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The Impact of Cultural Background Differences on Students Learning Outcome

Graduation Project Submitted to Department of General Education,
College of Education, Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements for the
Degree of a Bachelor of General Education in English Language Teaching

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ
شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَاكُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ)

صدق الله العظيم

سورة الحجرات، آية (13)

Certification

I certify that this project was prepared under my supervision at the Department of Translation, College of Arts and Letters, Cihan University-Erbil in partial requirements for the degree of:

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In
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Date / /2025

We, the examining committee, certify that we have read this project and have examined the students in its contents and that in our opinion it is adequate in partial requirement for the degree of:

Bachelor of Arts
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Approved for the departments committee of undergraduate studies.

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Date / /2025

Dedication

Here, on this joyful day of graduation, it is our pleasure to completely dedicate our graduation project to the shining stars of our lives – our parents. Your love and encouragement have always been our motivation. We also want to thank everyone involved in the development of this project, including our professors, and the administrative staff who helped us while we were working on our bachelor’s degree. A particular word of gratitude goes to Cihan University for offering us a home. At the end, this project is dedicated to everyone who has the passion for learning and improving themselves.

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List of Abbreviations

English Language Teaching.....ELT

General Education Department.....GED

Abstract

This study aims at exploring how cultural differences impact on students' academic achievement. In order to understand what culture means and how it influences students, and teachers, it is important to understand what culture means. In order to achieve this, randomly and among different departments as the subjects of this study at the second place 100 students have been selected among the participants purposefully based on gender to highlight the impacts of cultural differences on gender base criterion by using a survey which combined both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Data of the current study has been collected through on approved questionnaire by faculty members that consists of it, it is necessary to state that culture is one of the most important components of the student's personality and it is crucial to know how the students view the results of their learning. For enhancing learning outcomes, it requires language support, cultural awareness, inclusion, diverse role models, and equal resource access for a more equitable education system.

Key Terms: *Cultural Diversity, Learning Outcomes, Gender, Intercultural Education, and Academic performance*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

Students in the twenty-first century, the contemporary period, must have a new set of skills and knowledge to effectively carry out inclusion plans in the fast-changing educational landscape. UNICEF (2023) defines inclusive education as one that aims to give all pupils, regardless of background or ability, equal chances for learning and development. The classroom has become a crucial beginning place for teaching cultural differences, which begin with the teacher and students given the growing cultural diversity of the world. But the teacher finds it difficult to grasp how cultures influence academic learning outcomes, government, families, and spoken language (Jones, 2013). The advantages of cultural variety in higher education include stimulating debate, fostering critical thinking, and challenging students' points of view, ideas, and ways of thinking.

Additionally, this raises the level of globalization and effects on society at large. Interaction among peers from many backgrounds fosters empathy, adaptability, and cultural knowledge. Pejaner and Vistades (2020) claim that while teachers used a great variety of techniques and approaches in the classroom, these were only applied for activities that rendered the ideas of the subject matter pertinent to the students' daily life. The teachers ignored other conventional systems of knowledge and conventions since they lacked awareness of the culture of their students. Students learn in a classroom in an instructional atmosphere whether they are adults or people. Students from many financial backgrounds, faiths, genders, identities, and cultures populate the learning environment. Students will therefore show a variety of behaviors, learning methods, communication skills, etc. To help people learn how to stay faithful to their legacy, it is essential to welcome and promote this diversity. Students have to be educated to adjust to this evolving society and view differences as strengths rather than shortcomings as variation will only increase globally. Students from several backgrounds bring their knowledge and life experiences to the classroom. Teachers should carefully examine the backgrounds, values, histories, customs, and practices of the pupils as well as their families. Teachers must consequently have the capacity to change instruction, fit different learning styles, and create inclusive classroom environments that promote all students' collaboration and support (Hamstead, 2024). They also have to be culturally aware, sympathetic, and have great communication skills to engage with pupils from diverse backgrounds.

Moreover, Marvi, K. (2023) study on the influence of cultural variety in academic success. The aim of the study was to keep and promote a friendly environment in classrooms with kids from many backgrounds. Cultural value attained in schools constantly lags behind the dominant culture, thereby disregarding the ones that are distinct. Thus, as cultural distinctions are not appreciated or acknowledged, this situation leads to educational methods that aggravate social injustice and shows outcomes as failing to understand and appreciate cultural variety. Ultimately, this study aimed to investigate participant distribution, cultural diversity levels, social science learning outcomes, and university cultural component variances. The study looked at how cultural diversity and learning outcomes in important social scientific fields were related as well as how academic disciplines, learning environments, and student traits influenced cultural diversity and learning outcomes. This exam gauges the students' opinions about the class's ethnic diversity and how it influences their academic goals.

1.1. Background of the Study

People everywhere are divided by a number of real categories and divisions, including identity politics, whereby all cultural groups feel that people suffer some degree of violence, harassment, persecution, and discrimination. Whether or not they acknowledge it and whether the government hides it, people are varied in terms of gender, social class, ethnicity, race, language, abilities and disabilities, needs, ethnic background, political ideology, citizenship status, family structure, cultural background, income, profession, and other characteristics, Banks (2008b) and Lin and Jackson (2019a) say. Humankind is now an interactive, multicultural species. For example, around the world, more than 500 countries with populations exceeding 100,000 are occasionally categorized as ethnic groupings, even if their numbers are lower than 100,000. Currently, between 5000 and 8000 distinct languages are spoken (Evans and Levinson 2009). Of the more than 4300 currently in existence, over 70% of the world's population follows one of the five most major religions: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism.

Furthermore, this situation motivates universities, scholars, and the general public to think about how to bring people together and cooperate to solve the problems everyone confronts. Among the sustainable development goals mentioned by UNESCO is to "guarantee that everyone

has access to high-quality education and support lifetime learning possibilities for all," The variety of cultures helps and hinders the achievement of this goal. Many people and cultures remain marginalized in society because of past injustices, prejudices, fears, and misunderstandings, despite the fact that many noble words such as equity and social justice have been widely used and adopted in policies around the world as a politically correct approach to handle cultural diversity and people from different backgrounds. Participation and access to schooling have improved greatly lately. Still, in 2017, 262 million kids and teenagers between the ages of 6 and 17 were not enrolled in school, and more than half of them fell short of the minimum standards for reading and mathematics proficiency (United Nations Economic and Social Council 2019). The sustainable development goals also urge people to rethink what cultural variety could provide the globe and how they could work together to fully exploit this possibility.

