

DIVERSITY MATTERS:

Impacts of a Diverse Study Abroad Cohort on Intercultural Development

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Research can be accessed at:
<http://hdl.handle.net/2345/bc-ir:104141>



Agenda

- ❖ Outline Research & Program
- ❖ Quantitative Results
- ❖ Qualitative Results
- ❖ Findings related to Cohort Diversity
- ❖ Student Narratives
- ❖ Q&A



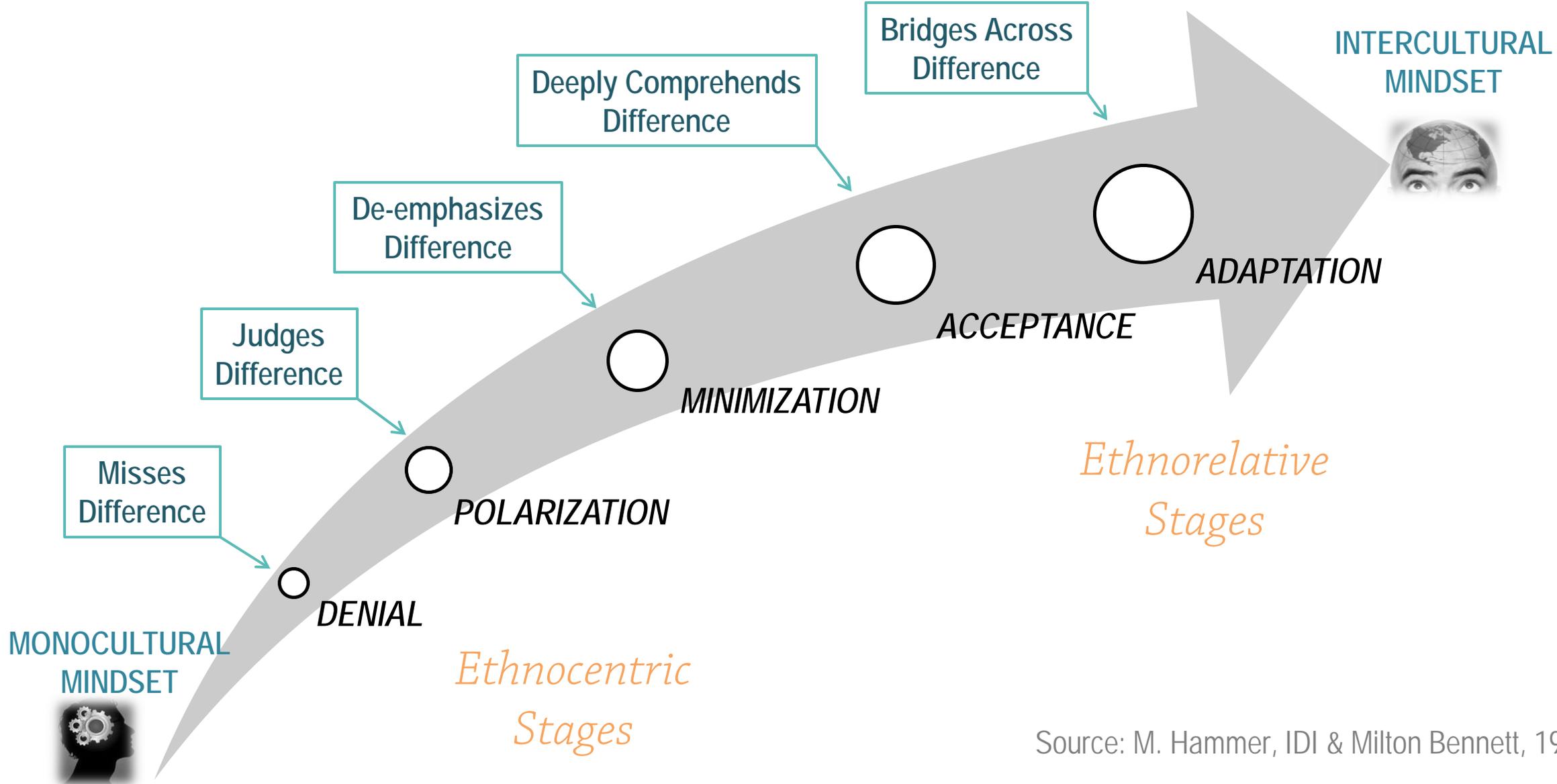
INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE & STUDY ABROAD

“Intercultural competence development is emerging as a central focus – and outcome – of many internationalization efforts”

(Deardorff & Jones, 2012)



INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM



Source: M. Hammer, IDI & Milton Bennett, 1993

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

(1) Does participation in a multi-destination study abroad program influence student's intercultural competence?

