researcher then focuses on students' perceptions of their own cultural identity and that of their peers. The study then critically evaluates students' behaviours and experiences in relation to the status of cultural diversity and cultural sensitivity in the classroom setting. Thus the objectives of study are 1) to explore the status of cultural diversity in secondary classrooms of Delhi; 2) to explore students' perspective regarding their own cultural identity and that of their peers; 3) to provide insight into the actual practice and experiences of culturally diverse classrooms of Delhi.

By taking into account students' perspectives on cultural sensitivity and examining how students

see instructors' roles in relation to cultural sensitivity in classrooms, this study aims to provide a fresh perspective on the issue.

Research Method

This study is a descriptive research. Survey design of the ex-post-facto type was adopted for the study. The empirical part of the research is structured as follows. At first, the 8th-grade students and their teachers were carefully observed by trainee teachers during their PSE sessions, keeping in mind the strategies they were using to tackle cultural diversity. These open observations serve as the basis for the questionnaires.

The sample consists of 445 students in 12 (six public and seven private) schools of Delhi. The Detail Diversification of Sample is as follows:

Table 1. The Detail Diversifiation of Sample

Cultural Identity	Sample Diversification	Total (445 students)
Gender Diversity	Male: Female	243:202
School Diversity	Public: Private School	191:254
Regional Diversity	Delhi:Punjab:Harayana: Uttar Pradesh:others	264:67:48:44:22
Religion Diversity	Hindu:Muslim:Sikh:othe rs	295:65:53:32
Caste Diversity	General: other	239:206
Language Diversity	Hindi:Punjabi:Harayanvi :others	306:72:45:22

The prepared questionnaire for students, which is called the Cultural Sensitivity Questionnaire for Students (CSQS), consists of following components:

1. Students' perception of their own cultural identity.
2. Students' perception about their peers' cultural identity.
3. Students' experience of cultural alienation, tension, conflicts in classrooms.

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[24] Perry Den Brok, Dolly van Eerde, and Maaike Hajer, "Classroom Interaction Studies as a Source for Teacher Competencies: The Use of Case Studies with Multiple Instruments for Studying Teacher Competencies in Multicultural Classes," *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice* 16, no. 6 (2010): 717–733.

[25] Ladson-Billings, "Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy."

[26] Radstake, *Teaching in Diversity: Teachers and Pupils about Tense Situations in Ethnically Heterogeneous Classes.*

4. Students' perception of the teachers' role in creating culturally sensitive classrooms.

Each category consists of four items (three closed-ended, i.e. Likert scale questions, and one open-ended question) on students' perceptions. Questionnaire items are finalised after testing on 25 students. Its content validity i.e. CPR was calculated to be 0.68. Scores were used to compare responses to individual questionnaire items. All responses were coded in a three-point Likert scale arrangement. The open-ended questions were administered on frequency and percentage. ultural identity was defined through six components: 1) Regional identity (Delhi, Punjab, Harayana, Uttar Pradesh, others); 2) Religious identity (Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, others); 3) Caste identity (general: other); 4) Language identity (Hindi, Punjabi, Harayanvi, others); 5) Gender identity (male: female); 6) School identity (public, private).

Findings and Discussion
Finding
Category 1: Students' perception of their own cultural identity

Table 2. Students' Perception of Their Own Cultural Identity

Question	%Age
Know their own cultural identity.	76 %
Can define their own cultural identity.	61%
Understands the prejudice attached to their own cultural identity.	49%
Attitude towards their cultural identity	
• Proud	27%
• Indifferent	43%
• Shameful	19%
• Do not know	11%

This finding implies that the majority of the students know and can define their cultural identity in all the six terms (region, religion, caste, gender, school identity, and mother tongue). Forty-nine percent of students can even explain the prejudice attached to their cultural identity.

Forty-three percent of them were quite indifferent to their cultural identity but a substantial number of students i.e. 27% were proud and 19% were shameful of their cultural identity.

Category 2: Students' perception about their peers' cultural identity.

Table 3. Students' Perception of Their Peers' Cultural Identity

Question	%Age
Know the cultural identity of their peers.	56 %
Can define their peers' cultural identity.	41%
Understand the prejudice attached to their peers cultural identity.	29%
Attitude towards their peers Cultural Identity	
• Superiority complex	26%
• Indifferent	48%
• Inferiority complex	20%
• Go not know	6%

This finding implies that the majority of students know and can define the cultural identity of their peers in all the six terms (region, religion, caste, gender, school identity, and mother tongue). Only 29% students can even explain the prejudice attached to the cultural identity of their peers. 48% of them were quite indifferent to the cultural identity of their peers but a substantial number of students i.e. 26% showed superiority complex and 20% showed inferiority complex towards the cultural identity of their peers.

