

## INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN BRAZIL

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to measure the level of intercultural sensitivity of public school principals in Brazil, and to seek evidence about which individual, institutional, socioeconomic, and localization characteristics are related to this aspect. Intercultural sensitivity translates behavioral aspects into situations of interaction between individuals from different cultures. It is one of the important competencies for education professionals to better perform their pedagogical work within the school environment. In order to achieve the aim of this work, an Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI) was proposed, and then, econometric regressions were made in OLS to correlate these characteristics with the proposed index. From the results of these models, it was proposed a profile of public school principals in relation to intercultural sensitivity. With the evidence obtained by the model, orientation of public policies focused on the theme was proposed.

**Keywords:** Intercultural sensitivity; regression model; basic education.

### SENSIBILIDADE INTERCULTURAL DE DIRETORES DE ESCOLAS PÚBLICAS NO BRASIL

### RESUMO

Este trabalho tem por objetivo mensurar o grau de sensibilidade intercultural dos diretores de escolas públicas no Brasil e buscar evidências sobre quais características individuais, institucionais, socioeconômicas e localizacionais se relacionam com tal aspecto. A sensibilidade intercultural traduz aspectos comportamentais em situações de interação entre indivíduos de culturas diferentes. Ela é uma das competências importantes para que profissionais da educação possam desempenhar melhor seu trabalho pedagógico dentro do ambiente escolar. Para alcançar o objetivo deste trabalho foi proposto um Índice de Sensibilidade Intercultural – ISI – e, em seguida, foram feitas regressões econométricas em MQO com o objetivo de relacionar tais características com o índice proposto. A partir dos resultados desses modelos foi proposto um perfil dos diretores de escola pública de educação básica em relação à sensibilidade intercultural. Com as evidências obtidas pelo modelo, propôs-se a orientação de políticas públicas voltadas ao tema.

**Palavras-chave:** Sensibilidade intercultural; modelo de regressão; educação básica.

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## INTRODUCTION

Cultural diversity is a challenge in modern society; it demands flexibility to accept the different and encourages the preservation of historical roots at the same time. Balance between those two factors is usually complicated.

In a country with such territorial extension and great blending, known to have serious problems regarding prejudice: how do school principals see interculturality issues? How is the relation with different cultures in a country in which migration between regions is substantial and cultural diversity is wide? Such issues have been widely discussed recently, by the alias of Intercultural Sensitivity.

Bennett (1993a) conceptualizes Intercultural Sensitivity through a Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). In this regard, Intercultural Sensitivity goes through two stages: ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism. According to the above-mentioned author, at ethnocentric stage it encounters denial behaviors, defense, and minimization against different cultures. At ethnorelative stage it encounters acceptance, adaptation, and integration.

Intercultural Sensitivity is a rising academic discussion topic. It is one of the necessary competences for education professionals to better perform their pedagogical work inside school environment.

There is extensive literature about this topic in European academia; however, few Brazilian scholars address the subject. Many Brazilian authors highlighted aesthetic education and intercultural education, not emphasizing Intercultural Sensitivity. Thus, this work seeks to fill a gap in the Brazilian literature related to this topic. Furthermore, the work has the trump card of having a national sample of Brazilian public school principals, which can reveal evidence for this continental country.

The overall aim of this work is to measure the extent of Intercultural Sensitivity of Public School Principals in Brazil, and search evidences on which individual, institutional, socioeconomic, and localization characteristics affect this level of Intercultural Sensitivity.

Furthermore, the pursue is also to build and validate an index to measure the level of Intercultural Sensitivity; measure the level of Intercultural Sensitivity between public school principals in basic education; know the profile of public school principals in basic education regarding Intercultural Sensitivity; analyze the relation between Intercultural Sensitivity Index and principals' profile; and, from the results found, to guide public policies.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Intercultural Sensitivity is relevant for academic research because it sustains itself on the importance of exercising a teaching profession that is committed to human education, in addition to redirecting the researcher to unravel interculturality more fully, mitigating horizons reductionists of reality.

For Bennett (1993b), the more sophisticated the personal experiences with different cultures, the bigger the intercultural competences of the individual are.

Arne Gillert (2001) affirms that developing Intercultural Sensitivity means, in its essence, learning to recognize and manage the fundamental differences concerning the perception of the world by cultures.

According to Bennett (2004), developing Intercultural Sensitivity demands the subjective experience of the apprentice to be given attention. He also points out that the key to such sensitivity and to abilities related to intercultural communication is the way apprentices recognize cultural differences.

As stated in Shannonhouse, Barden, and Mobley (2015), sensibility when working with people from different cultures is used as an argument to increase comprehension of how cultural differences became more complex. Intercultural Sensitivity is considered the forerunner attitude of cultural competence, defined by Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003) as “to achieve the capability to interpret and experience cultural differences in more complex ways” (p. 421).

Still in the work of Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003), Intercultural Sensitivity is defined as the ability of discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences. Alternatively, the term intercultural competence refers to the capability of thinking and act in an intercultural adequate way. The above-mentioned authors argue, yet, that a greater Intercultural Sensitivity is associated with a higher potential to the exercise of intercultural competences.

In addition, research by other authors, such as Gardenswartz & Rowe (1993), on domestic intercultural relations (contact through forms of ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, etc.) has found a key role for intercultural competence.

Intercultural competence is regarded as key in increasing comprehension and improving relations between cultures (BENNETT, 1993a,b; HAMMER, 1999).

According to Chen and Starosta (1997), Intercultural Sensitivity is one of the more important skills that help us live successfully in a society culturally diverse.