- Pre/Post IDI Scores

(2) What features of a multi-destination study abroad program influence students' intercultural competence?

- Student Perceptions (Interviews)
- Student Reflections (Journals)



BRIC: Multi-Destination Study Abroad Program

- Intensive pre-departure program on home campus in August
- Designed by and led throughout by home institution faculty



DATA COLLECTION

21 Undergraduate Participants:

- Female (11) Male (10)
- 6 Faith Groups
- Int'l (6) Domestic (5)
- Black, Asian, White, Multi-Racial
- Juniors & Seniors
- Traditional Age
- 8 Languages

Pre-Program IDI
(August)

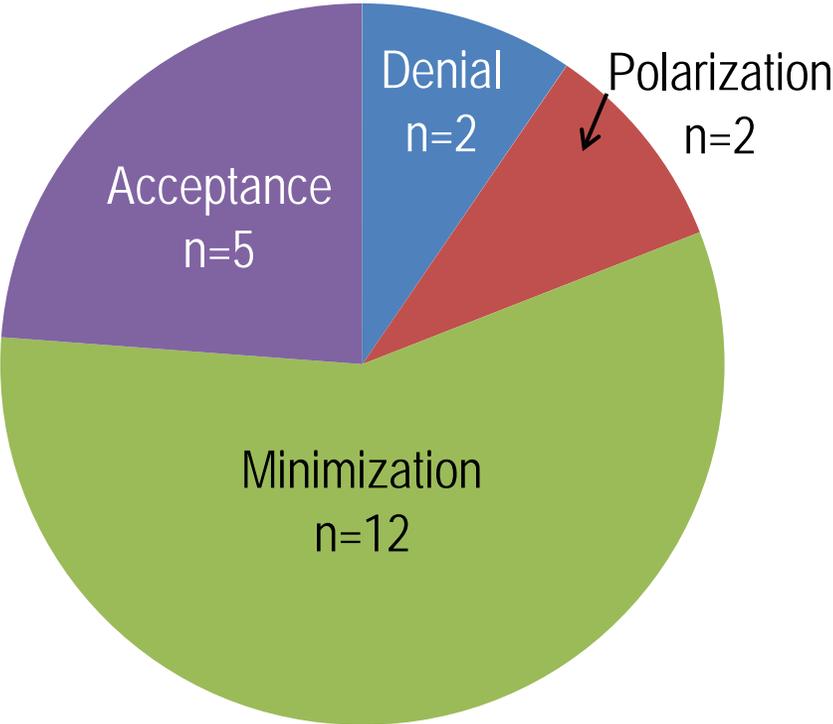
Journal Entries
(9)

Student Interviews
(November)

