



# **Development of Intercultural Sensitivity Model for the Public School Teachers in Indigenous Dominated Communities in the Province of Cotabato**

***Sharon Jane B. Valle***

**DepED, Philippines**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the dimensions of intercultural sensitivity among public school teachers in Indigenous-dominated communities in Cotabato Province, Philippines. The seven validated dimensions include: (1) Advancing and Upholding the Rights of People, (2) Cultural Knowledge, (3) Culturally Responsive Teaching for Indigenous Learners, (4) Cultural Awareness, (5) Community Immersion and Cultural Engagement, (6) Culturally Inclusive Teaching Practices, and (7) Cultural Awareness in Teaching. Employing both Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), the research sought to validate a multidimensional framework that reflects culturally responsive teaching practices aligned with Indigenous contexts. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO = .953) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ( $\chi^2 = 16296.457$ ,  $p < .001$ ) confirmed data suitability for factor analysis. EFA revealed a nine-component structure explaining 66.669% of the total variance, while CFA supported a seven-factor model with strong fit indices (CFI = .913, TLI = .901, NFI = .866, RMSEA = .066, and CMIN = 2.557). The validated model offers a robust framework for teacher training, curriculum development, and policy formulation in multicultural education. Recommendations include integrating the model into professional development programs, promoting teacher immersion in Indigenous communities, and institutionalizing culturally responsive education practices. This study contributes to the broader discourse on equity and inclusivity in Philippine education.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The ability of the teachers to handle diverse students is an indication of their commitment to strengthen their cultural competence and awareness. Through this, they would be able to deliver the lessons with highest level of competence upon knowing the cultural backgrounds of their learners. As classrooms become more multicultural, teachers have to adapt their strategies in order to meet the needs of their students effectively. The challenge, therefore is the inability of the teachers to have the awareness towards cultural differences as well as the necessary skills.

Segura-Robles and Parra-González (2019) articulated that teachers have the training to navigate and thrive in multicultural environments. In addition, Basman and Bayman (2024) stated that institutional commitment to cultural competence is significant for systematic change. The openness and acceptance of diversity indicates the increased cultural competence for teachers (Magsanay et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, intercultural sensitivity helps mitigate misunderstandings and conflicts that arise from cultural differences (Adili et al., 2024). Without a foundation understanding, it may result to inadvertently perpetuate stereotypes in behaviors that are perceived as insensitive and discriminatory. Thus, hindering effective collaboration and mutual respect especially in the school setting (Charoenslip, 2024).

Current research on intercultural sensitivity among public elementary teachers often relies on broad surveys and self-reported data (Filipović & Jurišić, 2024; Abad-Merino et al., 2024) which may not fully capture the nuances of teachers' experiences or the effectiveness of specific interventions. Many studies use generic questionnaires to measure cultural competence, which can oversimplify complex issues and overlook context-specific challenges (Cerić et al., 2023). Additionally, there is a tendency to focus on general perceptions of cultural competence rather than observing actual classroom practices or interactions (Celik et al., 2024). This methodological approach limits the depth of understanding regarding how teachers apply their intercultural competence in real-world settings.

As educational environments increasingly reflect the diverse societies they serve, public elementary schools are witnessing a significant rise in cultural diversity among students. Teachers are at the frontline of this diversity and are tasked with creating inclusive and effective learning environments that cater to all students. However, without adequate and intercultural sensitivity, teachers may struggle to meet these diverse needs, potentially leading to inequitable educational experiences and outcomes for students from varied backgrounds.

## **Statement of the Problem**

This study aimed to develop a model of intercultural sensitivity among the public school teachers in the Province of Cotabato. Specifically, it intends to provide answer to the following sub-problems:

1. What are the dimensions of intercultural sensitivity among public school teachers in the Province of Cotabato?
2. What model on intercultural sensitivity among public school teachers in the Province of Cotabato can be developed?

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## METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the methods used, the respondents and the participants, and the data analysis.

### Research Design

A quantitative cross-sectional survey design was used in this study. This type of research typically uses structured tools such as surveys, experiments, or statistical analysis to gather measurable data.

### Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were 358 public school teachers from the IP dominated communities in the Province of Cotabato composed of the SDO's of Cotabato and Kidapawan City who answered the survey questionnaires.