Category 3: Students' experience of cultural alienation, tension, or conflicts in Classrooms

Table 4. Students' Experience of Cultural Alienation, Tension, or Conflicts in Classrooms

Question	Never	Occasionally	Frequently
Faced cultural alienation from peers	29%	63%	8 %
Faced cultural bullying from peers	33%	56%	11 %

Faced cultural clash with peers	14%	77%	9%
Reason for cultural alienation, tension, clash in classrooms	• Ignorance about other cultures		31%
	• Superiority complex		28%
	• Inferiority complex		12%
	• Group dynamics		
			29%

This finding shows that the majority of students have faced cultural alienation, bullying, and occasionally clash in their classrooms. Despite the rarity of the experience, most people can recall at least one occurrence or more. According to students, ignorance about each other's culture is the main reason for these clashes. But many admitted that sociometric compulsion i.e. the desire to be a part of the group sometimes lead to such clashes. These clashes mainly occur due to superiority and inferiority complexes which lead to the formation of subgroups according to common cultural identities.

Category 4: Students' perception of teachers' role in creating culturally sensitive classrooms

Table 5. Students' Perception of Teachers' Role in Creating Culturally Sensitive Classrooms

Questions	Never	Occasionally	Frequently
Faced cultural alienation from teachers	67%	23%	10%
Faced cultural bullying from teachers	73%	21%	6%
Role of teachers in resolving cultural Alienation, tension, and conflicts in classrooms	**Pacifies** 51%	**Ignorant** 42%	**Misguides** 7%
Suggestion for Teachers in resolving cultural alienation, tension, and conflicts in classrooms	• Provide orientation about other cultures		43%
	• Provide equal opportunities to all		42%
	• Empathetic towards cultural minorities in the classroom		15%

This finding shows that majority of the students see teachers as the main stakeholders in creating culturally sensitive classrooms. Although the majority of students (51%) believed that the teachers' role is to be a pacifier in cultural clashes and that their teachers should never be part of any form of cultural alienation (67%) or bullying (73%), few pointed out that there were many biased teachers. There were a few testimonies by students who claimed that teachers also engaged in cultural bullying. Generally, students pointed out that during cultural conflicts in the classroom, the teachers' ignorant behaviour tended to cause more damage, because students would take matters in their own hand and this proved fatal.

Discussion
Students' perception of their own cultural identity

Simply put, one's sense of belonging to a group of people who are similar to you is your cultural identity. This is frequently the result of common traits including birthplace, customs, behaviours, and beliefs. One's cultural identity is also shaped through food, music, and art. This study suggests that the majority of students are familiar with and are adept at defining their cultural identity in each of the six terms (i.e., region, religion, caste, gender, school identity, and mother tongue).

By learning to value and respect individuals who are different, one can have the cultural awareness to remove barriers between cultures and to foster cross-cultural understanding. Understanding oneself and one's own culture will help one to relate to people from other cultural backgrounds more effectively.

Similar research on a small sample of self-reports by novice student researchers shows that acquiring intercultural competence involves steps such as acknowledging hesitation and fear, bringing stereotypes to light and challenging them,

keeping an eye on feelings and emotions, sorting through confusion, and tackling complexity.[27]

Students' perception about their peers' cultural identity

The ability to relate and engage with people from different cultural backgrounds effectively is developed through critically examining our own biases and preconceptions. Being aware of one's own biases is a crucial first step in developing cultural competency.

This suggests that the majority of students are familiar with and are adept at defining their peers' cultural identities in terms of the aforementioned six criteria.

Another study showed that students' cross-cultural interactions are significantly influenced by their language ability, academic aptitude, and cohort characteristics. The findings also imply that the quality of close peers' experiences in culturally varied groups may have an impact on students' own views of cross-cultural interactions (the extended contact effect).[28]

Students' Experience regarding cultural alienation, tension, and conflicts in classrooms

The results of this study suggest that the majority of students have experienced cultural alienation, bullying, and occasionally hostile interactions in the classroom. Even though the event is uncommon, the majority remembered at least one or more of the occurrences. Students claimed that cultural misunderstanding is the main cause of these conflicts. However, many acknowledged that sometimes these conflicts were caused by sociometric compulsion, or the need to

fit in the group. The superiority and inferiority complexes, which causes subgroups to develop based on shared cultural identities, is the primary cause of clashes. Furthermore, when teachers disregard the cultural roots of their pupils' classroom behaviour, cultural conflicts may also take place.

It is obvious that current research on students' cultural alienation must take into account the significant improvement that some educational systems and schools have undergone in recent decades, including higher flexibilities in terms of learning and instruction, specialised support for disadvantaged children and their families, and counselling services. However, current research on student cultural alienation must also look into possible solutions for the issues that remain unresolved.[29]

Borrero et al have identified five emerging themes that highlight cultural assets and experiences that come with being the "other" at school: multiple identities, stereotypes, racism, coping mechanisms for racism, and cultural pride. They analyse these findings from an ecological and relationally-informed perspective on community and cultural assets that are reciprocal and interactive, as well as how they connect to our notion of "othering." They also encourage educators and researchers to create opportunities that support and build on the students' innate skills in the classroom.[30]

Students' perception of the teachers' role in creating culturally sensitive classrooms

Cultural identity is an important aspect to be considered since the method of teaching might vary according to their cultural expectations. Each

[27] Prue Holmes and Gillian O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating Intercultural Competence: Ethnographies of Intercultural Encounters," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 36, no. 5 (2012): 707–718.