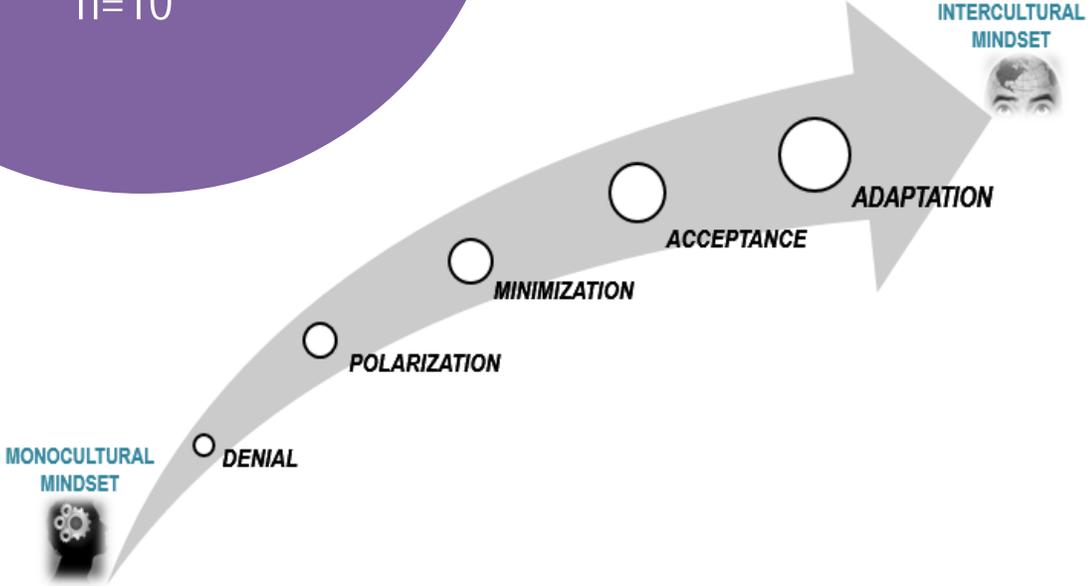
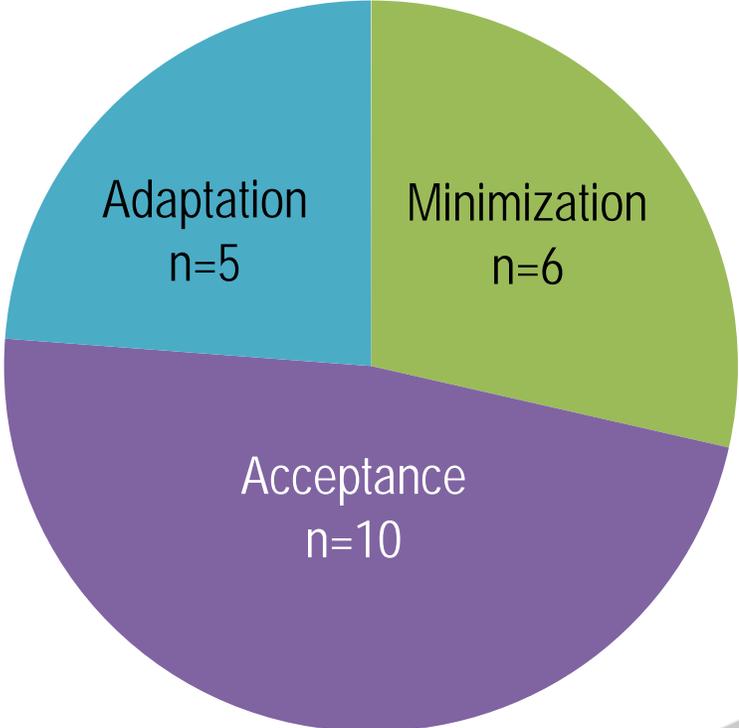
Post-Program IDI
(December)