Language is just another illustration of a cultural difference that some people find important while others find unimportant. Many people see language, especially languages other than their native tongue, as just a tool for conveying information. Yet, under the clear surface differences, languages expose deeper aspects of psychology, linguistics, culture, politics, and other disciplines. Psychology and language studies both show that languages especially one's mother tongue shape one's perception, understanding, and interaction with the external environment. Once a person develops an early attachment to their heritage language, it is crucial for their mental health to maintain rather than compromise this connection. Language represents how individuals see the world; hence it is essential for a culture's existence. The language of a society holds many of its basic meanings. Moreover, power and resources are connected to language. In many societies, social position, a sense of community, and access to possibilities are greatly influenced by fluency in the prevailing language (Lin and Jackson 2019b, c). People from several cultural origins are split, categorized differently, taken from the norm, and live alternative lifestyles in many countries (Girishkumar 2015). This approach emphasizes the need of recognizing various cultures in order to preserve human culture and provide individuals a more complete knowledge of the world by claiming that education about cultural variety is vital. Including everyone in the contact process will help to foster cooperation (Servaes 2005). Darling Hammond et al. (2002) claim that language from the viewpoints of people's different backgrounds is essential to investigate the commonalities among people in a world rich with accessibility and diversity. Embracing various ideas and viewpoints might help individuals overcome their narrow-mindedness since it reminds them that

the value of a culture is not dependent on whether or not outsiders agree with it (Parekh 2006). Every voice matters in a community; therefore, students have to develop into citizens ready to be tolerant and respectful of others if they are to reside in a multicultural society (Hess 2011).

Ultimately, the classroom is uniform and kids from various cultural background communities are unable to express or get their different cultures and identities (English 2016). People would not grasp the need of appreciating and tolerating cultural variety without teachers enabling different languages among students. Several studies indicate that by using language that crosses different points of view and addresses controversial issues like culture and identity, children can learn tolerance and respect for one another (English 2016; Hess 2011). Kazepides (2010) thus claims that "once educational facilities perform as places that reflect every cultural background, they develop into authentic human beings of transparency, dignity, confidence, and teamwork the fact that inspire learners and foster permanent and advantageous academic achievement" (Tully 1995, p. 24). The student's learning outcomes may be influenced by cultural background differences, which can have both positive and bad consequences. Based on the culture in which they were reared, the students are able to provide their own opinions and experiences to the class. The learning process becomes simpler and more pleasurable for the students as well since the professors take effort to grasp and value their cultural diversity. Cultural differences, therefore, could cause some issues. For instance, if the curriculum or teaching approaches are not culturally responsive, students from minority groups might not be able to connect with the subject or might feel isolated. This might then influence their motivation and confidence, which would lead to different learning results. By changing their teaching to acknowledge cultural diversity, instructors can help students feel more involved in the learning process. This could be done, for example, via inclusive practices, multilingual materials or culturally relevant models. Teachers, therefore, have to work to create a culture where all pupils and their backgrounds are not only tolerated but also used to enable their improvement.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The learning outcomes of the students from various cultural backgrounds can also be influenced by their background, with both positive and negative consequences. This way, the students may

contribute their own viewpoints to the class depending on the culture in which they were brought up. The learning process becomes simpler and more enjoyable for the pupils when the teachers take effort to understand and embrace their cultural diversity. Cultural differences, therefore, could cause some issues. For instance, if the curriculum or teaching approaches are not culturally responsive, students from minority groups might not be able to relate to the subject or might feel lonely. This might then influence their motivation and confidence, which would cause various learning results. Instructors can help students feel more connected to the learning process by altering their teaching methods to reflect cultural diversity, for example, by using inclusive approaches, bilingual resources, or culturally sensitive anecdotes. Teachers must work, therefore, to foster a culture in which all pupils and their backgrounds are not just tolerated but also leveraged to improve education. Learning in the culturally rich surroundings presents the students many difficulties. Amongst these are Lack of language skills.

1. Lack of understanding of cultures.
2. Lack of representation in lessons.
3. Lack of inclusion.
4. Absence of several role models.
5. Unequal resource availability.

1.3. Significance of study

University professors might utilize some techniques since students are prone to lose motivation and be let down to study in a cultural diversity setting or in classrooms following many obstacles. These tactics should guarantee that students are empowered and that, no matter how challenging the situation, they wish to carry on the learning process.

1.4. Purpose of the Study

This is because students are likely to lose interest or enthusiasm in the process of learning a foreign language due to various difficulties that they may encounter. However, there could be certain approaches that university lecturers can use. To effectively overcome these difficulties, enable

students, and encourage them to continue the learning process throughout the most challenging conditions. The following are the fundamental objectives:

1. To establish whether cultural differences are related to the choice of language learning strategies.
2. To find out how different instructional techniques affect students' strategy use and their academic achievement.
3. To determine how cultural diversity adds value to the learning process by bringing in different viewpoints, beliefs, and ways of living.
4. To explain how culturally sensitive teaching can help to overcome differences between students and teachers and enhance students' learning and participation.
5. To exchange stories on how educational procedures could be changed to fit the cultural circumstances of students, hence promoting their academic and professional development.
6. To underline the need of creating culturally appropriate teaching strategies for pupils from many backgrounds.
7. To clarify how the use and efficacy of techniques and learning are influenced by the physical environment of the classroom and the relationships with peers.

1.5. Research Questions and Hypotheses

This paper will address the following query:

RQ1: How does cultural background influence learning results?

RQ2: How the variation in cultural backgrounds influences students' motivation and involvement in their learning experiences?

1.6. Definition of the main terms

Cultural diversity is the presence of many cultural groups in one area, suggesting the diversity in language, traditions, values, beliefs, and worldviews. Such differences should be embraced and appreciated; a means should be sought to guarantee that all the cultures are honored and treated equally (Banks, 2010).

Learning Outcomes: Defined as the observable, measurable outcomes of learning in the shape of information, abilities, attitudes, and values that students may show after the learning process (Masud, N. A., 2021).

Intercultural Education: Is an approach that promotes awareness, understanding, and competence in interacting with people from different cultures, fostering the development of intercultural sensitivity and the ability to navigate cultural differences (Bennett, J. M., & Bennett, M. J., 2001).

Gender: is a social and cultural construct that defines roles, behaviors, expectations, and identities associated with being male, female, or non-binary, differing across societies and over time (West & Zimmerman, 1987; Butler, 1990).

Academic Performance: Refers to the extent to which a student meets the learning objectives and demonstrates knowledge, skills, and abilities in academic tasks, typically measured through grades, assessments, and other evaluations (Trautwein, Köller, & Lüdtke, 2003).

