

## Original Article

# A Study of Cultural Intelligence of Student Teachers

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### Abstract

*This study examines the cultural intelligence of student teachers in Pune city. Cultural intelligence (CQ) refers to an individual's ability to relate to, work effectively with, and adapt to culturally diverse situations. The study employed the survey method using the Cultural Intelligence Scale as the tool for data collection. The sample consisted of 90 student teachers from teacher education institutions in Pune. Findings reveal moderate levels of cultural intelligence across all four dimensions metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioural with notable variation based on certain demographic variables. The study underscores the importance of embedding intercultural competence in teacher education programs to prepare future educators for diverse classrooms.*

**Keywords:** Cultural Intelligence, Student Teachers, Teacher Education

### Introduction

Globalization, migration, and multicultural classrooms have made cultural adaptability an essential skill for teachers. In a city like Pune, which attracts students from across India and abroad, teachers are frequently required to interact with learners from varied linguistic, social, and cultural backgrounds. Student teachers—the future educators—must possess cultural intelligence to foster inclusive and equitable learning environments.

Cultural intelligence, as defined by Earley and Ang (2003), is the capability to function effectively in culturally diverse settings. It encompasses four dimensions:

1. Metacognitive CQ – awareness and regulation of cultural thinking.
2. Cognitive CQ – knowledge about cultural norms, practices, and conventions.
3. Motivational CQ – interest and drive to adapt to intercultural situations.
4. Behavioral CQ – ability to exhibit appropriate verbal and non-verbal actions.

### Review of Related Literature

Previous research has linked cultural intelligence with teaching effectiveness, intercultural sensitivity, and reduced bias in classrooms (Ng, Van Dyne & Ang, 2012). Studies on teacher trainees show that intercultural training programs enhance CQ levels (Alon & Higgins, 2005). However, limited studies have been conducted in the Indian context, particularly in Pune, despite its culturally heterogeneous student population.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the overall cultural intelligence of student teachers in Pune city.
2. To examine cultural intelligence across the four dimensions.
3. To explore differences in CQ based on demographic variables such as gender and medium of instruction

### Hypotheses

H<sub>1</sub>: The overall level of cultural intelligence among student teachers is moderate.  
H<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference in cultural intelligence between male and female



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$H_3$ : There is no significant difference in cultural intelligence based on medium of instruction.

**Scope-** present research is related to cultural intelligence of student teachers of pune city

### Limitations

1. Limited to 90 participants in Pune city, hence findings cannot be generalized to all student teachers.
2. Self-reported data may be subject to social desirability bias.

### Research Methodology

#### Research Method

The study adopted the survey method, suitable for gathering quantitative data from a relatively large group within a limited time frame.

**Population**-Student teachers of pune city is population of present research

#### Sample

### Results and Discussion

#### Overall Cultural Intelligence Scores

**Table 1 – Descriptive Statistics of Overall CQ**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Level
Overall CQ	90	3.46	0.52	Moderate

#### Interpretation:

The mean score ( $M = 3.46$ ) falls in the moderate range (scale: 1–5), indicating that student teachers have a fair ability to adapt to culturally diverse situations but require further enhancement.

