The Role of Cultural Intelligence on Secondary School Students' Behavioral Development

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Abstract

The growing cultural diversity in school classrooms has increased the need to understand factors influencing students' behavior. Cultural Intelligence (CQ) enables individuals to function effectively in multicultural environments and may play a significant role in students' developmental outcomes. The present study aimed to examine the levels of cultural intelligence and behavioral development among secondary school students. Cultural intelligence refers to the ability to understand and adapt to culturally diverse situations, while behavioral development includes social adjustment, emotional regulation, and cooperative behavior. A descriptive research design was adopted for the study. Population of this study was secondary school students in Champawat district in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand The sample consisted 50 students,25 male,25 female selected through random sampling. The sample consisted of 50 secondary school students selected using an appropriate sampling technique. Standardized tools were used to measure cultural intelligence and behavioral development. The collected data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and t-test.The findings revealed that the cultural intelligence of secondary school students was below the average level, and the obtained t-value was not statistically significant at the 0.05 level, leading to the rejection of the related hypothesis. The results also showed that the behavioral development of students was at an average level, and the corresponding hypothesis was rejected due to the non-significant t-value. Overall, the study indicates that secondary school students require greater educational support to enhance cultural awareness and positive behavioral skills.

Keywords: Cultural Intelligence, Behavioral Development, Secondary School Students

Introduction

Secondary Education represents a vital stage in the development of students' behavioral and cognitive capacities, as adolescence involves rapid social, emotional, and intellectual changes. During this period, learners develop attitudes, values, emotional control, and advanced thinking skills. In culturally diverse societies, secondary school students frequently interact with peers from varied cultural backgrounds, which shapes their behavior and patterns of thinking. Cultural intelligence, the ability to recognize, understand, and adapt effectively to cultural differences, supports students in managing such interactions. Enhancing cultural intelligence among secondary school students may foster positive behavioral development and stronger thinking skills, making it necessary to examine its role through empirical research to inform educational practice and policy.

Concept of Cultural Intelligence

Cultural intelligence means the ability of a person to understand, adjust, and act effectively in situations where people belong to different cultural backgrounds. It includes four main aspects. Metacognitive cultural intelligence refers to being aware of one's own cultural thinking and adjusting it during interactions. Cognitive cultural intelligence involves knowledge about different cultures, such as customs, values, and social rules. Motivational cultural intelligence reflects interest, confidence, and willingness to interact with people from other cultures. Behavioral cultural intelligence refers to the ability to change verbal and non-verbal behavior according to cultural situations. All these aspects together influence students' behavior and thinking.

Behavioral Development of Secondary School Students

Behavioral development during the secondary school stage includes the growth of social skills, emotional control, cooperation, discipline, and respect for others. Adolescence is a period when students learn to manage emotions and develop healthy relationships. Students with higher cultural intelligence generally show more empathy, tolerance, and

positive social behavior. Cultural intelligence helps students understand cultural differences, which reduces prejudice and promotes harmony among peers.

Role of Cultural Intelligence in Behavioral Development

Cultural intelligence plays an important role in improving students' behavior and thinking skills. It helps students adjust their behavior in culturally diverse environments and supports the development of critical and creative thinking. Students with high cultural intelligence are better at maintaining positive relationships, showing ethical behavior, and solving problems effectively. These qualities are important for academic success as well as social development.

Need and Significance of the Study

With increasing cultural diversity in schools, secondary school students often face difficulties in social adjustment and communication. If cultural differences are not properly understood, behavioral problems and limited thinking skills may develop. Studying cultural intelligence can help teachers plan effective teaching strategies that promote positive behavior and higher-order thinking skills. This study is significant because it provides empirical evidence on the role of cultural intelligence in the behavioral and cognitive development of secondary school students.

Review related Literature

Cultural intelligence (CQ) refers to an individual's capacity to function effectively and manage situations in culturally diverse environments, as proposed by (Earley & Ang 2003) This concept aligns with the idea of general intelligence, which emphasizes the ability to understand abstract concepts, reason logically, and solve problems. Cultural intelligence is grounded in the growing focus on practical, real-world forms of intelligence. This perspective has led to the identification of different types of intelligence that relate to specific domains, such as social intelligence, which highlights the ability to understand and respond appropriately to social situations (Thomdike & Stein, 1937).

It is essential to prepare future generations with cultural intelligence so that they can effectively respond to increasing cultural challenges related to race, social class, gender, politics, and religion. According to Goh (2012), educational systems must integrate cultural intelligence into their curricula in order to prepare learners for participation in a global society. He emphasized that the focus in teacher education has moved away from questioning the importance of cultural intelligence toward identifying effective ways to develop it among teachers.

Ang et al. (2020) described cultural intelligence as a construct consisting of four main dimensions: metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral. The metacognitive dimension includes planning, awareness, and monitoring during intercultural interactions. The cognitive dimension involves general cultural knowledge as well as knowledge specific to particular cultural contexts. The motivational dimension refers to intrinsic and extrinsic interest, along with self-efficacy in adapting to different cultures. The behavioral dimension focuses on the ability to adjust verbal and non-verbal behavior, including appropriate speech acts. In contrast, Thomas and Inkson (2017) proposed a three-component model of cultural intelligence consisting of knowledge, mindfulness, and behavioral skills. Knowledge relates to understanding what culture is, how cultures differ, and how culture influences behavior. Mindfulness involves openness and awareness of contextual cues in intercultural situations, while behavioral skills refer to the ability to demonstrate suitable social behaviors in new cultural environments. Although the four-factor model proposed by Ang et al. (2020) is widely used to measure cultural intelligence, the present study adopts the three indicators suggested by Thomas and Inkson (2017), as they are considered more appropriate for Indonesian teachers who come from highly diverse cultural backgrounds.