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

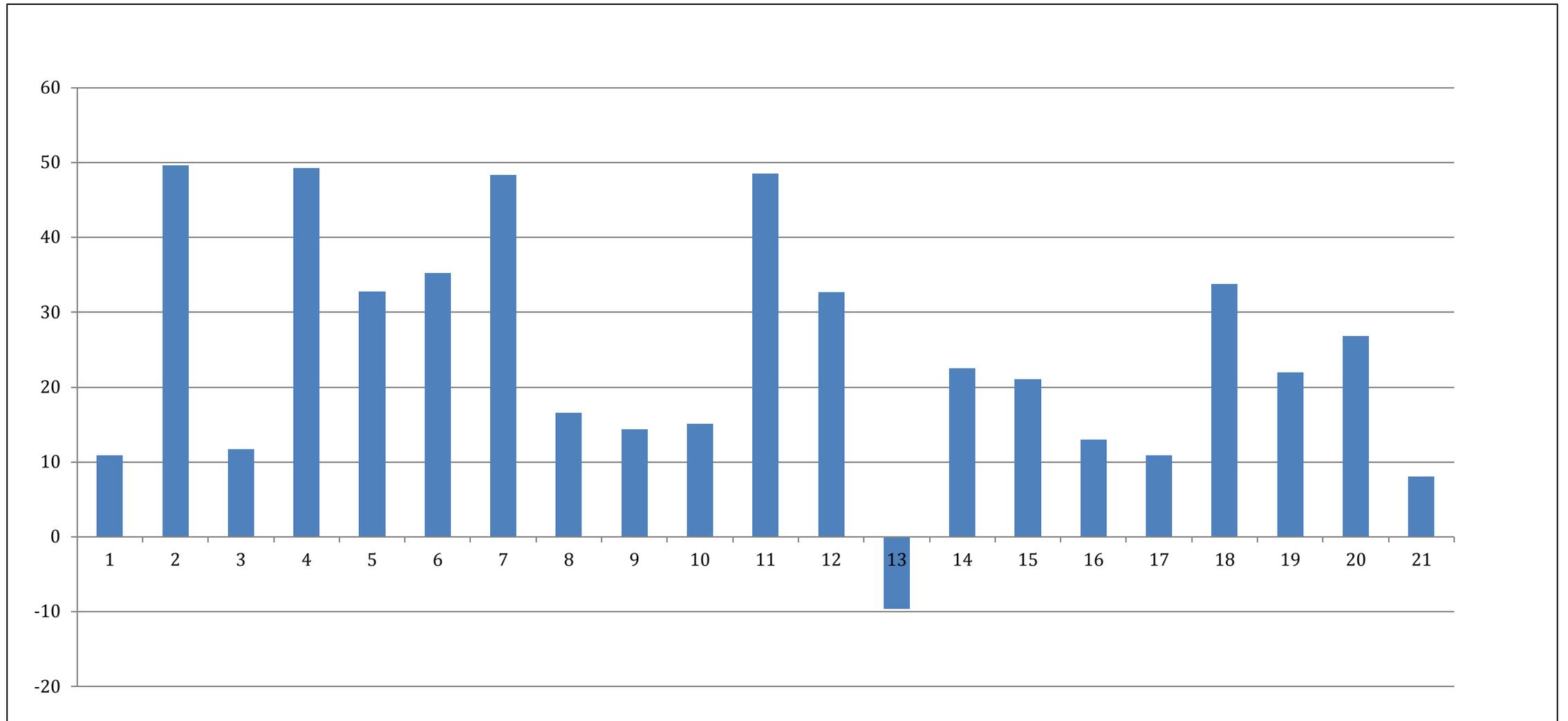
Pre-BRIC IDI Orientations



Post-BRIC IDI Orientations



CHANGE IN IDI SCORES



Average Gain: 24.45 points, a 25% increase

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

$t = 7.011, P \leq .05$

**Cohen's effect size
value ($d = 1.68$)**

Paired Sample t-test

Cohen's d – Effect Size

One-Way Analysis of Variance

One-Way ANOVA

No Differences in
IDI Gains

Women vs. Men

Int'l vs. Domestic

Prior Experience Abroad

Ability to Speak Host Country
Language

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Journal Entries
&
Interview
Transcripts