For Bennett (2004), cultural sensitivity is “a process of personal growth of the individual, in their way of perceiving and evaluating cultural differences. In this process, the individual achieves upper levels in their capability of recognizing, adjusting, and accepting cultural differences.”

Bennett (1986) also postulated a model of Intercultural Sensitivity; the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), which is based on concepts of cognitive psychology and constructivism, and operates on the assumption that individuals follow a predictable path when they gain experience with different cultures (HAMMER; BENNETT; WISEMAN, 2003).

Works such as Hammer, Bennett e Wiseman (2003), Bennett and Bennett (2004), among others, conceptualize the stages of Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). The first three guidelines of DMIS are conceptualized as more ethnocentric, which means that culture itself is experienced as central to the reality somehow. First stage is Denial, where the person realizes their culture as the only real one, refusing to perceive cultural differences. On the most extreme way of denial, people from the same culture can be perceived as “real” human beings, and other people are seen as simpler forms in the environment to be tolerated, explored, or eliminated, as needed. Bennett and Bennett (2004) still suggest that denial of cultural differences is the typical standard condition of primary, monocultural socialization.

At Defense stage, the own culture is seen as the only viable indeed; all other ones are decried. The world is organized into “we” and “them”, in which the own culture is superior and other cultures are inferior. People from dominant cultures are susceptible to experience the Defense stage as an attack to their values (often perceived by others as privilege). People from

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non-dominant cultures are more susceptible to experience the Defense stage as discovery and consolidation of a separated cultural identity in contrast with the dominant group (cf. BANKS, 1988; PARHAM, 1989).

At Minimization stage, elements of the own culture are considered universal, but now the differences are recognized. There is, however, minimization of its significance - similarities with the own culture are valued and differences are trivialized. People in Minimization stage wait for similarities and they may become insistent about how to correct the behavior of others in order to correspond to their expectations. Especially for people from dominant cultures, minimization tends to mask the acknowledgment of the own culture (ethnicity) and the institutional privilege that it provides to the members.

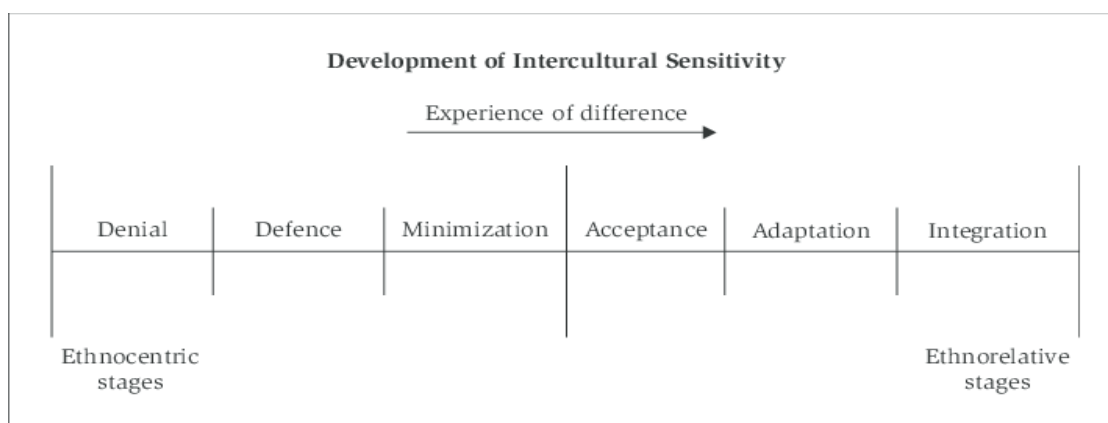
The last three guidelines of DMIS are defined as ethnorelative, which means that the own culture is experienced in the context of other cultures. Acceptance of cultural difference is the stage in which the own culture is experienced as one of many equally complex worldviews, and where the other is perceived as different but equally human.

In Adaptation, the experience of other culture produces the perception and behavior appropriated to that culture. The worldview is expanded to include relevant structures of other cultural worldviews. There is a process of aggregation, where new behaviors are learned and connected to personal behaviors. Empathy is also developed, understanding the others from their own perspective.

At the last stage, known as Integration, the person is able to move between different worldviews that coexist in themselves. Bennett (1993a) describes that integration is not necessarily better than adaptation in situations that demand intercultural competence, but it is descriptive of a growing number of people including many members of non-dominant cultures, long-term expatriated and global nomads.

The Figure 1 describes the six stages of Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). The first three guidelines are conceptualized as more ethnocentric and the last three ones as ethnorelative.

Figure 1 – Stages in Development of Intercultural Sensitivity



Source: BENNETT (1986).

The referred figure shows a continuous DMIS that goes from ethnocentrism, experience of the own culture as “central to reality”, to ethnorelativism, experience of the own culture and other cultures as “in relation to the context”. The Movement of development is one-way, permanent and applicable to anything defined as cultural difference, although it may have “retreat” in some positions. Greater or lesser familiarity with particular cultures does not change the level of sensitivity; however, it affects the range of competence that someone can self-promulgate.

According to Hammer, Bennett e Wiseman (2003), more ethnocentric guidelines can be seen, in general, as ways to avoid cultural difference by denying its existence, raising defenses against it, or minimizing its importance. More ethnorelative worldviews are ways to search for cultural difference by accepting its importance, adapting the perspective to take it into consideration, or integrating the concept in a definition of identity.

According to Bennett (2004), an assumption made by DMIS is that people can be more or less “sensitive” to cultural difference. This concept is based on the constructive idea of cognitive complexity (DELIA; CROCKETT; GONYEA, 1970; LOEVINGER; WESSELER, 1970).