CHAPTER II
REVIEW LITERATURE

2. Introduction

Students' academic performance and their perception of the cultural variety of the classroom are significantly correlated, according to this study. Considering the wide range of socioeconomic status, religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds that are represented in educational institutions nowadays, diverse educational methods that acknowledge and appreciate the individuality of youth are essential. Administration of classrooms, academic and social standards, peer and self-regulation behaviors, and cultural variations in authority all affect how teachers view the school environment. The examination and consideration of intercultural awareness is necessary for educators to effectively educate about various cultures and comprehend that there is unity despite diversity (Opeña & Pontillas, 2020). Although the academic program is intended for all learners, it is essential that instructors behave in a way that supports the company's tight staff monitoring and disaster risk reduction. By offering everyone an equal opportunity and delivering top-notch teaching, this may be handled. Regardless of a student's gender, ethnicity, age, religion, language, or exceptionality, instructors' perceptions and attitudes about culturally diverse students in the nation's classrooms are essential to motivating, instructing, and enhancing their education. There can be significant differences in the teaching styles of different instructors and the learning preferences of students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Sunita, 2005).

Additionally, the concept of education demonstrates that the instruction and education of students are crucial. The university's learning atmosphere involves a lot of activities, which helps learners perform better. Students' genuine adaptation to the learning environment is readily apparent when they observe how they interact with one another Kelly (2002). The seamless function of the educational institution and the honesty of the professors and students are both necessary. Cultural background, material, and other resources that are essential for teaching and learning as well as elements that raise the level of students are among the requirements that must be met in order to meet learning objectives (Hansman et al., 2019). Usually, a few key factors determine a person's physiological tendency to favor anything (Khan & Sharma, 2020). Cultural diversity represents an area of customs, beliefs, languages, and viewpoints that mold and define our present-day society (Sleeter, 2018). In order to obtain concerning the study that has already been carried out on the impact of culture on the academic performance of students from various cultural backgrounds. Additionally, the effects of teachers' attitudes on students, the ways in which

formation programs influence teachers' appreciation of students' cultures, and the difficulties that teachers of different students' identity may face (Banks & Romaine, 2009). Since language is a cultural component that affects academic performance outcomes (Banks & Romaine, 2009), students will perform better academically if their culture and language are utilized or taken into account in the classroom (Bonner et al., 2018).

Last but not least, by employing cultural understanding as a teaching tool that is, relating prior experiences and knowledge. teachers may also modify specific elements of their curriculum to meet the requirements of their students (Boon, 2016). The requirements can be met by using reading materials from various authors, ethnic groups, cultures, heritages, and experiences. Given that ethnicity, culture, and other human distinctions are inherent, it is imperative to recognize that teaching and learning about them should be prevalent (Gay, 2013).

2.1. Theoretical Framework

Diversity in education is one aspect of social and cultural change that affects our society deeply and is also rapidly changing. Bruner (1996) suggested that how a culture or society manages its system of education is a major embodiment of the culture's way of life, not just of its preparation for it. Cultural diversity is a multifaceted concept, which includes a broad spectrum of attributes, including language, religion, socioeconomic status, gender, etc. Diverse learners' performance will be influenced by their interactions with teachers and other students. Educational institutions may also examine their policies and practices to encourage diversity in the classroom and lessen prejudice toward marginalized populations (Bonner, 2018).

The diverse structure of the cultures in which educational institutions operate must be reflected in this age of globalization and interconnection. It is crucial to acknowledge the wide range of ways people perceive the world in order to create an atmosphere that values diversity rather than excludes it. In his exploration of the advantages and disadvantages of diversity in academia, Smith (2018) provides practical advice on how to ensure that diversity programs are successful. In my opinion, we must consider both the advantages as well as difficulties associated with diversity in higher education. Furthermore, Smith offers useful guidance and strategies for carrying out and maintaining diversity programs in educational establishments.

2.2. Review of the Related Studies

Students investigate as well as acquire knowledge in the classroom while they are at leisure. Nevertheless, usually remember that place negatively. In most cases, a bad classroom experience is the result of both educators and learners working collaboratively. With the guidance of the instructor and abilities, that might be handled and repaired. Instructors are expected to utilize reflection to create culturally suitable methods of instruction. It is essential that educators are self-aware, critical, and analytical of their own lecturers and cultural diversity concepts (Panel, Linda, Marcel, & Maja, 2019).

Gardenswartz and Rowe (2003, pp. 31-33) identify four dimensions of diversity that shape individual identities and experiences. The first dimension, personality, includes personal values, beliefs, and preferences formed during early childhood and influenced by other dimensions throughout life. Internal diversity, the second dimension, encompasses inherent and uncontrollable factors such as age, physical ability, gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity. These factors are universal and serve as the foundation for diversity initiatives (Loden & Rosener, 1991, pp. 18-19). The third dimension, external diversity, covers aspects under individual control, such as socioeconomic status, hobbies, education, previous work experience, and physical appearance. These factors often guide career choices and evolve over time. Lastly, the organizational dimension relates to workplace culture and includes aspects such as job roles, leadership positions, and organizational memberships. While much of diversity research focuses on internal dimensions, organizational factors significantly influence workplace dynamics (Velasco et al., 2016).

Additionally, cultural diversity in education is particularly significant for shaping students' identities and interactions with peers. Chrysanthopoulos and Miriam (2010) highlight the importance of understanding ethnicities and the interplay between collectivism and individualism. Similarly, Dee (2002, pp. 195-210) argues that novice educators generally support equity and diversity in classrooms but do not believe that assimilation into the majority culture is necessary for student success. Examining behaviors across different cultural contexts provides valuable insights into human interaction. Research from various disciplines shows that humans are naturally curious about others' experiences, which fosters interest in cultural diversity. However, understanding and embracing diversity require deliberate efforts to educate individuals about

cultural differences and global awareness (Reimers, 2020, pp. 31-52, Verkuyten, 2013, pp. 1-27 et al). Multicultural education has been a priority in many Western countries, including the United States, Britain, and Europe. Efforts focus on reducing achievement gaps among students from non-majority cultures through multilingual, cross-cultural, and anti-racist education (Banks & Lynch, 1986; Skutnabb-Kangas). Nieto (1996) defines culture as a dynamic set of beliefs, customs, and social connections shared by a group and shaped by shared history, geography, language, socioeconomic status, and religion. This definition also incorporates factors such as gender and socioeconomic status, which influence academic success.