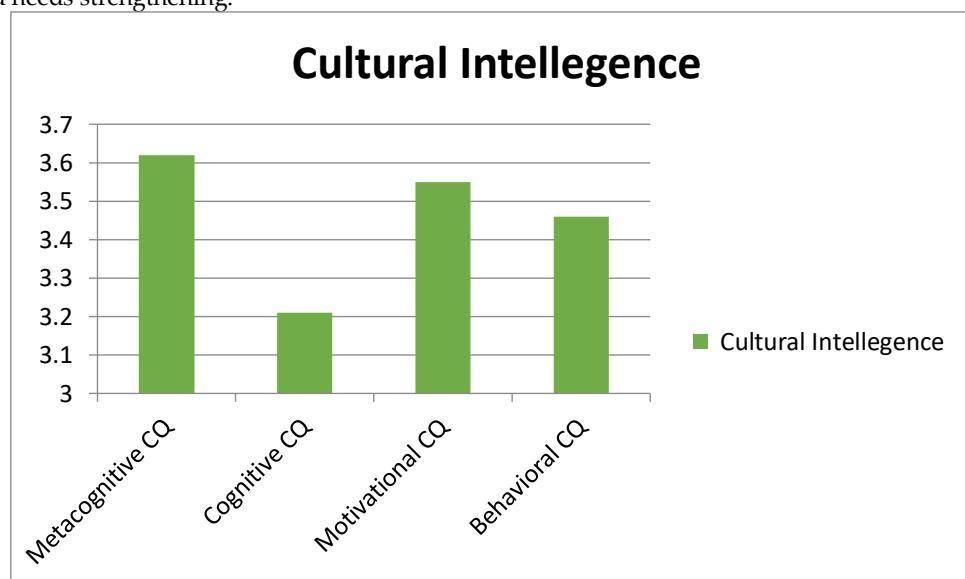
#### Dimension-wise CQ Scores

**Table 2 – Mean Scores by CQ Dimension**

CQ Dimension	Mean	SD	Level
Metacognitive CQ	3.62	0.49	Moderate-High
Cognitive CQ	3.21	0.58	Moderate
Motivational CQ	3.55	0.51	Moderate-High
Behavioral CQ	3.46	0.54	Moderate

#### Interpretation:

Metacognitive and motivational CQ are relatively higher, showing that student teachers are aware of cultural differences and motivated to engage across cultures. However, cognitive CQ (knowledge of other cultures) is the lowest and needs strengthening.



A purposive sampling technique was used to select 90 student teachers enrolled in B.Ed. programs at different teacher education colleges in Pune city. The sample included both male and female student teachers, from English and Marathi medium backgrounds.

#### Tool of Data Collection

The Cultural Intelligence Scale developed by Ang et al. (2007) was used. It consists of items measuring the four CQ dimensions on a Likert-type scale.

**Procedure**-The scale was administered in a classroom setting after obtaining informed consent from participants. Scores were computed for each dimension and overall CQ.

#### Statistical Techniques

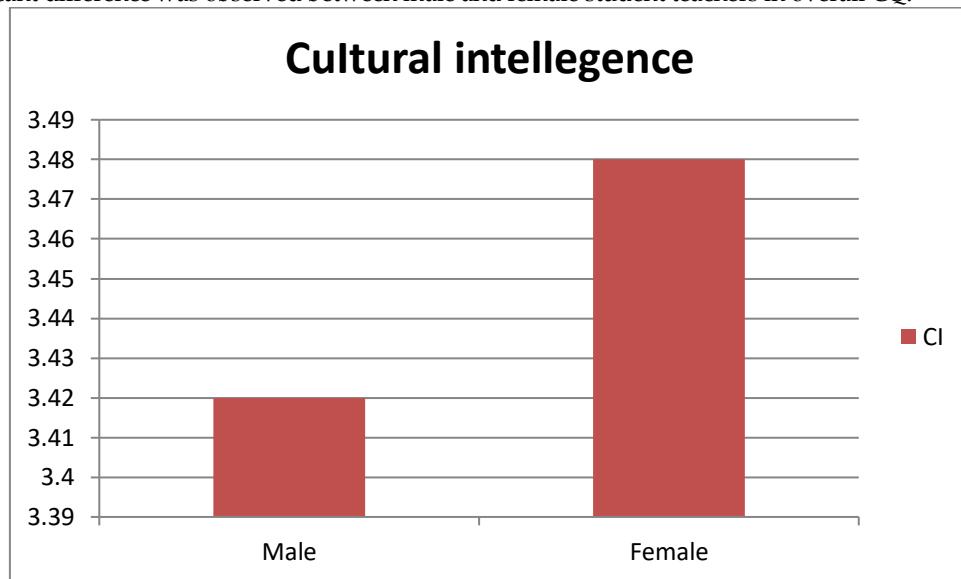
Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were used to determine CQ levels, and t-tests were applied to examine differences between groups.

**Gender-wise Comparison****Table 3 – Independent Samples t-test for Gender**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Result
Male	30	3.42	0.53	0.58	Not Significant
Female	60	3.48	0.51		