Bennett (1986) affirms that developing Intercultural Sensitivity requires attention to the subjective experience of the apprentice. The author explains that the key to such sensitivity and abilities related to intercultural communication is the way that cultural difference is interpreted.

Bennett (1986) still suggests that the continuous stages of personal growth allow the diagnosis of the level of sensitivity of individuals and groups. Continuous development moves from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. Development stages are typically illustrated by specific statements and behaviors that indicate the level of sensitivity.

Bennett’s model of Intercultural Sensitivity requires not only gradual change in affection and cognition, but also the behavioral capability to achieve the competence state of intercultural communication (CHEN; STAROSTA, 1997).

### Cultural Diversity, Interculturality, and Multiculturality

Culture is part of the wholeness of a given society, nation, or people. This wholeness is all that shapes group living. It includes customs, habits, way of thinking, act, and feel, traditions, and techniques used to development and interaction of the men with nature (DE OLIVEIRA *et al.*, 2018).

In today’s globalized world the issue of cultural diversity and interculturality becomes even more current. Intense migratory flow and high speed of information exchange through global network of computers bring light to the increasing multiculturalism.

Beltrán (2002) makes a contrast between intracultural and intercultural. Cultural diversity, according to him, can be observed in two aspects. First, in intracultural diversity, cultures are not homogeneous from an internal point of view; each one is built by different segments and social groups with identities and characteristics that articulate themselves in a process of adjustment, adaptation, and negotiation, and this is known as intracultural diversity. Secondly, cultures tend to consider themselves as homogeneous, and blur the internal diversity when compared or contrasted with other different cultures; this is known as intercultural diversity. The concept of cultural diversity is a tautology, because what defines culture, both singular and plural, is exactly diversity.

Still according to Beltrán (2002), the fairly recent establishment of Nation-States in the western world was based on a project that involves removal and exclusion of traditional cultural differences on the inside, the standardization and homogenization of behaviors, and the imposition of a number of ideas considered universal, or better yet, national. The same author also says that in a time when culture is increasingly losing roots, with the constant growth of volume and speed of information transmission and the uncontrolled spread of cultural traits, one must reconsider the supposedly different cultural areas.

Bartolomé and Cabrera (2003) add that the challenge of the current western society is to deal with cultural diversity and recognition of distinct identities in the collective space, many times referred as the challenge of “multiculturalism”.

Another aspect to be considered is that not only globalization, but also population mobility such as urbanization, unprecedentedly increased the contact between cultures and cohabitation between different ethnic-cultural groups and ways of life, thus contributing for the multi/interculturality of societies, particularly in the cities and to social and economic interdependence, placing serious challenges to the management of cultural diversity, intercultural communication and cohabitation of many cultures (LAVALLEE; OUELLET; LAROSE, 1991; LABAT; VERMES, 1994; WIEVIORKA, 1996).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (VOICU, 2002) underlines in the Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity, article 3: “[...] it is one of the roots of development, understood not simply in terms of economic growth, but also as a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence.”

The main goal of interculturality is the coexistence and interaction of individuals and groups from different cultures and identities in the same space or social formation (BELTRÁN, 2002).

## Intercultural Education

Intercultural Sensitivity applied to the school environment provides intercultural education, which defines an approach, a procedure, a dynamic process of social nature in which the participants are positively boosted to be aware of their interdependence; it is also a philosophy, a policy and a mindset that guarantees this approach (VELASCO, 2004). It is “to be with, live with, and live together”; it is defined as “pedagogy of listening” (FALTERI, 1998).

The UNESCO World Report - Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue consider that:

In increasingly complex multicultural societies, education must enable us to acquire the intercultural competencies that will permit us to live together with – and not despite – our cultural differences. The four principles of quality education defined by the report of the World Commission on Education for the 21st Century – ‘learning to be’, ‘learning to know’, ‘learning to do’, and ‘learning to live together’ – can be successfully implemented only if cultural diversity is situated at their core. (UNESCO World Report – Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue – Summary – p. 15-16, translated).

According to Fleuri (1999), education, teaching, and sensitivity are topics that interlace and intertwine, and are seen in varied and multiple spaces. The school is one of them. It is also, par excellence, the place of teaching and making intercultural education happen. The horizon

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of this approach is constituted from the creation of educational contexts that allow the integration and the creative, critical, and cooperative interaction between different individuals, as well as their social, political, economic, and cultural contexts.

Nanni (1998) defines intercultural education as a multidimensional process of interaction between individuals from different cultural identities. These individuals live a deep and complex experience of conflict/acceptance, through intercultural encounter. It is an opportunity to grow one's personal culture, with the view of changing structures and relations that prevent the construction of a new civil coexistence. Intercultural education promotes, moreover, a change in the school system: it defends equality of educational opportunities for all, requires teaching training, and encourages re-designing of textbooks, as well as the adoption of techniques and multimedia tools.

More recent works such as De Sousa (2019) show that intercultural competence is an essential tool and with it is possible to work with various pedagogical contents, creating in the classroom, in turn, an environment of knowledge and understanding of the culture of the other.