Moreover, the intersection of cultural diversity and socioeconomic disparities often places marginalized students at a disadvantage. Although race is no longer considered a biological determinant of intelligence or behavior, institutional racism and individual biases persist. White privilege, rooted in systemic practices, exacerbates these inequities, highlighting the need to view racial distinctions as social constructs (McIntosh, 1988; Weinberg, 1990). Public perceptions of race often reinforce negative stereotypes, affecting students' attitudes and opportunities. Socioeconomic elements aggravate these difficulties even further. Many pupils categorized as "linguistically and culturally diverse" come from working-class or poor homes. Often, these kids lack proper learning surroundings and insufficient educational resources including run-down facilities and scarce supplies. Kozol (1991) stresses that an overemphasis on cultural or linguistic variations sometimes eclipses systematic problems like inadequate infrastructure and lack of resources. Therefore, promoting fair educational possibilities depends on first addressing social prejudices and second on resource inequality.

Before concluding, Kelly (2002) defines the idea of education as emphasizing the significant impact of students' behavior and learning encounters on their general academic progress. Playing a key role in improving student performance are universities, noted for their rich learning environments. Watching pupils engage in these settings helps one to understand their flexibility. Good education depends on the smooth operation of educational institutions and the dedication of both teachers and pupils. Fostering student development depends on critical elements such as culture, curriculum material, and necessary teaching and learning aids (Hansman et al., 2019). Moreover, a variety of elements, including personal tastes and behavioral patterns, influence students' preferences for particular learning methods (Khan & Sharma, 2020). Promoting students'

mental development, academic performance, and general well-being depends on a conducive learning environment. An ideal classroom setting lets students physically and mentally investigate and rearrange their environment. Students need direction and inspiration to critically assess their surroundings and grow in an organized way. Physical education is essential for general growth in addition to fulfilling psychological demands. Physical education, on the other hand, presents particular difficulties and requires access to suitable facilities and technological tools to improve movement and learning (Teclehaimanot & Hickman, 2011). A good learning environment is greatly shaped by interactions between students and teachers as well as availability of instructional materials. The term "learning environment" extends beyond a physical space. Teaching and learning occur in diverse settings, demanding that educators create spaces where students respect each other, communicate effectively, and share knowledge. The quality of the learning environment, including the institution's facilities and the dedication of instructors, directly impacts students and broader societal outcomes. Wealthier societies, in particular, experience significant benefits from a well-structured academic atmosphere.

McLaughlin and Talbert (2006) emphasize that inadequate institutional infrastructure, lack of student motivation, poor relationships between faculty and students, and non-compliance with educational regulations can significantly lower student performance, thereby hindering their future aspirations. Both education and athletics are influenced by numerous factors, either directly or indirectly. Education delivery methods vary, ranging from virtual to practical formats, yet socially relevant learning environments are generally more effective and widely accepted (Filardo, 2008; McGregor, 2004). Teachers play a pivotal role in managing resources to create effective learning environments. Students should have access to all necessary tools and resources to achieve academic success. Any deficiency in these resources can negatively impact educational outcomes. Research consistently highlights that a positive perception of the learning context enhances academic performance (Lee & Wallace, 2018; Khan et al., 2019; Asante Boadi et al., 2020).

In summary, addressing cultural diversity in education requires a comprehensive approach that incorporates internal, external, and organizational dimensions of diversity. Educational systems must prioritize equity by addressing systemic inequities, promoting inclusivity, and providing adequate resources for all learners.

CHAPTER III
METHOD AND MATERIAL

3. Introduction

To answer the main research questions, the study used quantitative research methods. It aimed to understand The Impact of Cultural Background Differences on Student Learning Outcome in classes across different departments in Cihan University - Erbil.

3.1. Research Design

This study will utilize both qualitative and quantitative research approach to systematically investigate the prevalence and effectiveness of learning outcomes of male and female students in university.

3.2. Participants

The participants were students, both male and female, chosen randomly from different departments (English, Translation, Business Administration and Community Health Nursing) at Cihan University-Erbil.

3.3. Materials and Instruments

The data of this research were collected using a questionnaire by different studies adopted by Brown's work (2022). The work is mainly concern with cultural differences and the performance of students who study in a multicultural community. Questions were classified based on students' experiences and the influence of cultural backgrounds on their learning processes. The questionnaire used a Likert Scale consisting of five options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The questions consisted of 15.

3.4. Data Collection Procedures

Data collection involved distributing a structured questionnaire to (150) students from diverse departments "English, Community Health Nursing, and Business Administration department" at Cihan University. However, a final sample of 100 students was selected ensuring an equal representation of 50 males and 50 females. The questionnaire was classified based on students' experiences and the influence of cultural backgrounds on their learning processes employed by the

students. On a designated day, the researchers distributed the questionnaires to the selected participants and emphasized the importance of honest and thorough responses. After three days, all completed questionnaires were collected. The researchers then entered the data into a spreadsheet for analysis, maintaining quality control measures throughout the process.

3.5. Data Analysis

To analyze the data, the researchers employed the formulas as follows:

1. The Likert Scale
2. After the researchers had collected the questionnaire, they counted the total answers for each answer category that existed in each aspect.
3. Then, the data obtained from the questionnaire are analyzed by using the percentage techniques.

Explanation: P: Percentage F: The frequency of item N= Total Respondent

4. After calculating the percentage of the data from the questionnaire, the researchers interpreted the data, collected the information, and predicted the result of the impact of cultural differences on students learning outcome.

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

CHAPTER IV
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4. Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data for the study “The Impact of Cultural Background Differences on Students Learning Outcome. The chapter begins with a result of the analysis conducted to answer the research question. Through this analysis, the researchers of the present study aim to gain insights into the impact of cultural background of students learning outcome into their academic performance during learning process. The Questionnaire was applied by researchers in Cultural Diversity Environment at Cihan University – Erbil. The research question aimed to investigate the differences among students in classroom at Cihan University – Erbil. 100 students, consisting of 50 males and 50 females, participated in filling out the questionnaire. They had learning experiences in the range of 2 to more than 4 years.

4.1. Answering the Research Question

In this section, we address the research question on their performance of cultural background differences in classroom or their academic process.