**Interpretation:**

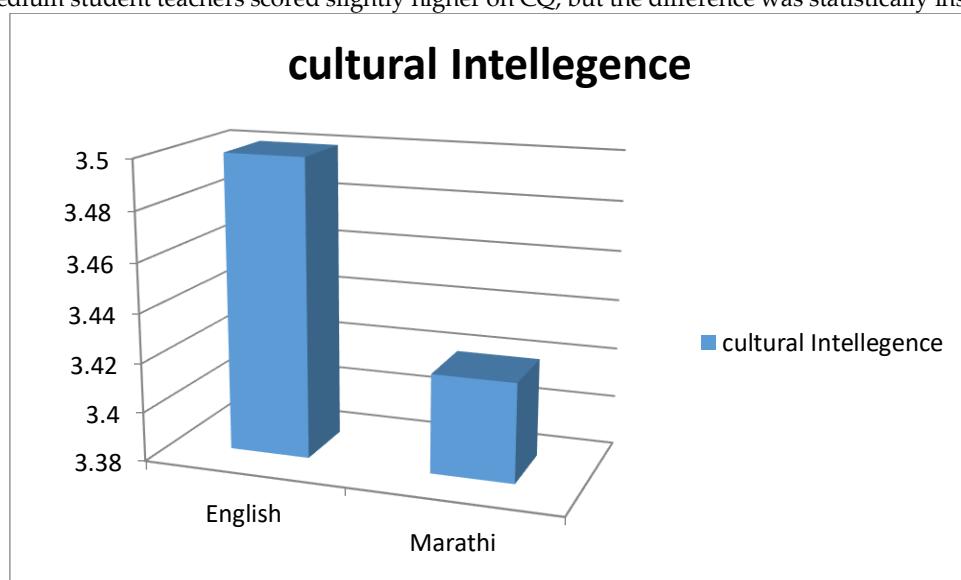
No significant difference was observed between male and female student teachers in overall CQ.

**Medium of Instruction-wise Comparison****Table 4 – Independent Samples t-test for Medium of Instruction**

Medium	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Result
English	45	3.50	0.50	0.92	Not Significant
Marathi	45	3.42	0.54		

**Interpretation:**

English medium student teachers scored slightly higher on CQ, but the difference was statistically insignificant.

**Overall Cultural Intelligence**

The mean CQ score of the sample was found to be in the moderate range, indicating that student teachers possess a reasonable but improvable

capacity to interact effectively in culturally diverse settings.

**Dimension-wise Analysis**

- **Metacognitive CQ:** High awareness during intercultural interactions, though occasional

lapses in planning for cultural differences were reported.

- **Cognitive CQ:** Limited factual knowledge about other cultures, suggesting a need for more exposure and curriculum support.
- **Motivational CQ:** Moderate to high interest in intercultural engagement, especially in classroom contexts.
- **Behavioral CQ:** Adequate flexibility in adapting speech, gestures, and teaching strategies, though variation existed among individuals.

#### Group Comparisons

- **Gender:** No statistically significant difference in overall CQ between male and female student teachers.
- **Medium of Instruction:** No significant difference was found, though English medium students showed slightly higher cognitive CQ.

#### Conclusion

The study highlights that student teachers in Pune have a moderate level of cultural intelligence. While their motivational and metacognitive dimensions are relatively strong, the cognitive aspect requires further development. Teacher education institutions must integrate intercultural training modules, provide opportunities for cross-cultural experiences, and encourage reflective practices to enhance CQ.

#### Educational Implications

##### Curriculum Enrichment

The teacher education curriculum should be deliberately redesigned to include structured courses and modules on *intercultural communication, diversity management, and global citizenship*. Such courses can introduce student teachers to theories of cultural competence, case studies of multicultural classrooms, and practical strategies for managing diversity in lesson planning, assessment, and classroom management. Embedding these topics within core pedagogy subjects ensures that intercultural competence is not treated as an optional skill but as a fundamental teaching competency. Assessment activities, such as microteaching in culturally simulated environments, can provide experiential learning opportunities.

##### Workshops and Seminars

Organizing periodic workshops, seminars, and cultural immersion programs can significantly enhance student teachers' exposure to different cultural contexts. These can include:

**Cultural exchange programs** with institutions from other regions or countries to foster first-hand interaction.

**Guest lectures** by experts in cross-cultural education and social integration.

##### Celebration of cultural diversity days

where student teachers plan and participate in events showcasing linguistic, artistic, and traditional diversity. Such activities move beyond theoretical knowledge, enabling participants to apply cultural intelligence skills in authentic settings.

##### Reflective Practice

Reflection plays a crucial role in strengthening cultural intelligence. Student teachers should be encouraged to maintain *reflective journals* documenting their experiences in culturally diverse teaching situations during internships, practice lessons, or community work. These journals can capture: Observations of cultural differences in classroom behavior and learning preferences. Personal challenges faced in adapting teaching strategies. Strategies implemented and their effectiveness. Faculty can facilitate *guided reflection sessions* where student teachers share and discuss their reflections in small peer groups. This process helps in deepening self-awareness, questioning assumptions, and refining intercultural teaching approaches.

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##### Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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