Vieira (2017) aimed to evaluate the level of intercultural sensitivity, to assess perceptions and the level of agreement regarding the welcoming of refugees' people in Portugal, based on collated data from 117 college finalists, in a public school from Lisbon, whose ages range from 16 to 20 years old. The tool used covered three sections, the first of which is an adaptation of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale of Chen and Starosta (1997), a questionnaire with a scale of attitudes relating to the interaction of people from different cultures. The participants revealed having a medium/high level of intercultural sensitivity (with an average of 94,863 points, on a scale from 24 to 120), being that, when comparing the male to the female students, the female were associated with a significantly higher intercultural sensitivity average. Upon being questioned whether "Portugal should welcome refugees," 94% of the students expressed agreement with the welcoming of the refugees' people in Portugal in an overall perspective. 81.20% of the participants are "fully agree" and "agree" with the statement "A refugee can live in my community / neighborhood".

Despite the importance of the topic, there is a relative scarcity of related investigative contributions. Therefore, this work intends to contribute to the discussion related to the theme.

### Migration and Brazilian Cultural Diversity

Migrations are of great importance to Intercultural Sensitivity. They allow the individual to have contact with different cultures, either because they migrated or because their territory receives migrants. In this context, it is necessary to contextualize migrations in Brazil.

According to Vainer (2005), the migrant is considered an individual endowed with economic rationality when decides to migrate and, therefore, able to design their path through the territory in a way that is adequate to the needs of the labor market, as if each migrant was an "entrepreneur of themselves" searching for an optimal location for their human capital.

Migrations were determinant in recent Brazilian history, contributing decisively to the particularities of its urbanization process. This process only accelerated and took a really structural dimension on the second half of last century. Only in the 1960s the urban population surpassed the rural population. The velocity of the urbanization process, greater than more advanced capitalist countries, was the big novelty of Brazilian matter (BRITO, 2007).

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Most part of the second half of last century, the most important regional migration flow in Brazil involved interactions between the Northeast, poor, and Sao Paulo, the most industrialized and rich state of the country, configuring a spatial pattern of direction North-South. Indeed, fast-growing industrialization and urbanization began in 1950s when mortality had begun to drop and the rate of population growth was the highest in Brazilian history, at 3% a year. Thus, the less developed and high-fertile areas promoted huge reservoirs of workforce (VAINER; BRITO, 2001).

## METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

Regarding the research classification, it is a quantitative, explanatory, experimental and exploratory research. The data used to compose this research was collected from questionnaires sent by electronic messages to 133.694 Brazilian public school principals.

As already explained, this work proposes to build an Index of Intercultural Sensitivity denominated ISI and subsequently, from the usage of regression methods, build a profile of school principals that present higher Intercultural Sensitivity. In other words, this research analyses if school directors recognize, comprehend, and value the culturally different individual in their pedagogical practice. The analysis process of Intercultural Sensitivity is multifaceted, and the aspects are the result of a dynamic interaction between individual, localization, and institutional elements of principals.

This study is based on primary data deriving from the application of a semi structured questionnaire. This questionnaire was divided into two blocks. The first block has eighteen questions and aims at capturing demographic, localization, and socioeconomic characteristics of the participants, such as age, sex, skin color, marital status, home state, state where currently reside, salary range, level of education, among others. Therefore, it was possible to know the profile of public school principals in relation to their Intercultural Sensitivity, using the method of linear regression.

On the second block, the questions aim at locating in which level of Intercultural Sensitivity the participant stands. This block had thirty questions based on the works of Bennett (1986, 1993a, 2004) regarding Intercultural Sensitivity. Questions were closed, answered in Likert format.

The answers were ranked with the purpose of discriminate which participants presented higher or lower Intercultural Sensitivity according to the scale of DMIS. Thus, it was possible to verify if principals have an ethnocentric or ethnorelative inclination.

The questionnaire seeks – based on the literature of Bennett, Hammer, Wiseman, and other authors – to capture what is the perception that participants have regarding human relations and the world connected to culture, more specifically, in case of individuals coming from different cultures, to measure the level of Intercultural Sensitivity.

After prepared, the questionnaire was submitted to a pre-test with the purpose of testing and validating the research instrument. It is important to carry out a pre-test after preparing the questionnaire in order to evaluate the acceptability, clarity, understanding, response time, and reduction in number of items. Through this procedure it was perceived the need to make corrections and improvements to make the research more intelligible and concise to final application.



Concerning the application of the instrument, it was used the research system *LimeSurvey* for questionnaire application and data collection. This system is free software developed with the goal of preparing, publishing, and collecting questionnaire answers. Once created, a questionnaire can be published online (question by question, group of questions by group of questions, or all in one single page of questionnaires). *LimeSurvey* allows defining how the questions will be exhibited and varying the format of questionnaires through a system of patterns (*templates*). It also provides a basic statistical analysis on the questionnaire results.

Another relevant functionality is the capability of generate individualized Tokens (keys), in such a way that only the person who receives a token can access the questionnaire. Tokens are information sent to the list of people that you want to invite to participate in a questionnaire, allowing more control of the questionnaire available on the Internet. It was chosen the access control so that only who received an invite, in this case, public school principals in Brazil, was able to answer and send the answers. Afterward, the questionnaire was sent by electronic messages through *LimeSurvey*, in October of 2016.