1,482

Coded Segments of Text

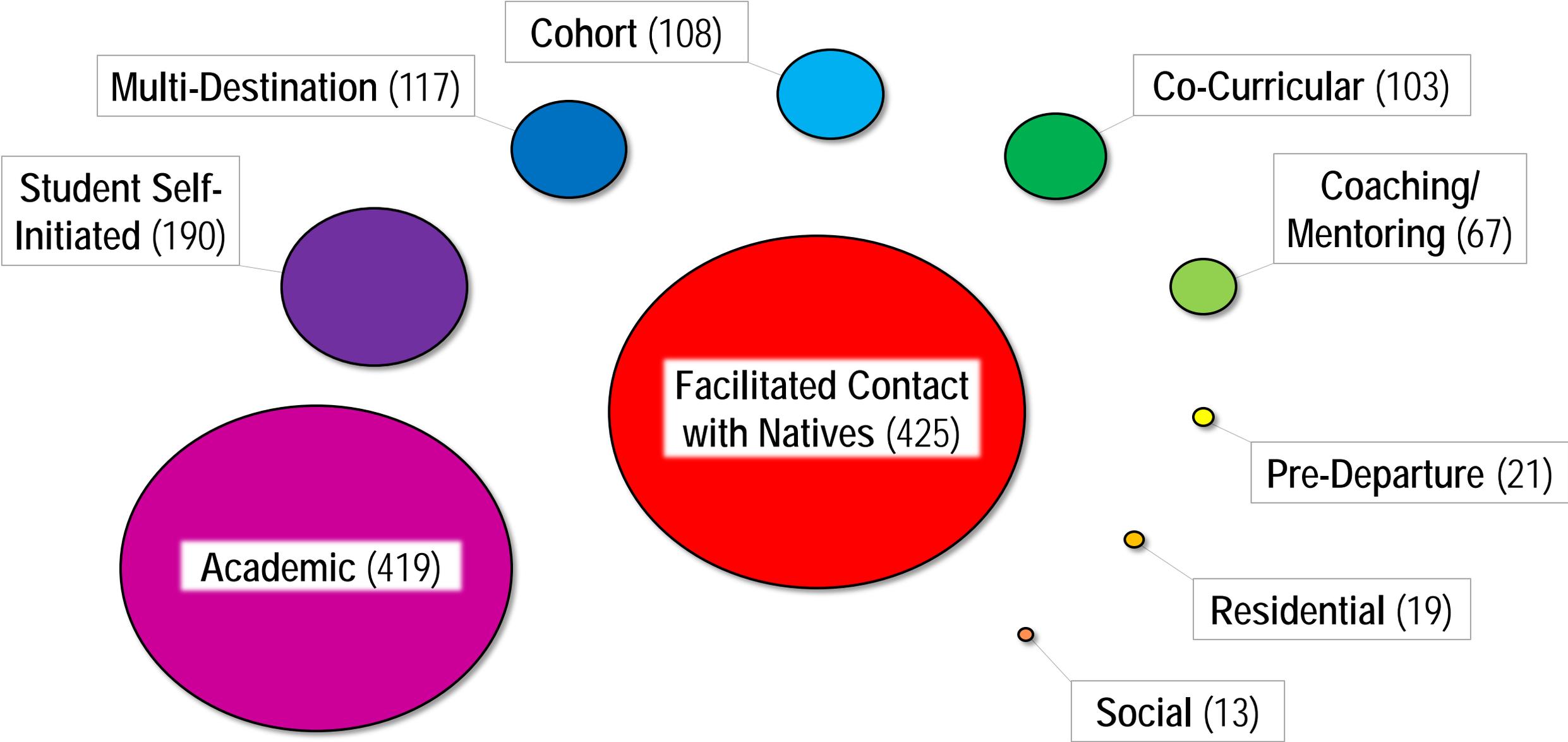