Our questionnaire as we selected these categories based on cultural background differences among students learning outcomes, The results of female students’ responses to these items are presented in the following table;

4.2. Table 1. “Female participants from diverse departments”

| NO. | Statements | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-----|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | I feel comfortable at participating in classroom discussions that involve culturally sensitive topics. | %14 | %16 | %18 | %2 | %0 |
| 2 | I have experienced instances where cultural norms from my background conflicted with academic expectations. (e.g., critical thinking, questioning authority) | %7 | %17 | %17 | %7 | %2 |
| 3 | Cultural background affects my ability to collaborate with peers from different cultures in group assignments. | %12 | %7 | %23 | %6 | %2 |
| 4 | Cultural background impacts on my motivation to excel academically. | %10 | %13 | %19 | %5 | %3 |

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| 5 | I occasionally struggle with academic expectations. (e.g., independent research, critical analysis) due to my cultural upbringing. | %15 | %17 | %11 | %5 | %2 |
| 6 | I believe on cultural representation in examples and case studies improves my academic performance. | %13 | %15 | %10 | %9 | %3 |
| 7 | Cultural background influences my approach to time management and meeting deadlines. | %13 | %8 | %18 | %10 | %1 |
| 8 | I figured out course materials lacking cultural relevance to my personal background. | %9 | %11 | %16 | %10 | %4 |
| 9 | My cultural background affects my ability to ask for help from instructors or peers. | %7 | %20 | %15 | %4 | %4 |
| 10 | I believe on cultural background influences my ability to apply theoretical knowledge in real world scenarios. | %12 | %13 | %13 | %6 | %6 |
| 11 | I think exposure to diverse cultural perspectives in academics benefits my learning outcomes. | %7 | %18 | %11 | %9 | %5 |
| 12 | I assess the effectiveness of the institution's efforts to provide culturally responsive teaching methods as commendable. | %12 | %9 | %13 | %8 | %8 |
| 13 | Cultural background affects my ability to learn and engage with new technologies in academics. | %7 | %14 | %21 | %5 | %3 |
| 14 | Cultural background influences my preferred method of assessment. (e.g., exams vs. projects) | %18 | %7 | %16 | %6 | %3 |
| 15 | Cultural differences affect my understanding of feedback from instructors. | %14 | %8 | %17 | %6 | %5 |

The Most Frequent Result Applied by students in different departments at Cihan University – Erbil

This research question aimed to investigate the most frequent result applied by students' indifferent departments at Cihan University – Erbil. This question was viewed from the highest mean score among all categories. After analyzing data, the result is described in the following figures;

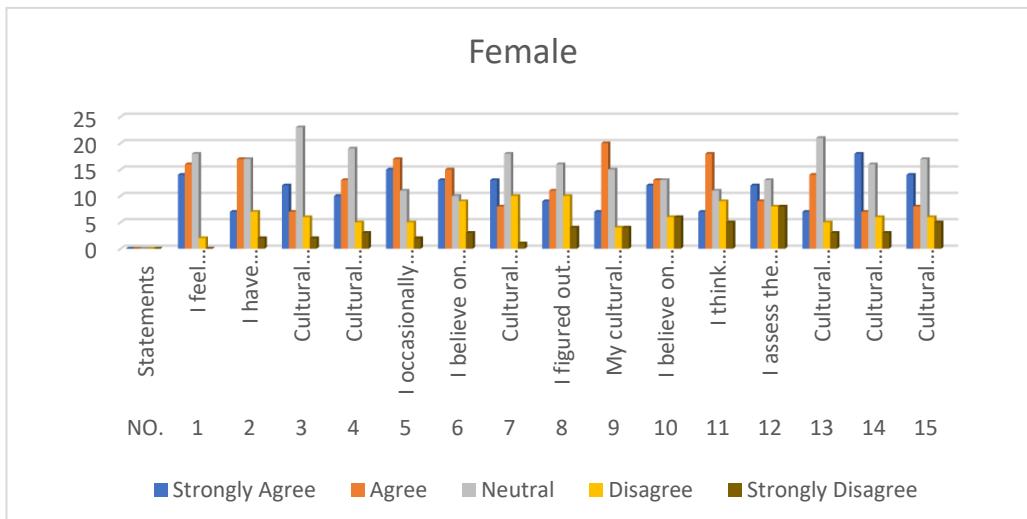


Figure 1. The impact of cultural background differences on female students learning outcome

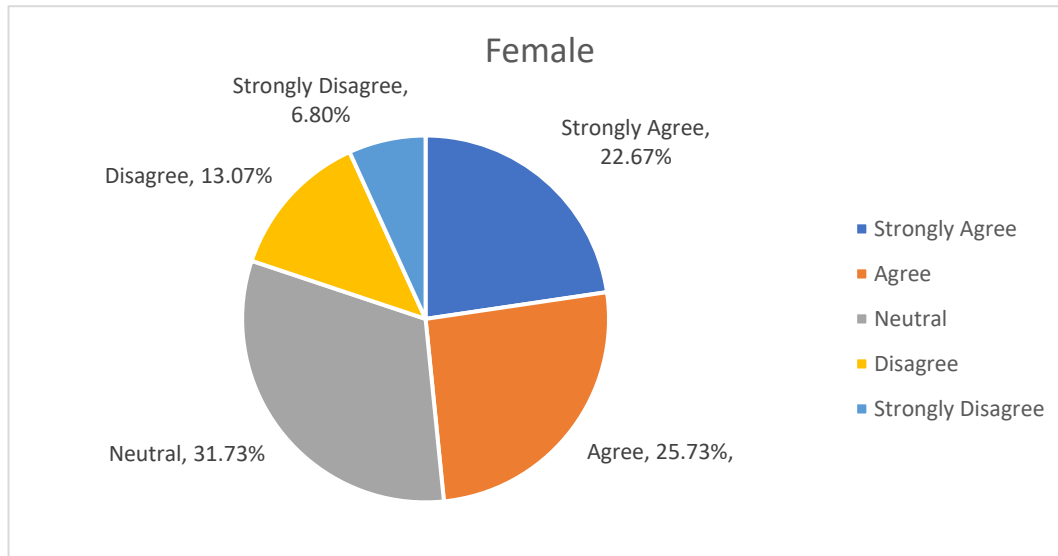


Figure 2. The result of female students'

In table 1, it presents the highest category as females were certain about it is statement 3 “Cultural background affects my ability to collaborate with peers from different cultures in group assignments.” Which have impact on their learning process outcome, the difficulty to collaborate with other students or peers’ different cultures such as Arab and Kurdish students in Cihan University – Erbil. Cultural differences, like values and habits, can make teamwork harder, especially if stereotypes or biases are involved. Communication issues, such as language fluency or misunderstandings, can also create problems. Additionally, social divisions or feelings of inequality can lead to conflicts or uneven participation.

The balanced category between “highest to lowest” which female students were certain about it is statement 13 “Cultural background affects my ability to learn and engage with new technologies in academics. So, it seems how cultural differences can impact students’ use of technology. Limited exposure to technology, language barriers, and traditional learning styles may make it harder for some students to adapt to modern tools. Attitudes toward technology and access to resources like devices or internet also play a role.