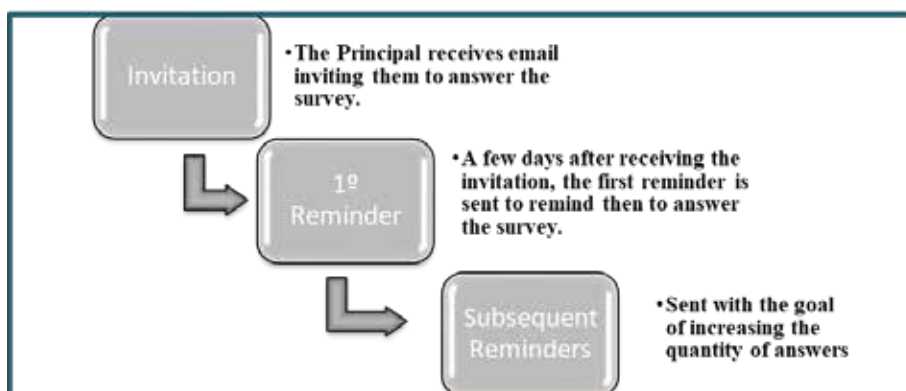
E-mails were sent through the database provided by Ministry of Education. Despite having available 133,694 emails on the database, the system only allowed to include 116,780 in its structure. According to the school census of 2015 there were 149,098 public schools of basic education in Brazil. Thus, the database represented 89.6% of schools.

The data from emails were divided into the States and the Federal District. As the capacity of the system is unknown, it was decided to make a random choice of the chosen emails in order to avoid eventual geographic bias.

Another limitation of *LimeSurvey* is that it only allows sending invitations to participate in blocks of 250 emails. As there were a total of 116,780 invitations to be sent, it was necessary to send 468 emails so that everyone could receive the invitation.

The Flow of sending is shown in Chart 1.

Chart 1 – Flow of emails to Public School Principals



Source: Survey data.

Then, reminders were sent to the principals that did not answer immediately. The goal was to sensitize school principals to participate on the survey. In this moment the System allowed to send in blocks of 500 emails, which reduced by half the time to send each reminder. It was noticed that most answers reached the database shortly after the invitations and reminders were sent. At the end, a total of 10,084 answers were obtained.

## Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI)

The Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI) was measured through the elaborated questions. They elicited the connection of principals with different cultures, and in which way these individuals interact, see themselves, and understand an individual from another origin. This research was based on part of the methodology of Damasceno, Khan e Lima (2011) and on the theory of Hammer *et al* (2003). ISI can be mathematically defined as:

$$ISI = \sum_{i=1}^{30} c_i$$

In which:  $-60 \leq ISI \leq 60$ , e  $-2 \leq c_i \leq 2$

Where:

ISI = Intercultural Sensitivity Index; and,

$C_i$  = Contribution of the question “i” – in Likert scale - in Intercultural Sensitivity Index of public school principals in basic education.

Each of the thirty statements had always five possible answers. Chart 2 presents the first three questions of the Block 2 of the questionnaire.

Chart 2 – Representation of the first three questions of the applied questionnaire

1. I like to interact with people from different cultures.  
( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) No opinion ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree
  2. I believe that I am able to interact well with people from different cultures.  
( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) No opinion ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree
  3. I have difficulties to communicate with people from different cultures.  
( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) No opinion ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree

Source: research data.

If the individual answered “Strongly agree” to statements “1” and “2”, two points were added to the ISI of the interviewed. If they answered “Agree” just one point was added, and so on; two negative points were given in case they answered “Strongly disagree”. The ranking order of some random questions was reversed to avoid moral hazard. Thus, in the case of statement “3” the score was reversed. After marking the 30 statements, the individual obtained an answer that could vary from – 60 to 60 points.

Once the ISI of each participant was obtained using the Ordinary Least Squares Method, it was possible to estimate the contribution margin of each socio-economic-localization characteristic on the referred ISI.

## RESULT ANALYSIS

The main results found on this research will be presented. At first, some descriptive statistics will be presented in order to have a more general view of the sample collected. Next, the results of regression will be presented accompanied by comments and meanings of the results

obtained. Unfortunately, it is not possible to make a dialogue between the results achieved in this work with those found with similar works, given the particularity of this work, which is to relate the value attributed to “ISI” to the characteristics of the school principals who were interviewed.

Thus, Table 1 shows Descriptive Statistics of the participants of the questionnaire. It presents the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and maximum and minimum values of variables considered in regression models.

Table 1 – Descriptive Statistics of Public School Principals Group

Variable	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Maximum	Minimum
ISI	27.43	26	22	9.62	55	-25
Age	44.29	45	49	8.47	75	19
Sex	0.23	0	0	0.42	1	0
Unmarried	0.17	0	0	0.38	1	0
Married	0.60	1	1	0.49	1	0
Divorced	0.10	0	0	0.3	1	0
Widowed	0.02	0	0	0.15	1	0
Union	0.09	0	0	0.28	1	0
Elementary School	0.001	0	0	0.04	1	0
High School	0.02	0	0	0.13	1	0
Higher Education	0.24	0	0	0.43	1	0
Postgraduate Course	0.69	1	1	0.46	1	0
Masters	0.04	0	0	0.21	1	0
Doctorate/PhD	0.005	0	0	0.07	1	0
Minimum Wages	4.39	4	4	1.91	9	0
Children	1.72	2	2	1.16	7	0
Catholic Religion	0.65	1	1	0.48	1	0
Protestant	0.18	0	0	0.38	1	0
Asian	0.001	0	0	0.04	1	0
Muslim	0.001	0	0	0.02	1	0
Jewish	0.001	0	0	0.03	1	0
African	0.01	0	0	0.12	1	0
Other Religions	0.26	0	0	0.44	1	0
White Color	0.55	1	1	0.5	1	0
Brown	0.36	0	0	0.48	1	0
Black	0.08	0	0	0.27	1	0
Asian	0.005	0	0	0.07	1	0
Indigenous	0.01	0	0	0.07	1	0
Television	1.36	1	1	0.96	5	0
Journalism	0.87	1	1	0.34	1	0
Sports Programs	0.19	0	0	0.39	1	0
Soap Opera	0.27	0	0	0.45	1	0
Movies	0.45	0	0	0.5	1	0
Auditorium Program	0.11	0	0	0.31	1	0
Other TV programs	0.25	0	0	0.44	1	0
Number of Computers	2.37	2	1	1.37	5	0
Internet Hours	2.9	3	5	1.69	5	0
International Traveling	0.57	0	0	1.17	5	0
Living Abroad	0.02	0	0	0.14	1	0
Migration between States	0.14	0	0	0.35	1	0

Source: Survey data.