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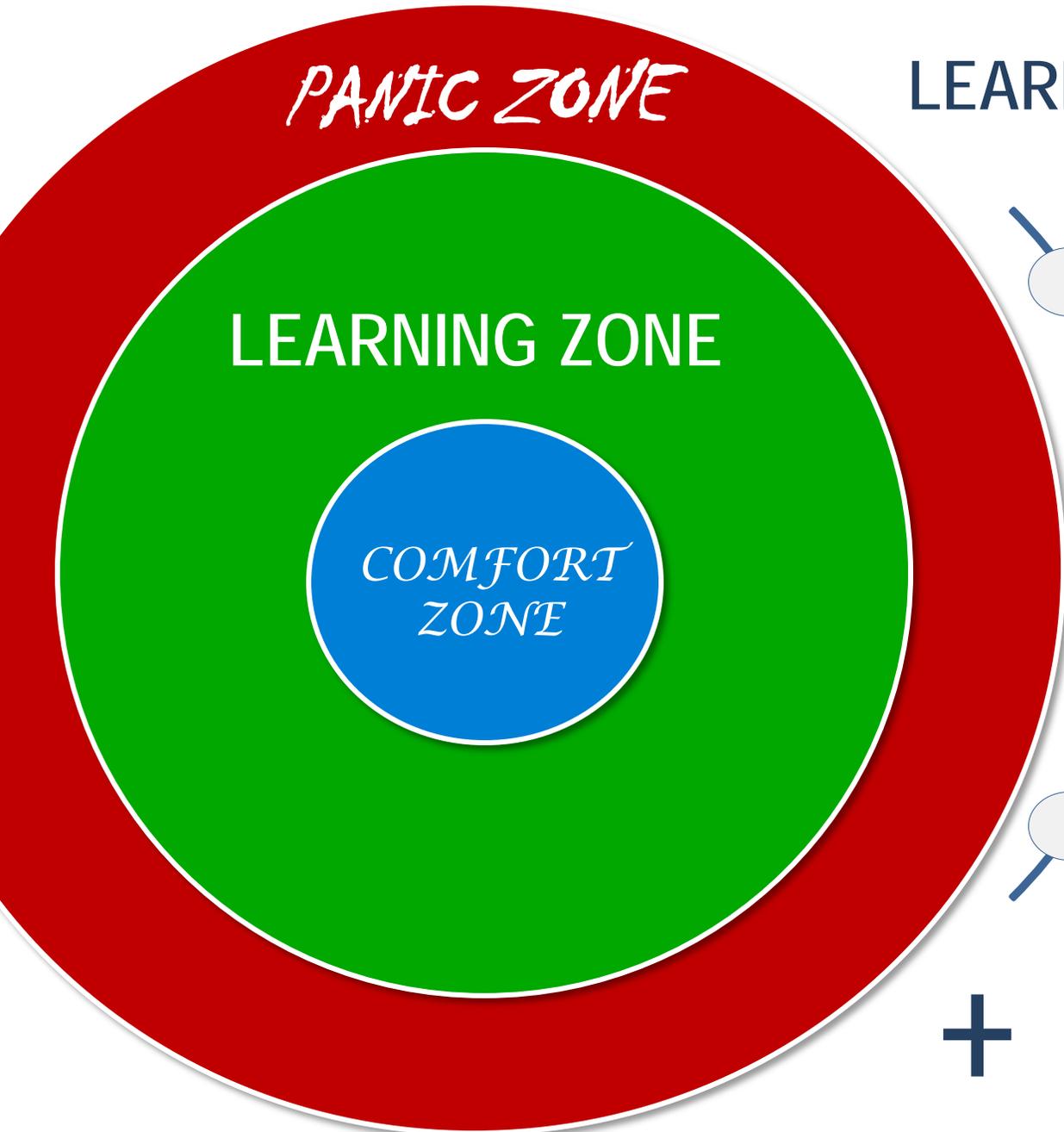
BRIC Influential Sub-Features