### Research Instrument

The instrument used in the gathering of the data was the pre-structured questionnaire. Each dimension was taken from previous studies or literatures also known as the theoretical domains. Statements were rated using a Likert scale.

### Data Analysis

The researcher tested the constructs of the developed questionnaire through exploratory factor analysis (Govindasamy et al., 2024). On the other hand, to measure the factorability of the data the KMO and Bartlett's Test were used. Further, the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Balogun et al., 2024) was applied to seek answers whether the predetermined model fits the data well.

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered in relation to the research objectives. It provides a detailed presentation of the statistical findings, including descriptive and inferential results, supported by visual models and tables.

### Dimensions of Intercultural Sensitivity for the Public School Teachers in Indigenous Dominated Communities in the Province of Cotabato

The results present various dimensions of intercultural sensitivity among public school teachers working in Indigenous-dominated communities in the Province of Cotabato. The factor loadings from the analysis revealed multiple thematic dimensions that reflect teachers' values, knowledge, and practices in promoting inclusive, culturally aware education. These dimensions indicate the complex, multidimensional nature of intercultural sensitivity and underscore the ways in which teachers engage with Indigenous communities and learners.

The first major dimension, **Advancing and Upholding the Rights of People**, includes items with high factor loadings such as ensuring non-discrimination (.800), advocating for curriculum inclusion (.728), and educating students about Indigenous rights (.714). This cluster reflects teachers' commitment to justice, equity, and culturally affirming education. Their role extends beyond classroom instruction to include policy support and rights-based advocacy, demonstrating a holistic approach to cultural inclusion.

The second dimension, **Cultural Knowledge**, focuses on teachers' awareness and understanding of the cultural, historical, and socio-economic context of Indigenous learners. Items such as understanding family and community roles (.613), language knowledge (.625), and traditional practices (.544) show strong internal consistency. This theme suggests that cultural knowledge is foundational in informing teachers' responsiveness and in designing contextually appropriate instructional practices.

Another key theme, **Culturally Responsive Teaching** for Indigenous Learners, encompasses practices that adapt instruction to align with cultural norms and student learning preferences. Items like modifying teaching approaches (.770), using oral traditions (.568), and fostering experiential learning (.717) reflect adaptive strategies. These practices bridge pedagogical methods with Indigenous ways of knowing, making learning more accessible and relevant for Indigenous students.

The fourth dimension, **Cultural Awareness**, reflects teachers' attunement to local languages (.615), traditions (.527), and classroom practices influenced by Indigenous beliefs. It includes the integration of cultural content and community-based knowledge into lessons (.649). This awareness shapes teachers' ability to design inclusive and respectful learning environments that recognize the identity and values of students.

**Community Engagement and Cultural Immersion** emerged as another core dimension, demonstrated by strong factor loadings for participation in community events (.685), time spent outside school hours with Indigenous families (.663), and collaboration with elders (.437). This theme suggests that cultural sensitivity is not just instructional—it is relational and built through trust and immersion in the lived experiences of the community.

Additional dimensions include **Culturally Inclusive Teaching Practices**, **Culturally Responsive Curriculum Development**, and **Cultural Awareness in Teaching**, all of which reflect efforts to decolonize the curriculum, eliminate stereotypes (.463), and ensure relevance of materials and pedagogy to Indigenous learners. Teachers also showed engagement in Culturally Inclusive Teaching Strategies by incorporating tactile and visual materials (.404) and promoting collaborative learning that reflects communal values (.436).