The lowest category as female students were certain about is statement 12 “I assess the effectiveness of the institution’s efforts to provide culturally responsive teaching methods as commendable.” It is suggested that the university is making notable progress in adapting teaching methods to meet the diverse cultural needs of students. This approach likely includes acknowledging cultural differences, incorporating diverse perspectives into the curriculum, and fostering an inclusive learning environment.

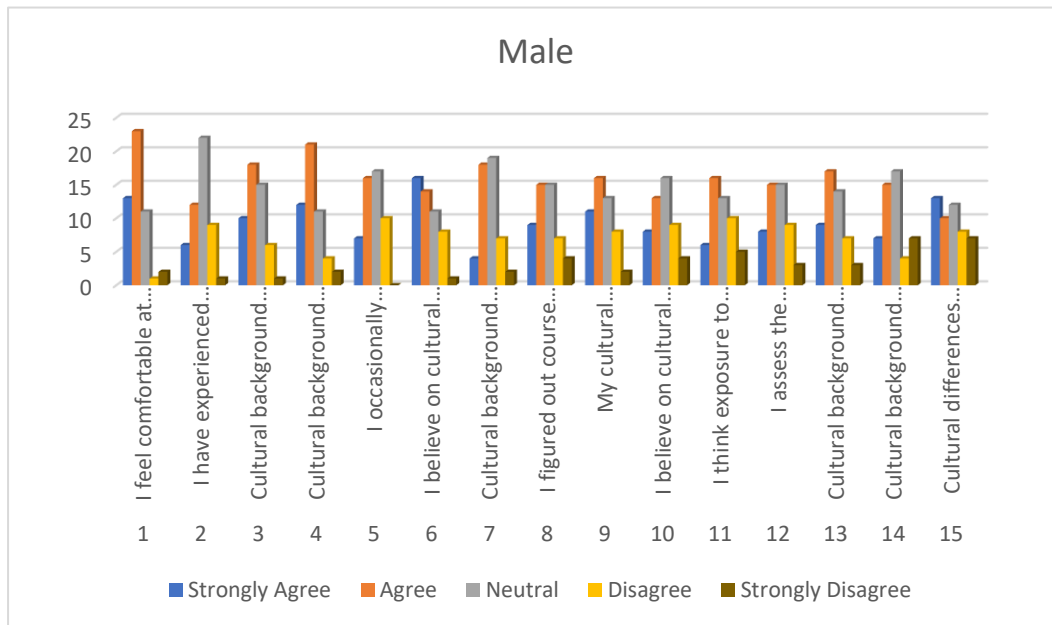
As well as our questionnaire as we selected these categories based on cultural background differences among students learning outcomes, The results of male students’ responses to these items are presented in the following table;

4.3. Table 2. “Male participants from diverse departments”

| NO. | Statements | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|------------|--|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | I feel comfortable at participating in classroom discussions that involve culturally sensitive topics. | %13 | %23 | %11 | %1 | %2 |
| 2 | I have experienced instances where cultural norms from my background conflicted with academic expectations. (e.g., critical thinking, questioning authority) | %6 | %12 | %22 | %9 | %1 |
| 3 | Cultural background affects my ability to collaborate with peers from different cultures in group assignments. | %10 | %18 | %15 | %6 | %1 |
| 4 | Cultural background impacts on my motivation to excel academically. | %12 | %21 | %11 | %4 | %2 |
| 5 | I occasionally struggle with academic expectations. (e.g., independent research, critical analysis) due to my cultural upbringing. | %7 | %16 | %17 | %10 | %0 |
| 6 | I believe on cultural representation in examples and case studies improves my academic performance. | %16 | %14 | %11 | %8 | %1 |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| 7 | Cultural background influences my approach to time management and meeting deadlines. | %4 | %18 | %19 | %7 | %2 |
| 8 | I figured out course materials lacking cultural relevance to my personal background. | %9 | %15 | %15 | %7 | %4 |
| 9 | My cultural background affects my ability to ask for help from instructors or peers. | %11 | %16 | %13 | %8 | %2 |
| 10 | I believe on cultural background influences my ability to apply theoretical knowledge in real world scenarios. | %8 | %13 | %16 | %9 | %4 |
| 11 | I think exposure to diverse cultural perspectives in academics benefits my learning outcomes. | %6 | %16 | %13 | %10 | %5 |
| 12 | I assess the effectiveness of the institution’s efforts to provide culturally responsive teaching methods as commendable. | %8 | %15 | %15 | %9 | %3 |
| 13 | Cultural background affects my ability to learn and engage with new technologies in academics. | %9 | %17 | %14 | %7 | %3 |
| 14 | Cultural background influences my preferred method of assessment. (e.g., exams vs. projects) | %7 | %15 | %17 | %4 | %7 |
| 15 | Cultural differences affect my understanding of feedback from instructors. | %13 | %10 | %12 | %8 | %7 |

Figure 3. The impact of cultural background differences on male students learning outcome