It is important to notice that some variables described on Table 2 are categorical. Thus, statistics obviously represent the values assumed by the respective dummy variables.

It is important to observe that medium ISI was around 27, with 95% of them between 17 and 37, verified from the value of their Standard Deviation. On the other hand, the median was 26 and the mode was 22, the maximum and minimum values found on the sample were –25 and 55.

It can be observed that their average age is around 45 years old, and 23% of them are male, being the majority of participants on the research composed by women.

For the analysis not to be tiresome, the reader is invited to observe the characteristics of other statistics that can be verified on the referred table.

### Regression Results

Now, the results of regression models that aim at correlating the ISI of school principals with their socio-economic-localization characteristics are presented.

It is known that Intercultural Sensitivity of a person can be strongly influenced by the environment that they live. Therefore, one cannot fail to consider that part of localization influence is related to the place of birth and living during the first years of life; the other part, in the case of those that migrated, is influenced by the place of residence. Considering these aspects, the research questionnaire was concerned to identify the individual's State of Birth and State of Residence, in order to capture both effects.

Table 2 shows the results obtained in regression models OLS, such as the coefficient values of the variables and their respective statistical significance, resulting from tests like Durbin-Watson and F, and the value of  $R^2$ .

Table 2 – Results of Regression Models OLS

Variables/Statistics	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Constant	29.310*	29.624*	29.157*
Sex	0.257	0.264	0.282
Age	-0.269*	-0.278*	-0.264*
Age squared	0.003**	0.003**	0.002**
Married	-0.908*	-0.980*	-0.958*
Divorced	0.207	0.108	0.128
Widowed	-0.937	-1.006	-0.954
Stable Union	-0.215	-0.272	-0.234
Elementary and High	-2.100*	-2.151*	-2.079*
Postgraduate Course	0.958*	0.986*	0.996*
Masters and Doctorate/PhD	2.884*	2.970*	2.915*
Minimum Wages	0.274*	0.283*	0.281*
Children	0.193**	0.221**	0.214**
Protestant	-1.975*	-1.906*	-1.927*
Asian	3.895	3.782	3.761
Muslim	3.259	3.693	3.415
Jewish	8.612**	8.119**	7.800**
African	4.851*	4.796*	4.834*
Other Religions	0.914**	0.882**	0.884*
Brown	0.012	0.137	0.042
Black	1.887*	2.006*	1.874*
Asian	1.383	1.578	1.413
Indigenous	0.549	0.795	0.639
Television	-0.441*	-0.427*	-0.433*
Journalism	0.699**	0.685**	0.683***
Sportive	0.042	0.040	0.046
Soap Opera	-0.979*	-0.969*	-0.970*
Movies	1.000*	0.984*	0.984*
Auditorium	-0.151	-0.155	-0.162
Other TV programs	0.624*	0.613*	0.610*
Computer	0.387*	0.380*	0.390*
Internet	0.370*	0.362*	0.364*
International Traveling	0.563*	0.577*	0.574*
Living Abroad	2.813*	2.775*	2.765*
Migration between States	0.395	0.681**	0.912*
State of Birth	Yes	No	Yes
State of Residence	No	Yes	Yes
N	9854	9854	9854
R <sup>2</sup>	0.082	0.083	0.086
F-test	14.583 (0.000)	14.745 (0.000)	10.721 (0.000)
Durbin-Watson	2.012	2.012	2.012

Source: Survey data.

Notes: Statistically significant until \*1%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*10%. In brackets: significance

Due to the observance of the economicity of time, in order not to lose answers to the questionnaire and have problems of micronumerosity, it was not detailed how old the subject was when migration happened (if there were migration). Therefore, one cannot split the effects in a precise way regarding place of birth, personality development, schooling, labor market entry, etc.

On the other hand, three distinct regression models were presented. The difference between them relies on the fact that in the first model, the estimate is controlled by State of Birth, in the second one it is controlled by State of Residence, and in the third model by both States, aware of eventual problems of self-correction between variables, bearing in mind that the majority of participants did not migrate.