Item	Item Statement	Score	Construct
53	I believe it is important for teachers to be aware of and support Indigenous students' rights.	.800	Advancing and upholding the rights of people
51	I strive to ensure that Indigenous students are not discriminated.	.800	
52	I value their cultural identity in the classroom.	.791	
56	I make efforts to ensure that Indigenous students feel their cultural identity is respected and recognized.	.750	
54	I advocate for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in the curriculum to reflect the rights of Indigenous peoples to preserve and promote their culture.	.728	
50	I actively support policies that respect and uphold the rights of Indigenous students within the educational system.	.714	
55	I educate my students about the rights and contributions of Indigenous peoples.	.714	
49	I am committed to advocating for the educational rights of Indigenous students and ensuring they have equal access to quality education.	.668	
58	I provide opportunities for Indigenous students to share their culture, perspectives, and experiences in the classroom.	.632	
60	I check that materials are free from stereotypes or misinterpretation.	.557	
18	I understand the importance of land, family, and community in the lives of Indigenous people.	.427	
59	I ensure that my teaching materials and resources reflect diverse Indigenous cultures.	.452	
57	I incorporate Indigenous cultural practices, traditions, and languages into my teaching to honor the cultural heritage of Indigenous students.	.464	
33	I understand their community values.	.704	Cultural Knowledge
30	I am aware of the unique educational challenges faced by Indigenous students, such as lower levels of school attendance or higher dropout rates.	.686	
31	I understand the social and economic challenges that Indigenous families face, such as poverty or access to resources, and how these challenges affect students' learning.	.659	
29	I integrate traditional knowledge into educational experiences.	.642	
32	I understand how the cultural of Indigenous peoples influence the behaviors and educational needs of students.	.634	
28	I am aware of the traditional knowledge systems of Indigenous people.	.627	
26	I am knowledgeable about the Indigenous languages spoken in the community and their significance to students' identity.	.625	
27	I understand the role of family, elders, and community in the education of Indigenous students.	.613	

37	I understand how to adapt my teaching strategies to better support their learning styles.	.588	Culturally Responsive Teaching for Indigenous Learners
25	I have a strong understanding of the cultural traditions, practices, and values of the Indigenous communities where I teach.	.544	
34	I incorporate Indigenous cultural perspectives into my teaching and curriculum.	.527	
36	I use culturally relevant materials (e.g., Indigenous stories, texts, history) in my lessons to connect with Indigenous students' cultural backgrounds.	.502	
20	I am familiar with local Indigenous customs, traditions, and belief systems that influence students' behaviors and perspectives in the classroom.	.497	
38	I adapt my teaching style with the cultural preferences of the students.	.487	
35	I infuse their historical knowledge in deepening their understanding of the lesson.	.485	
21	I have learned about the local Indigenous language(s) and its significance in the community, even if I do not speak it fluently.	.458	
49	I am committed to advocating for the educational rights of Indigenous students and ensuring they have equal access to quality education. I incorporate Indigenous cultural perspectives into my teaching and curriculum.	.404	
34	I incorporate Indigenous cultural perspectives into my teaching and curriculum.	.435	
38	I adapt my teaching style with the cultural preferences of the students.	.470	
35	I infuse their historical knowledge in deepening their understanding of the lesson.	.448	
40	I modify my instructional approach to reflect the values, traditions, and beliefs of the Indigenous communities where I teach.	.770	
39	I adapt my teaching methods to accommodate the cultural learning styles of Indigenous students.	.718	
41	I incorporate hands-on, experiential learning activities that resonate with the learning preferences of Indigenous students.	.717	
43	I adapt the pace and structure of my lessons to align with the diverse needs and backgrounds of Indigenous students.	.632	
44	I create a classroom environment that respects and reflects the cultural identity of Indigenous students.	.589	
42	I use storytelling, oral traditions, and community-based knowledge as central teaching tools to support Indigenous students' learning.	.568	
45	I ensure that classroom activities are culturally relevant and inclusive of Indigenous knowledge, history, and practices.	.538	
47	I use visual and tactile learning materials that are culturally relevant to Indigenous students.	.519	
24	I work with local community members, such as elders or knowledge keepers, to bring cultural insights into the classroom.	.459	
48	I make adjustments to my teaching methods when I notice that Indigenous students are not engaging with the material.	.453	