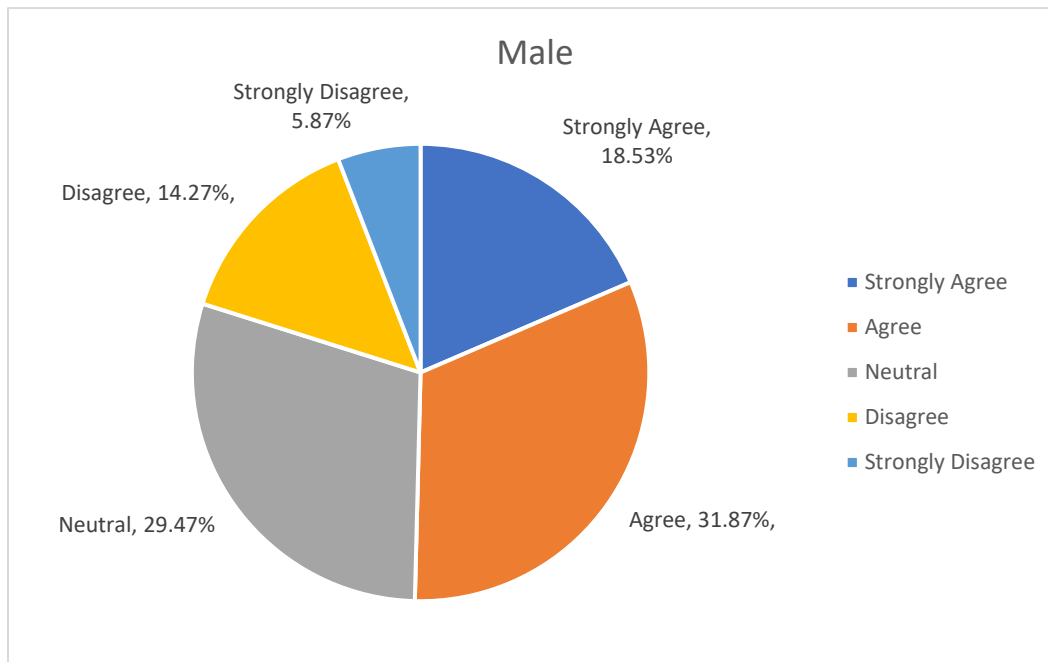


Figure 4. The result of male students

The highest category in table 2 as male students were certain about it is statement 1 “I feel comfortable at participating in classroom discussions that involve culturally sensitive topics.” It shows that they feel comfortable in case of cultural background that affects their ability to work with peers. It suggests that students may feel at ease discussing issues related to culture, identity, and diversity. If students feel comfortable in these discussions, it indicates that their cultural background does not hinder their ability to engage with peers on sensitive topics. This comfort level helps create an open, respectful environment where students can share ideas, learn from different perspectives, and work together more effectively.

The balanced category between “highest to lowest” which male students were certain about it is statement 7 “Cultural background influences my approach to time management and meeting deadlines.” So, here it highlights how cultural norms and values affect students' attitudes toward time. In some cultures, strict adherence to schedules and deadlines is emphasized, while in others, a more flexible approach is common. These differences can influence how students prioritize tasks, plan their work, and meet academic deadlines.

The lowest category as male students were certain about is statement 15 “Cultural differences affect my understanding of feedback from instructors” It reflects how a student’s cultural background can influence their ability to interpret and respond to feedback. This may lead to

challenges in understanding the intent or meaning of instructors' comments, potentially impacting their academic progress.

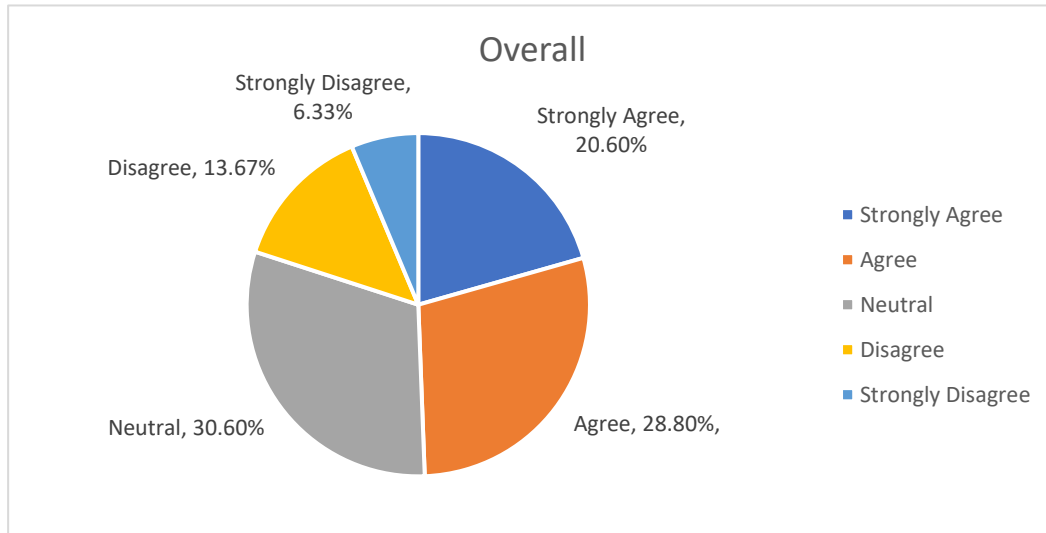


Figure 5. The result of overall students

4.4. Discussion

The findings of the present study reveal that, if all kinds of educational facilities are provided to the students in order to expect good outcomes in a university, then important elements related to the learning environment of an educational institution should be given (Kennedy, 2005). From the participants' view of this study, it is observed that the learning environment of different culture background of Cihan University is good for diverse students and well suited for academic process. The findings of the study showed that the classroom of university is in a good position, the most average of overall statement is (30.60%) which is "Neutral" Students who selected a neutral stance on these statements may experience minimal or mixed impacts of cultural background on their academic performance. They neither strongly feel that cultural differences significantly influence their participation in discussions, collaboration, motivation, or comprehension of academic expectations. They may acknowledge cultural influences on time management, technology use, assessment preferences, and communication with instructors but do not perceive them as major barriers or advantages. Their responses suggest a balanced or adaptable approach to diverse academic environments, where cultural background plays a role but does not strongly dictate their learning outcomes.

The survey results show a range of perspectives on how cultural background impacts students' learning experiences. Strongly Agree (20.60%) & Agree (28.80%): Nearly half of the students (49.4%) believe that their cultural background significantly influences their academic performance, participation, motivation, and interactions with peers and instructors. This suggests that for many students, cultural factors play a meaningful role in shaping their learning experiences, whether through differences in academic expectations, communication styles, or study habits.

Furthermore, disagree (13.76%) & Strongly Disagree (6.33%): A smaller percentage of students (20.09%) do not feel that their cultural background affects their academic journey in a significant way. These students may believe that academic expectations are universal or that they have adapted well to the educational system, minimizing any cultural barriers. The mixed responses highlight that while cultural background is an important factor for many students, its impact varies based on individual experiences, adaptability, and institutional inclusivity. Marshall (2004) suggested that, the environment around the university, encouraging students, supporting them, everything can make a university a great success in terms of academic performance. The comments of the results of students' surveys suggest that they believe culture impact students academically but understanding how is a complicated question to answer. Because Culture is composed of different factors is hard for teachers to understand how or to what extent culture affect students' academic achievement. But understanding that including culture in the classroom is important for their academic success.

Additionally, the students in our hometown, Erbil and other Kurdistan regions are facing several problems that affect their learning achievements and output in particular because of cultural and financial issues. For instance, financial problems may limit students' opportunities to develop their language skills or learn other languages common in Erbil and other parts of the world, such as Arabic and English. These challenges may hinder their chances of getting into universities, attending training courses, or buying textbooks that could have helped them improve their language skills and knowledge. Since these languages are part of the school and university programs, such limitations pose a challenge in the learning process. The family setting or the parental beliefs can also significantly affect a student's learning and knowledge acquisition. For example, students from parents with traditional or restrictive culture or practices may not be

allowed to attend online or practical classes, or even make friends with people of other ethnicities which hinders their growth.