10

BRIC Influential Features

10 INFLUENTIAL FEATURES OF BRIC

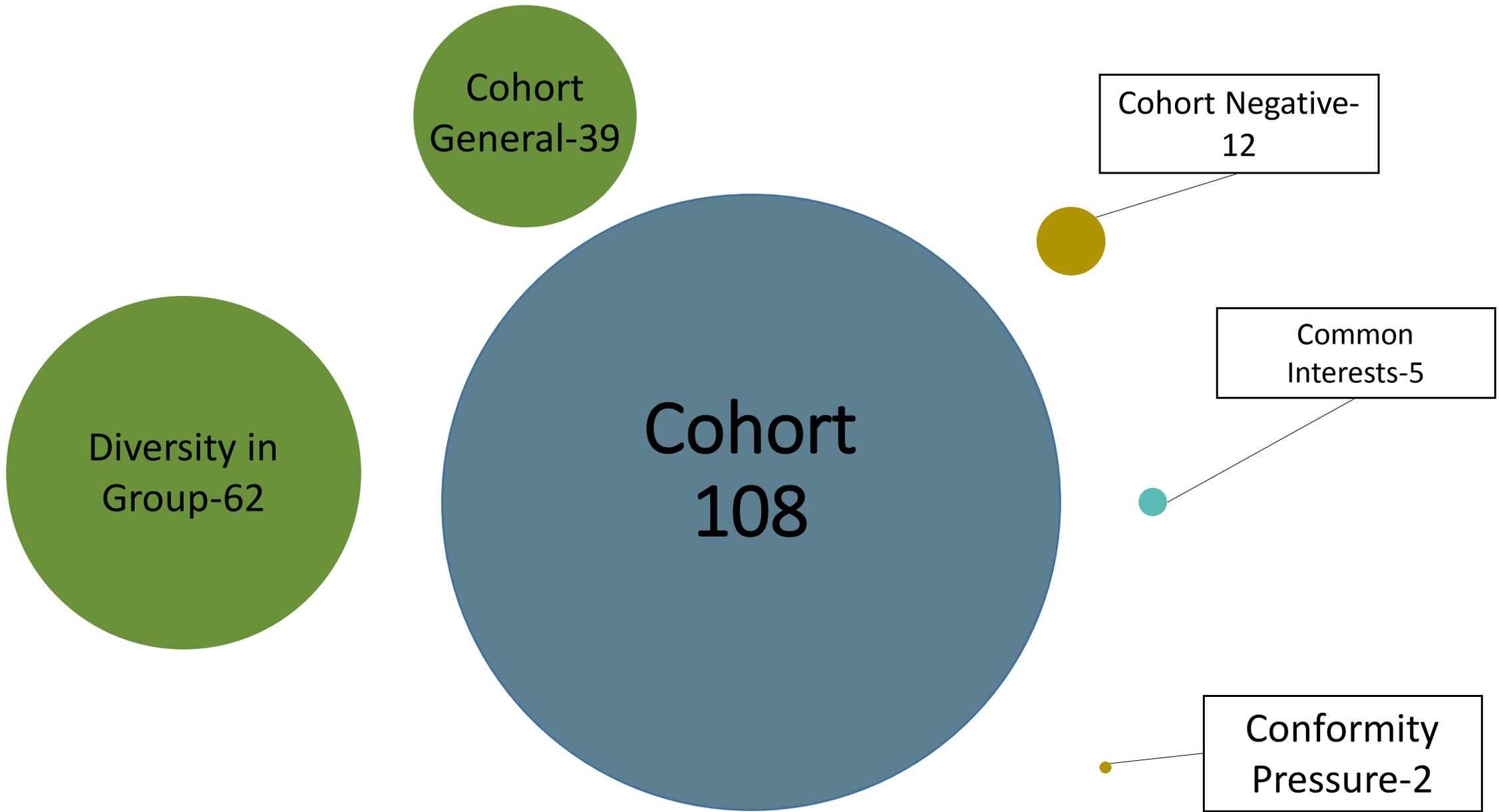




LEARNING THROUGH A COMBINATION OF:

- ACADEMIC
- MULTI-DESTINATION
- COHORT
- STUDENT SELF-INITIATED
- FACILITATED CONTACTS WITH NATIVES

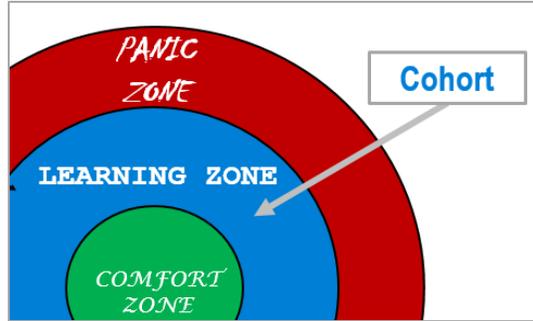
+ REFLECTION



10 INFLUENTIAL FEATURES OF BRIC

Multi-Destination (117)

Cohort (108)



COHORT DIVERSITY

The Diversity of the participants was a salient theme in the qualitative data regarding the Cohort feature.

Many participants remarked that they would not have had the experience, discussion, reflections, and learning regarding privilege, empathy, minority status, and social inequalities had their group been homogeneous.

Gender

Race

Language

Nationality

"This must be how black or Muslim people feel in the U.S. It was an unsettling feeling...I worried about the implications – did this mean it would be more difficult for me to find a job in Russia? Or to find friends or girlfriends?"