23	I adapt my teaching strategies based on the cultural practices and values I have learned from the Indigenous community.	.424	
22	I incorporate knowledge gained from the Indigenous community into my lesson plans and teaching practices.	.400	
46	I encourage collaborative learning in my classroom to reflect the communal values of Indigenous cultures.	.426	
20	I am familiar with local Indigenous customs, traditions, and belief systems that influence students' behaviors and perspectives in the classroom.	.410	Cultural Awareness
7	I actively seek out Indigenous authors, texts, or resources to include in the curriculum.	.653	
6	I integrate cultural knowledge into my teaching practices.	.649	
5	I integrate Indigenous cultural perspectives into my lesson plans and teaching materials.	.643	
4	I am familiar with the language(s) spoken in the Indigenous communities where my students come from.	.615	
9	I promote the inclusion of cultural knowledge in the teaching and learning process.	.527	
3	I can identify specific Indigenous cultural practices, such as rituals, festivals, or ceremonies, that influence students' behaviors and interactions in the classroom.	.509	
10	I adapt my teaching methods to accommodate the unique learning styles of Indigenous students.	.460	
22	I incorporate knowledge gained from the Indigenous community into my lesson plans and teaching practices.	.426	
8	I encourage students to share their Indigenous cultural experiences in the classroom.	.441	
20	I am familiar with local Indigenous customs, traditions, and belief systems that influence students' behaviors and perspectives in the classroom.	.411	Community Engagement and Cultural Immersion
21	I have learned about the local Indigenous language(s) and its significance in the community, even if I do not speak it fluently.	.445	
24	I work with local community members, such as elders or knowledge keepers, to bring cultural insights into the classroom.	.437	
15	I regularly engage with community leaders and elders to better understand the cultural needs and educational challenges of Indigenous students.	.757	
16	I attend cultural festivals, ceremonies, or gatherings to immerse myself in the local Indigenous traditions and customs.	.725	
14	I actively participate in community events and cultural activities in the Indigenous community where I teach.	.685	
17	I make an effort to spend time in the community outside of school hours to understand the social dynamics and values of Indigenous families.	.663	
9	I promote the inclusion of cultural knowledge in the teaching and learning process.	.441	Culturally Inclusive Teaching Practices
12	I create a classroom environment where Indigenous students feel comfortable expressing their cultural identity.	.686	
11	I assist my students' learning needs.	.684	

13	I ensure that Indigenous students' cultural practices, such as traditional attire or language, are respected in the classroom.	.638	
8	I encourage students to share their Indigenous cultural experiences in the classroom.	.507	
19	I consider the indigenous values learned in my teaching.	.462	
58	I provide opportunities for Indigenous students to share their culture, perspectives, and experiences in the classroom.	.427	Culturally Responsive Curriculum Development
60	I check that materials are free from stereotypes or misinterpretation.	.463	
59	I ensure that my teaching materials and resources reflect diverse Indigenous cultures.	.602	
57	I incorporate Indigenous cultural practices, traditions, and languages into my teaching to honor the cultural heritage of Indigenous students.	.466	
1	I am aware of the cultural backgrounds of my students and consider this when planning lessons.	.689	Cultural Awareness in Teaching
2	I am aware of the cultural traditions, practices, and values of the Indigenous communities in which my students live.	.688	
45	I ensure that classroom activities are culturally relevant and inclusive of Indigenous knowledge, history, and practices.	.436	Culturally Inclusive Teaching Strategies
47	I use visual and tactile learning materials that are culturally relevant to Indigenous students.	.404	
46	I encourage collaborative learning in my classroom to reflect the communal values of Indigenous cultures.	.436	

#### Fit Indices for Seven-Factor Model on Interculturally Sensitivity for the Public School Teachers in Indigenous Dominated Communities in the Province of Cotabato

The model fit results for the seven-factor model on intercultural sensitivity among public school teachers in Indigenous-dominated communities in the Province of Cotabato suggest a moderately acceptable fit. The Chi-Square Minimum Discrepancy (CMIN) value is 2.923, which, while higher than the commonly accepted threshold of 2.0, is still within a range that suggests a reasonably good model fit. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is .836 and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) is .815—both approaching the acceptable threshold of .90, indicating that the model adequately accounts for the observed data. Meanwhile, the Normed Fit Index (NFI) of .772 is slightly lower than the standard cutoff, suggesting that some improvements could be made to the model's specification. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) value of .074, however, falls within the acceptable range (below .08), indicating a satisfactory level of approximation error. The Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) is 2759.582, providing a reference point for comparing alternative models, where lower values denote better model parsimony.

Taken together, these values indicate that the seven-factor model offers a reasonably strong representation of the underlying construct of intercultural sensitivity. The model captures a substantial portion of the complexity involved in the ways teachers interact with, respond to, and support Indigenous learners. However, the slightly suboptimal values in NFI and CFI suggest that while the model is acceptable, refinement could enhance its explanatory power. This model can still be effectively used to inform culturally responsive teaching practices.