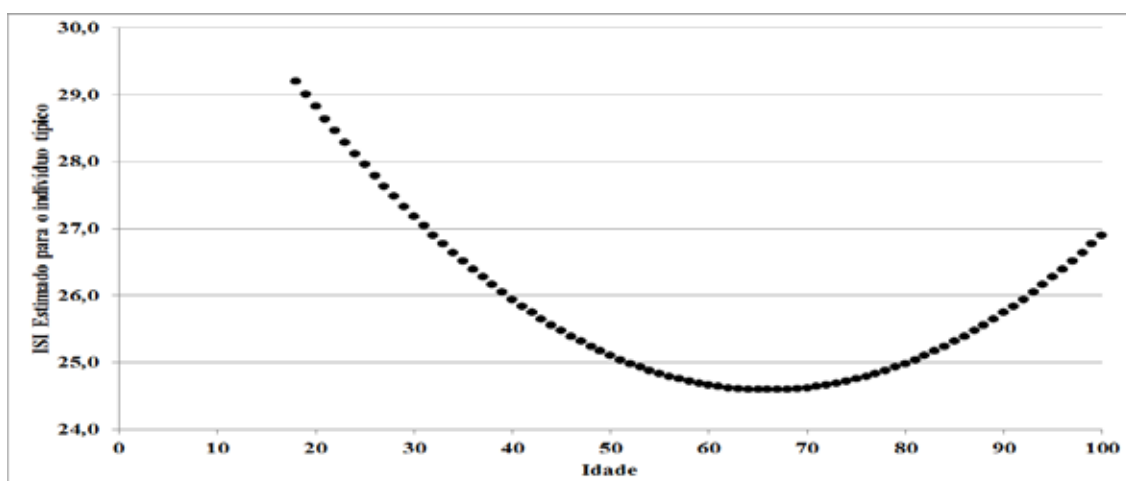
It was verified that, in general, the results are those that could be expected, and do not appear to bring any surprise in conditional means of the regression. Initially, it was possible to verify that the variable “sex” is not statistically relevant for any of the three regression models used. Thus, it cannot be affirmed, based on the sample obtained, that there were significant differences of perception between male and female principals. It would be possible to imagine, at first, that female principals could have more Intercultural Sensitivity than male principals, given that woman are endowed with more sensitivity. However, such fact cannot be affirmed, nor the opposite, even though such expectation could be reserved for male principals for some reason.

Concerning age, the results show that the higher the age the less sensitive one appears to be regarding people from different cultures. Such fact seems to occur because the increase of age would bring consolidation of beliefs, and these can generate a decrease in empathy for different cultures. This variable showed statistical significance at the 1% level in all regression models.

Nonetheless, the model predicted the capture of a non-linearity relation, including the same variable age squared that is presented as statistically relevant. When the partial derivative of estimators is calculated, it can be verified that a point of relative minimum around 50 years old is found, more precisely 44.8; 46.3 and 66 years old for Models 1, 2, and 3, respectively. Such results make believe that sensitivity decreases over the years up to the age of 50, and after that age, it increases again. This fact can be related to the changes experienced by people who reach this age group, when one is able to accumulate more cognition and experience.

Figure 2 shows the dynamic of ISI estimated for the life cycle of a principal with typical characteristics of the sample.

Figure 2 – medium ISI by age of a typical individual of the sample



Source: Survey data.

The referred figure focus on the point estimation of ISI, from “Model 3” to a typical individual which is the one formed by the median. As it can be verified, over the years, individuals decrease their Intercultural Sensitivity; however, this chart is reversed after they reach the age group of 66 years.

Regarding marital status, four dummy variables were inserted to search for evidences as to which types would have the greatest impact on determining ISI compared to unmarried participants (comparison group). Results show that participants who declare themselves as “Married” had lower ISI when compared to the unmarried participants. On average, the group of married principals tends to decrease the ISI in 0.9 (0.908, 0.980, and 0.958, respectively, in models 1, 2, and 3) when compared to the unmarried group. Other groups, namely: divorced, widowed and stable union, when compared, did not present relevant differences in relation to participants who are unmarried. It is not possible to point out an unquestionable reason for this relation; does marriage desensitize the individual in this regard? Why? Further studies could seek such evidence.

Concerning level of schooling, it is inferred that the more years of study, the higher the Intercultural Sensitivity should be. This can be interpreted taking into consideration that the quantity of hours spent in a classroom, somehow, increases the empathy of people for different cultures. Perhaps knowledge leads to as understanding of what is distinct from the own culture. All variables presented statistical significance at the 1% level in all regression models, and the variable used for comparison was “higher education”.

The variable “children” presented statistical significance in all three regression models used. Thus, it can be affirmed that, based on this sample, the higher the number of children the participant claims to have, the higher their ISI. On average, each additional child of the participant increases their mean ISI in 0.2 points. Such result can be attributed to the fact that having children change the perspective of people about the world; the conception of an offspring makes people more tolerant and open to what is different from themselves, although, at first, it could be imagined the opposite.

Concerning the variable “minimum wages”, results indicate that the rise in the number of minimum wages received by participants increases ISI in 0.279 points on average (0.273, 0.283, and 0.281, respectively, in models 1, 2, and 3). Intercultural Sensitivity conceptualized by Bennett (1984) is seen as a process of development in which the individual transform affectively, cognitively, and behaviorally, from ethnocentric stages to ethnorelative stages. The fact the individual perceives greater financial value may possibly give them more opportunities to make these transformations. Besides, it cannot be denied that higher income brackets are related to higher levels of education.

Figure 3 shows the Mean ISI of participants by income, measured in current minimum wages. It is easy to realize the positive relation between the two variables.

Figure 3 – Mean ISI and the Income of school principals



Source: Survey data.

Concerning religion, it can be observed that “Asian” and “Muslim” professions of faith do not present statistical significance. Variables “Protestant” and “African” present statistical significance at the 1% level. Variables “Jewish” and “Other Religions” present statistical significance at the 5% level. Principals that declared themselves as protestant are the ones that presented lower ISI, while those who declared to profess Judaism as their faith presented the highest. Such matter can find explanation in the history of Jewish people, marked by persecutions and extermination; these historical traits can explain the higher tolerance. On the other hand, participation in major religious groups can bring greater insensitivity.

Regarding the variable “skin color”, it was included four dummies to search for evidences of correlation between them and ISI, compared with the participants who declared themselves as white (comparison group). All the options, except for “Black”, did not present level of statistical significance. Principals who declared themselves as black had ISI 1.922 points on average (1.877, 2.006, and 1.874, respectively, in models 1, 2, and 3), higher than the ones who declared themselves as white. Both groups (principals who declared themselves as white or black) correspond to 63% of the total; despite being the majority, it does not depict the huge diversity of skin color in the country. Therefore, it can be inferred based on the sampling plan of this work that, in Brazil, skin color does not explain Intercultural Sensitivity.