Objectives of the Study

To study the level of cultural intelligence among secondary school students.

To study the level of behavioral development of secondary school students.

Hypotheses of the Study

The cultural Intelligence level of secondary school students is High.

Behavioral Development of secondary school students is High.

Variables of the Study

Independent Variable: Cultural Intelligence

Dependent Variables: Behavioral Development

Operational Definitions

Cultural Intelligence Cultural intelligence refers to students' ability to recognize, understand, and adjust effectively to situations involving cultural diversity. In the present study, it is assessed using a standardized cultural intelligence scale.

Behavioral Development Behavioral development denotes the extent to which students demonstrate positive social adjustment, emotional control, cooperation, and respect toward others.

Research Methodology

The present study is quantitative and descriptive method involving 50 students employed a descriptive survey method, as it aimed to examine relationships among variables without manipulating them.

Sample of the Study

The sample consisted of secondary school students studying in government and private schools. A total of 50 students 25 male,25 female were selected using the random sampling technique to ensure adequate representation.

Tools Used

The following standardized tools were used:

Cultural Intelligence Scale – to measure students' cultural intelligence

Behavioral Development Scale – to assess students' behavioral development

All tools were validated and found reliable for the present study.

Procedure of Data Collection

The researcher obtained permission from school authorities before data collection. The tools were administered to the students in group settings. Clear instructions were provided, and confidentiality of responses was ensured. The collected data were scored according to the manuals of the respective tools.

Statistical Techniques Used

The following statistical techniques were employed:

Mean ,Standard Deviation and t-test .

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The present study deals with the statistical analysis and interpretation of data collected to examine the levels of cultural intelligence and behavioral development among secondary school students. The data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, and t-test to test the stated hypotheses. The results are presented and interpreted objective-wise.

Analysis of Cultural Intelligence

To examine the level of cultural intelligence among secondary school students, a one-sample t-test was applied. The results are presented in Table 1.1.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	Significance
Cultural Intelligence	50	`1.90	0.416	49	-1.698	0.096	Not significane

Interpretation of Cultural Intelligence

The mean score of Cultural Intelligence of secondary school students was 1.90, which is lower than the average level. The obtained t-value (–1.698) was not significant at 0.05 level as the p-value was 0.096. This shows that the level of Cultural Intelligence among secondary school students is not high. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that the cultural intelligence of secondary school students is high was rejected.

Analysis of Behavioral Development

To assess the level of behavioral development among secondary school students, a one-sample t-test was employed. The results are presented in Table 1.2.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	t-vlaue	p-value	Significant
Behavioral Development	50	2.06	0.512	49	0.829	0.411	Not significant

The mean score of Behavioral Development of secondary school students was 2.06, which is slightly above the average level. However, the obtained t-value (0.829) was not significant at 0.05 level since the p-value(0.411) was greater than 0.05. This indicates that the Behavioral Development of secondary school students is average. Hence, the hypothesis was rejected.

Summary of Findings

The analysis of data revealed that secondary school students exhibit a below-average level of cultural intelligence and an average level of behavioral development. The results of the t-tests did not support the hypotheses proposing high levels of cultural intelligence and behavioral development. These findings suggest the need for focused educational interventions to promote cultural understanding and positive behavioral development among secondary school students.

Findings of the Study

The analysis revealed that the level of cultural intelligence among secondary school students was below average. The mean score obtained was 1.90, and the t-test result showed no significant difference at the 0.05 level. This indicates that secondary school students do not possess a high level of cultural intelligence.The hypothesis stating that the cultural intelligence of secondary school students is high was rejected, as the statistical results did not support it.

The findings related to behavioral development showed an average level among secondary school students. The mean score was 2.06, which was slightly above the average, but the obtained t-value was not statistically significant.The hypothesis assuming that the behavioral development of secondary school students is high was also rejected, since the p-value was greater than 0.05.

Overall, the study indicates that secondary school students demonstrate average behavioral development but comparatively lower cultural intelligence, highlighting a need for educational interventions focusing on cultural awareness and social adaptability.

Educational Implications

Curriculum Development:

The findings suggest that school curricula should include components related to cultural diversity, social values, and global citizenship to enhance students' cultural intelligence.

Teacher Training:

Teachers should be provided with professional training to help them promote culturally responsive teaching practices and positive behavioral management strategies in classrooms.

School Environment:

Schools should create inclusive and supportive environments that encourage respect for cultural differences and foster healthy social interactions among students.

Co-curricular Activities:

Activities such as group discussions, cultural exchange programs, role-playing, and community involvement can be effective in improving both cultural intelligence and behavioral development.

Guidance and Counseling:

Regular guidance and counseling programs can help students develop emotional regulation, empathy, and socially appropriate behavior.

Parental Involvement:

Parents should be encouraged to support cultural understanding and positive behavior at home, reinforcing the values taught in schools.

Conclusion

The present study was conducted to examine the levels of cultural intelligence and behavioral development among secondary school students. The findings of the study revealed that the cultural intelligence of secondary school students was below the expected level. The statistical analysis did not support the assumption that students possess a high level of cultural intelligence. This indicates that many students may face difficulties in understanding, respecting, and adapting to culturally diverse situations within the school environment.

The study further revealed that the behavioral development of secondary school students was at an average level. Although students showed acceptable levels of social adjustment and emotional regulation, the results did not confirm a high level of behavioral development. The rejection of both hypotheses suggests that cultural intelligence and behavioral development among secondary school students require greater attention within the educational system.

Overall, the findings highlight the need to strengthen cultural awareness and positive behavioral practices in secondary schools to support students' holistic development and social competence.

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