#### Fit Indices for Seven-Factor Model on Interculturally Sensitivity for the Public School Teachers in Indigenous Dominated Communities in the Province of Cotabato

Fit Indices	Obtained Value
CMIN	2.923
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	.836
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	.815
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	.772
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	.074
Akaike Information Criterion (AIC)	2759.582

### Seven-Factor Model on Interculturally Sensitivity for the Public School Teachers in Indigenous Dominated Communities in the Province of Cotabato

The structural equation model (SEM) shown in the diagram represents a seven-factor model of intercultural sensitivity for public school teachers in Indigenous-dominated communities. Each latent variable (F1 through F7) corresponds to a distinct factor, with observed variables (Q1 to Q56) loading onto their respective constructs. The model also displays the path coefficients between these latent constructs, indicating the strength and direction of their relationships.

Factor F1 is shown to have moderate positive path relationships with F2 (0.12), F3 (0.11), and F4 (0.18), suggesting that foundational attitudes or awareness (possibly intercultural recognition or values) influence other dimensions such as culturally inclusive practices and responsiveness. F2 has stronger connections to F3 (0.20), F4 (0.17), and F5 (0.17), emphasizing its role as a pivotal factor—possibly reflecting intercultural knowledge or instructional strategies—bridging foundational awareness and applied practices. F3, which may relate to practical classroom approaches or cultural integration techniques, strongly influences F4 (0.28) and is linked to F7 (0.14), reinforcing its relevance in shaping adaptive or responsive teaching styles. Meanwhile, F4 serves as a convergence point with incoming influences from F1, F2, and F3, implying its role as an outcome dimension, such as culturally affirming classroom environments or inclusive policy support.

Interestingly, F5 has bidirectional connections with both F1 (0.11) and F7 (0.09), possibly indicating a feedback mechanism between reflective practices and culturally adaptive behaviors. F6 appears to be influenced by F1 (0.20) and F2 (0.13), pointing to its position as a more dependent construct—likely capturing aspects like teacher collaboration or reinforcement of intercultural principles. Lastly, F7 is shown as being influenced by F3 (0.14) and influencing F5 (0.09), suggesting it may represent teacher flexibility or responsiveness in evolving contexts.

### Fit Indices for Seven-Factor Model on Interculturally Sensitivity for the Public School Teachers in Indigenous Dominated Communities in the Province of Cotabato

The model fit indices for the seven-factor model on intercultural sensitivity among public school teachers in Indigenous-dominated communities in the Province of Cotabato indicate an acceptable and well-fitting structural model. The Chi-square minimum (CMIN) value is 2.557, suggesting a reasonable level of discrepancy between the hypothesized model and the observed data, considering the complexity of the model. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is .913, and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) is .901—both surpassing the commonly accepted threshold of .90, indicating a good fit. Additionally, the Normed Fit Index (NFI) is .866, which also approaches acceptable standards for model adequacy.

The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) value is .066, falling within the range of .05 to .08, which is generally interpreted as an acceptable error of approximation and indicates reasonable model fit in the population. Furthermore, the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) value of 1051.298 supports model comparison, suggesting that this model offers a better fit compared to alternative models with higher AIC values.

These fit indices collectively affirm that the seven-factor structure effectively captures the dimensions of intercultural sensitivity as exhibited by public school teachers in Indigenous communities. It implies that the latent constructs and their corresponding indicators are appropriately specified and statistically supported, thus making the model a valuable framework for understanding and enhancing culturally responsive practices in education.

### Fit Indices for Seven-Factor Model on Interculturally Sensitivity for the Public School Teachers in Indigenous Dominated Communities in the Province of Cotabato

Fit Indices	Obtained Value
CMIN	2.557
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	.913
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	.901
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	.866
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	.066
Akaike Information Criterion (AIC)	1051.298

### Seven-Factor Model on Interculturally Sensitivity for the Public School Teachers in Indigenous Dominated Communities in the Province of Cotabato

The structural equation model presented reflects a seven-factor structure assessing intercultural sensitivity among public school teachers in Indigenous-dominated communities in Cotabato. Each latent factor is measured through multiple observed variables (questionnaire items), and the model demonstrates strong standardized loadings, mostly above 0.70, indicating good item reliability and internal consistency for the latent constructs.