The variable “television” refers to the number of TV hours watched by day. It presented statistical significance of 1%. Results indicated that long hours a day of watching television cause a decrease on mean ISI (0.433, 0.427, and 0.433 in the models 1, 2 and 3, respectively). Such result can be understood regarding the content of television in Brazil, which can help build sociocultural models that turn into paradigms. This fact can make intercultural interaction between individuals from different cultures more difficult.

Concerning the most watched types of television programs, six dummies were created, namely: journalism, sports, telenovelas, movies, live variety shows, and other TV programs. The participant school principals that watch movies have, on average, ISI one point higher compared to the ones that watch other items. Those who watch telenovelas have ISI on average 0.979 points lower than the ones who choose other television programs.



The variable “computer” is about the quantity of computers, desktops, laptops, and tablets in the residence of the principal participant of the survey. This variable showed statistical significance in three models presented. Each new electronic device increases the value of ISI on average 0.386 (0.387, 0.380, and 0.390, respectively, in models 1, 2, and 3). Such result can be related to the fact that a bigger quantity of computers can generate more access to information. The higher the amount of information related to other cultures the individual has access to, the higher the possibility of cultural empathy, and, consequently, the higher the ISI. One cannot fail to considerate that such characteristic is correlated to income and education as well.

The variable “Internet” refers to the quantity of hours a day that the principal participant uses the tool. Each additional hour the principal spends surfing the Internet a day, the mean ISI increases in 0.365 (0.370, 0.362, and 0.364, respectively, in models 1, 2, and 3). Such fact can possibly be explained by the same reason of that of the last paragraph. More access to information opens personal horizons, producing affective, cognitive, and behavioral changes necessary to evolution of Intercultural Sensitivity. This variable presented statistical significance of 1%.

Concerning “international traveling”, results show that the fact of traveling abroad at least once increases the ISI of the principal participant by 0.571 points, on average. This fact demonstrates that having contact with different cultures increases the capability of intercultural interaction of the individual, consequently increasing the ISI. The variable showed statistical significance of 1% in the three models presented.

Having lived abroad, or not, interferes on the value of the index of the principal participant. The variable “living abroad” presented statistical significance of 1% in all models. The ISI has a medium increase of 2.784 points (2.823, 2.775, and 2.765, respectively, in models 1, 2, and 3) for those principals who had already lived abroad. Living abroad generates coexistence with a different culture and increases the acceptance of another culture, and can reach the last stage of DMIS: Integration.

Concerning “migration between States”, this variable did not present statistical significance in Model 1, but presented in the other two models. Migration between States causes the individual to interact intensively with different cultures in many aspects, such as speaking, food habits, and music, among others.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Modern and globalized times require from people the capability of being interculturally sensitive. Brazil has uniqueness because of its great territorial extension; it requires that the population coexist with diverse cultural traits, remarkable and different from each other. For this reason, the characteristic of Intercultural Sensitivity is so relevant inside out territory. Focusing on public school principals, the competence of Intercultural Sensitivity becomes an essential ability to their work.

The overall aim of this work was to measure the extent of Intercultural Sensitivity of Public School Principals in Brazil, and search evidences on which individual, institutional, socio-economic, and localization characteristics affect this level of Intercultural Sensitivity. Furthermore, the specific aims were to build and validate an index to measure the level of Intercultural Sensitivity; measure the level of Intercultural Sensitivity between school principals; know the

profile of principals regarding Intercultural Sensitivity; analyze the relation between Intercultural Sensitivity Index and principals' profile; and, lastly, to guide public policies based on the results found.

From the results found on the research, it was observed that a number of individual, institutional, socioeconomic, and localization variables are related to ISI. With this evidence it was possible to build the profile of the principal that presents higher Intercultural Sensitivity. From regression results, it can be affirmed that the individual with higher ISI:

- In the age group of 50 years;
- Is unmarried;
- Has a Master's degree or a Doctorate/PhD degree;
- Has a higher number of children;
- Is on the higher salary ranges;
- Professes Jewish or African religion, or yet, is not Protestant.
- Declares themselves as Black;
- Watches few hours of television a day;
- When watches television, prefers movies and journalism, and do not watch telenovelas;
- Has a computer and other similar equipment in the house, and uses the Internet regularly;
- Has already traveled abroad;
- Has already lived abroad; and,
- Currently lives in a different State from the one they were born.

Education of quality relies on a good school management. The public school principal, due to the autonomy existent in our chain of education, gives the school a direction where to follow. The characteristic of Intercultural Sensitivity must be developed with proper attention, as it represents the development of communication among people, the technology of transportation that connects people from different origins and various regions, the tool of healthy competition for more cognitively developed students, and, the development of multiculturalism that affects many areas of human life.

In this regard, actions are proposed to develop Intercultural Sensitivity on public school principals around the country. Such actions undergo varied areas, many of them focused on individual and sociocultural development of the principal. They should also focus on encouraging higher education, exchange programs, international traveling, increased reach and access to the Internet, and the creation of programs that allow principals to experience culture and history of other Brazilian states and to visit those places, experiencing different realities, if possible.

Lastly, it is important to stress that the development of Intercultural Sensitivity crosses situations in which people interact with different cultures; it is not possible to learn and interact with other cultures without having contact with them.

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