Before we conclude, the education system of Erbil and the Kurdistan Region and the schools, both public and private, are key in determining the learning achievements of students with regard to cultural exposure. Kurdish students are mainly targeted by schools, which offer low cultural diversity and limited chances of learning other languages naturally. Another factor is the absence of technology in private schools which also affects students' cultural learning effectiveness by restricting them to certain approaches to learning. Furthermore, English and Arabic language classes are usually based on the preparation for examinations not on the actual acquisition of the language. Some teachers, of course, care more about grades than whether students gain fundamental language skills such as listening, reading, writing, and speaking. This approach hampers students' chances of being able to communicate with their fellow culture learners and gain knowledge. Finally, on the flip side of the coin, there are some schools that encourage language learning and cultural interchange, and thus, cultivate students' cultural tolerance and language skills.

Based on our above-stated viewpoint, it is absolutely essential for institutions to concentrate on certain important areas and improve students' learning experiences as well as handle cultural issues. Strengthening language assistance helps students clarify academic goals by helping them to cross communication obstacles. Encouraging cultural knowledge among faculty and students will help to create a more inclusive and sympathetic learning environment. Making classes more relevant by including different points of view, case studies, and examples can help to guarantee representation in them. Policies and classroom practices can help to strengthen inclusion initiatives and therefore foster a sense of belonging for every student. Offering many role models, including professors and guest speakers from many backgrounds, will motivate students and expand their dreams. Finally, ensuring equal access to resources—including technology, mentoring, and academic support—helps to level the playing field and guarantees every student the chance to achieve. Institutions can build a more fair and culturally sensitive education system by means of these topics.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5. Conclusion

Ultimately, our research emphasizes the importance of different influence of cultural background on students' academic experiences at Cihan University. Shaping students' education nowadays requires cultural variety. Its aim is to enable pupils to be global citizens who appreciate, respect, and support the variety of individuals around them. Education is therefore a potent tool to dismantle obstacles, foster knowledge, and build a more just and integrated society. Although almost half of the respondents admitted their cultural backgrounds affect their academic performance, motivation, and relationships, many students took a neutral or uninterested view, implying that cultural influences could be subtle or less strong for some individuals. These variations highlight the difficulty of comprehending and handling the function of culture in academic environments. The study supports the idea that although cultural background is very important, its impact is modulated by personal adaptation, institutional inclusiveness, and the more general learning environment.

Additionally, many students expressed in the survey results their gratitude for the varied and inclusive learning environment the university offers. Still to be handled, nevertheless, are certain issues including cultural obstacles in communication, teamwork, and understanding of academic standards. Moreover, the academic experiences of students from various cultural backgrounds, institutions have to give top priority important interventions. These include of providing language abilities, support programs, encouraging cultural awareness among professors and students, including different viewpoints into the curriculum, and supporting inclusive classroom methods. Providing equal access to resources and role models from many backgrounds also helps students to be inspired and supported as they negotiate and achieve in a multicultural academic setting.

Finally, by emphasizing these techniques, schools can provide a well appropriate academic growth for their kids. In the end, not only is ethical need but also a strategic benefit for promoting academic excellence and global citizenship to embrace and confront cultural diversity in higher education. Future studies should investigate the environmental and cultural background variations teachers in university and school settings employ in the classroom to develop an equitable form of instruction. We accept the assumptions for the first and second study questions which acknowledge that culturally responsive teaching tactics can improve learning for different students. Cultural

background shapes cognitive styles, communication patterns, and attitudes towards education, so influencing learning results. Different societies give different learning strategies top priority; some are critical thinking while others are rote memory. Academic achievement is also influenced by socioeconomic variables, instructor expectations, and language challenges. For understanding that cultural backgrounds affect students' motivation and involvement by means of their learning methods, values, and attitudes towards education. Schools and teachers who use culturally responsive teaching techniques can create a more inclusive and inspiring learning environment, hence enhancing student involvement and achievement.

Recommendation

The study focused mainly on gender and limited number of participants, in further study ethnical background of students goes under investigation, there may other results and findings be concluded. To be succeed in a diverse cultural environment, students should immerse themselves in learning, speaking, and interacting with various cultures. This experience enriches their educational journey, improves their learning outcomes, and fosters cultural awareness. Additionally, utilizing technology helps them track progress, receive instant feedback, and deepen their understanding of different cultural backgrounds.

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Appendix A:

| NO. | Statements | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-----|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | I feel comfortable at participating in classroom discussions that involve culturally sensitive topics. | %27 | %39 | %29 | %3 | %2 |
| 2 | I have experienced instances where cultural norms from my background conflicted with academic expectations. (e.g., critical thinking, questioning authority) | %13 | %29 | %39 | %16 | %3 |
| 3 | Cultural background affects my ability to collaborate with peers from different cultures in group assignments. | %22 | %25 | %38 | %12 | %3 |
| 4 | Cultural background impacts on my motivation to excel academically. | %22 | %34 | %30 | %9 | %5 |
| 5 | I occasionally struggle with academic expectations. (e.g., independent research, critical analysis) due to my cultural upbringing. | %22 | %33 | %28 | %15 | %2 |
| 6 | I believe on cultural representation in examples and case studies improves my academic performance. | %29 | %29 | %21 | %17 | %4 |
| 7 | Cultural background influences my approach to time management and meeting deadlines. | %17 | %26 | %37 | %17 | %3 |
| 8 | I figured out course materials lacking cultural relevance to my personal background. | %18 | %26 | %31 | %17 | %8 |
| 9 | My cultural background affects my ability to ask for help from instructors or peers. | %18 | %36 | %28 | %12 | %6 |
| 10 | I believe on cultural background influences my ability to apply theoretical knowledge in real world scenarios. | %20 | %26 | %29 | %15 | %10 |
| 11 | I think exposure to diverse cultural perspectives in academics benefits my learning outcomes. | %13 | %34 | %24 | %19 | %10 |
| 12 | I assess the effectiveness of the institution's efforts to provide culturally responsive teaching methods as commendable. | %20 | %24 | %28 | %17 | %11 |
| 13 | Cultural background affects my ability to learn and engage with new technologies in academics. | %16 | %31 | %35 | %12 | %6 |
| 14 | Cultural background influences my preferred method of assessment. (e.g., exams vs. projects) | %25 | %22 | %33 | %10 | %10 |
| 15 | Cultural differences affect my understanding of feedback from instructors. | %27 | %18 | %29 | %14 | %12 |