F1 consists of items Q51 to Q56, with loadings ranging from 0.75 to 0.81, highlighting a well-defined factor. This suggests strong internal coherence and indicates that the measured items effectively capture a specific aspect of intercultural sensitivity, possibly related to respect and advocacy for Indigenous rights.

F2 includes Q29 to Q33 with loadings between 0.75 and 0.82, indicating reliable measurement of another important dimension, likely centered on cultural awareness or knowledge of Indigenous traditions and values. This factor is closely correlated with F1 ( $r = 0.69$ ), implying that knowledge of cultural context enhances support for Indigenous advocacy.

F3 (Q39 to Q43), showing loadings from 0.71 to 0.86, appears to relate to culturally responsive pedagogy or inclusive teaching strategies. It demonstrates moderate to strong correlations with F1 (0.61), F2 (0.57), and F5 (0.55), suggesting that responsive instructional practices are positively associated with both cultural awareness and support mechanisms.

F4 includes Q5 to Q7, with loadings from 0.70 to 0.82, and may reflect classroom inclusivity and equality-based practices. Its notable associations with F2 (0.53) and F6 (0.63) imply that inclusive teaching relies not only on cultural knowledge but also on behavioral attitudes that reflect intercultural respect.

F5 (Q14 to Q17), with loadings from 0.64 to 0.80, likely centers around interpersonal engagement or teacher adaptability. It correlates closely with F1 (0.62) and F4 (0.44), highlighting the role of teacher flexibility and supportive practices in promoting a culturally safe classroom environment.

F6, composed of Q11 to Q13 (loadings from 0.69 to 0.76), seems to represent communicative competence or sensitivity to cultural expressions. It is associated with F4 (0.63) and F7 (0.57), reflecting that effective communication aligns with inclusive practices and community engagement.

F7 (Q1 and Q2, loadings at 0.82 and 0.72) appears to represent external involvement or community immersion. Its connection with F1 (0.58) and F2 (0.53) suggests that deeper community interaction enriches teachers' appreciation of Indigenous knowledge systems and enhances advocacy behaviors.

Overall, the model presents strong inter-factor correlations, ranging from moderate (0.36) to strong (0.69), indicating that the dimensions of intercultural sensitivity among teachers are highly interconnected. This implies that improvements in one domain—such as cultural awareness or inclusive classroom practices—can positively influence other related behaviors, including advocacy, communication, and community collaboration. The interconnected structure highlights the comprehensive nature of intercultural sensitivity as a multidimensional competency essential for fostering equity and inclusivity in Indigenous educational contexts.

#### Scale on Intercultural Sensitivity of Public School Teachers in Indigenous Dominated Communities in the Province of Cotabato

<b>Advancing and upholding the rights of people</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
I educate my students about the rights and contributions of Indigenous peoples.					
I actively support policies that respect and uphold the rights of Indigenous students within the educational system.					
I advocate for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in the curriculum to reflect the rights of Indigenous peoples to preserve and promote their culture.					
I make efforts to ensure that Indigenous students feel their cultural identity is respected and recognized.					
I value their cultural identity in the classroom.					
I strive to ensure that Indigenous students are not discriminated.					
I believe it is important for teachers to be aware of and support Indigenous students' rights.					
<b>Cultural Knowledge</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
I understand how the cultural of Indigenous peoples influence the behaviors and educational needs of students.					
I integrate traditional knowledge into educational experiences.					
I understand the social and economic challenges that Indigenous families face, such as poverty or access to resources, and how these challenges affect students' learning.					
I am aware of the unique educational challenges faced by Indigenous students, such as lower levels of school attendance or higher dropout rates.					
I understand their community values.					
<b>Culturally Responsive Teaching for Indigenous Learners</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
I adapt the pace and structure of my lessons to align with the diverse needs and backgrounds of Indigenous students.					