[28] Karen Kimmel and Simone Volet, "University Students' Perceptions of and Attitudes towards Culturally Diverse Group Work: Does Context Matter?," *Journal of Studies in International Education* 16, no. 2 (2012): 157–181.

[29] Tina Hascher and Andreas Hadjar, "School Alienation–Theoretical Approaches and Educational Research," *Educational Research* 60, no. 2 (2018): 171–188.

[30] Noah E Borrero et al., "School as a Context for 'Othering' Youth and Promoting Cultural Assets," *Teachers college record* 114, no. 2 (2012): 1–37.

different culture might require different activities and strategies to make learners interested in lessons.

Traditional educational approaches frequently fall short of promoting the success of all students equally, but culturally responsive teaching does just that. Language hurdles, institutionalised discrimination, and a lack of diversity are all problems that arise in classrooms when students' cultural backgrounds are not carefully taken into account.

This result suggests that the majority of students view teachers as the key stakeholders in developing culturally aware classrooms. There were a few student narrators who highlighted their culturally insensitive teachers as well. However, students typically emphasised that during any cultural confrontation in the classroom, teachers' insensitive behaviour causes greater harm because at that point, students took matters into their own hands, which proved fatal.

To create culturally sensitive classrooms, students suggested that teachers provide more opportunities for them to know each other's culture. Knowing each other's traditions could bridge the gap. For this, teachers have to play an active role; they cannot be mere spectators. Rather, they must initiate dialogue among peers regarding cultural prejudice. Moreover, efforts to generate empathy towards cultural minorities will help those who are most vulnerable.

We also take into account students' perceptions of diverse classrooms in the United States that employ varying degrees of culturally relevant practices. The findings show broad support for culturally sensitive teaching in regular classrooms (62% female, 25% White, 25% Latino, 25% African American, and 25% Asian).[31]

Many students from diverse cultural backgrounds struggle in school, and a disproportionate number end up in special education classrooms and environments. The amount to which cultural differences, including cultural clashes, contribute to these problems must be taken into account by educators and administrators.[32]

If teachers adopt a strengths-based strategy and integrate cultural relevancy into all aspects of the classroom, learners from diverse cultural backgrounds will succeed in both their academic and social endeavours. All educators need a solid foundation in understanding the numerous communities they serve as well as the pupils who come from various cultural backgrounds.

Conclusion

Diversity in the classroom is one of India's greatest strengths at a time when the educational system is under close scrutiny and criticism from many quarters. India is renowned for its slogan, "Unity in Diversity." Delhi's schools reflect this diversity. Each student in Delhi is a member several cultural groups that are distinguished in terms of region of origins, religion, caste, gender, mother tongue, and school identity. The only thing our society will achieve by disregarding cultural variations among our pupils is conflict and tension. On the other hand, if we decide to embrace and appreciate this diversity, we will discover that it is a precious asset for our classrooms.

The purpose of this study is to address the problem of cultural sensitivity in Delhi's multi-ethnic and diverse classrooms. The research presented students' impressions of their own cultural identification, the cultural identity of their classmates, and their common experiences of cultural alienation, bullying, or conflict in their

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[31] Christy M Byrd, "Does Culturally Relevant Teaching Work? An Examination from Student Perspectives," *Sage Open* 6, no. 3 (2016): 2158244016660744.

[32] Donna Y Ford and Cathy D Kea, "Creating Culturally Responsive Instruction: For Students' and Teachers' Sakes," *Focus on Exceptional Children* 41, no. 9 (2009): 1–16.

classes. The report also highlighted the expectations that students have of their teachers in terms of fostering culturally sensitive learning environments. The researcher was pleasantly delighted to see that students were fairly open and prepared to comment on their own cultural identities as well as those of their peers. Students were even fairly reflective about the bias they harboured against one another's cultural identities, which was the source of misunderstandings.

The study drew the conclusion that ignorance about one another's cultures is what causes cultural alienation, bullying, and conflicts. We develop a false superiority and inferiority complexes in our minds when we are uninformed about other cultures. In this regard, teachers can play a crucial role in establishing culturally sensitive classrooms. Teachers can create an atmosphere in which students can 1) learn about one another's cultural identities, attitudes, beliefs, conceptions, and misconceptions; 2) participate in one another's cultural customs and celebrations for greater understanding; 3) become conscious of their own cultural prejudices and overcome any superiority or inferiority complexes; 4) learn to empathize with members of other cultures, resulting in classrooms that are culturally sensitive.

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