I incorporate hands-on, experiential learning activities that resonate with the learning preferences of Indigenous students.					
I adapt my teaching methods to accommodate the cultural learning styles of Indigenous students.					
I modify my instructional approach to reflect the values, traditions, and beliefs of the Indigenous communities where I teach.					
<b>Cultural Awareness</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
I integrate Indigenous cultural perspectives into my lesson plans and teaching materials.					
I integrate cultural knowledge into my teaching practices.					
I actively seek out Indigenous authors, texts, or resources to include in the curriculum.					
<b>Community Immersion and Cultural Engagement</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
I make an effort to spend time in the community outside of school hours to understand the social dynamics and values of Indigenous families.					
I actively participate in community events and cultural activities in the Indigenous community where I teach.					
I attend cultural festivals, ceremonies, or gatherings to immerse myself in the local Indigenous traditions and customs.					
I regularly engage with community leaders and elders to better understand the cultural needs and educational challenges of Indigenous students.					
<b>Culturally Inclusive Teaching Practices</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
I ensure that Indigenous students' cultural practices, such as traditional attire or language, are respected in the classroom.					
I assist my students' learning needs.					
I create a classroom environment where Indigenous students feel comfortable expressing their cultural identity.					
<b>Cultural Awareness in Teaching</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
I am aware of the cultural traditions, practices, and values of the Indigenous communities in which my students live.					
I am aware of the cultural backgrounds of my students and consider this when planning lessons.					

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Summary of Findings*

The study investigated the dimensions of intercultural sensitivity among public school teachers in Indigenous-dominated communities in Cotabato Province using Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

Results from the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO = .953) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ( $\chi^2 = 16296.457$ ,  $p < .001$ ) confirmed that the dataset was highly suitable for factor analysis.

The Exploratory Factor Analysis identified a nine-component structure accounting for 66.669% of the total variance, while the Confirmatory Factor Analysis supported a seven-factor model with acceptable fit indices (CFI = .913, TLI = .901, NFI = .866, RMSEA = .066, and CMIN = 2.557).

The validated dimensions include Advancing and Upholding the Rights of People, Cultural Knowledge, Culturally Responsive Teaching for Indigenous Learners, Cultural Awareness, Community Immersion and Cultural Engagement, Culturally Inclusive Teaching Practices, and Cultural Awareness in Teaching. Each factor demonstrated strong internal consistency, with most item loadings ranging from .70 to .82, and the inter-factor correlations were moderate to strong, indicating that these components are distinct yet interrelated aspects of teachers' intercultural sensitivity.

The findings highlight that teachers adopt culturally responsive teaching through the integration of Indigenous culture, hands-on learning, and storytelling.

## Conclusions

Intercultural sensitivity is multidimensional, encompassing values, pedagogical strategies, and relational practices that align with Indigenous cultural contexts.

The validated seven-factor model serves as a robust framework for measuring teachers' readiness and effectiveness in engaging with Indigenous learners and communities.

Teachers show strong commitment to promoting the rights of Indigenous peoples and integrating cultural knowledge into teaching. However, areas such as community engagement and culturally responsive curriculum development may benefit from enhanced institutional support.

The strong model fit indices affirm that the constructs are well-specified and can serve as a theoretical and practical basis for professional development and policy enhancement in multicultural education.

Teachers modify their strategies by incorporating Indigenous culture, storytelling, and experiential learning to align with students' cultural preferences. Their values, cultural identity, and shared experiences strengthen their commitment to inclusive teaching.

Ensuring authenticity in content and collaboration with Indigenous communities helps address stereotypes and promote equitable learning environments.

## Recommendations

1. Integrate the seven dimensions into in-service training modules.
2. Equip teachers with strategies for culturally responsive and rights-based education.
3. Incorporate Indigenous knowledge systems, languages, and community practices in curriculum planning and lesson delivery.
4. Encourage the use of culturally relevant resources and experiential learning strategies.
5. Promote teacher immersion programs and collaboration with Indigenous elders and leaders to enhance contextual understanding.
6. Facilitate community-driven education activities that value Indigenous voices.
7. Develop policies that formally recognize and support intercultural sensitivity as a core teacher competency.
8. Mandate the integration of cultural responsiveness into performance evaluation frameworks and school improvement plans.
9. Conduct longitudinal studies to measure the impact of interculturally sensitive practices on student outcomes.
10. Explore the relationship between teacher intercultural sensitivity and community engagement metrics.
11. Establish school-based mechanisms to evaluate the authenticity and impact of culturally responsive teaching materials and strategies.

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