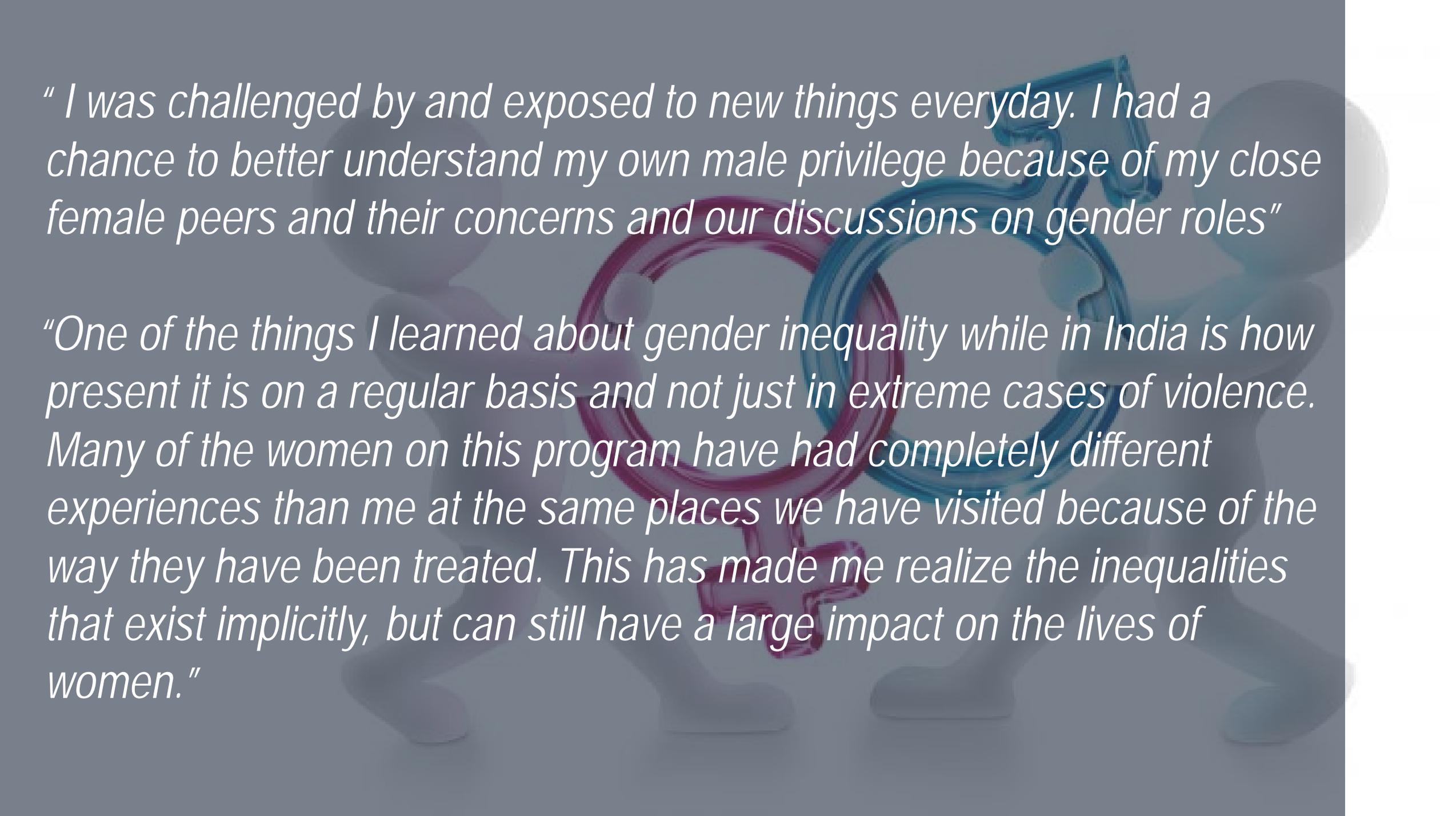
This experience and the consequent reflection helped me realize that the act of racial profiling at a check point might be supporting the continuation of racial discrimination, even if it is beneath the surface."



" I realized how much I had in common with this boy. It was at this point where my global mindset completely changed. Instead of the view of all of the poor kids in India as completely different than me –

I realized that we really were quite similar. It made me think a lot about the life I was born into – and the responsibilities I have as a very privileged individual to give back, help, and empower my peers like Ragav."



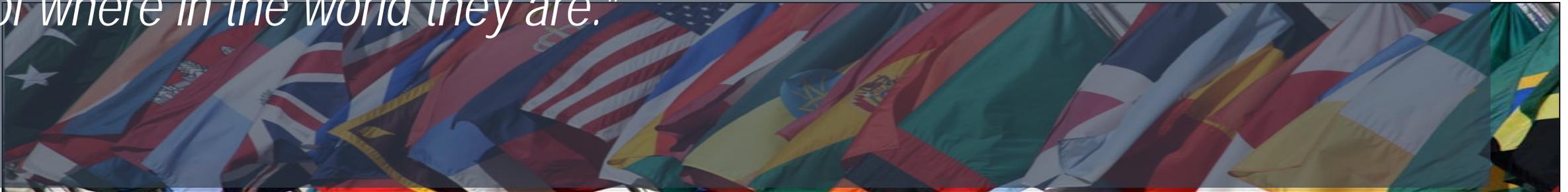
The background features a dark blue gradient with faint, stylized silhouettes of people. In the center, there are two large, overlapping gender symbols: a purple female symbol and a blue male symbol. The text is overlaid on this background in a white, italicized font.

“ I was challenged by and exposed to new things everyday. I had a chance to better understand my own male privilege because of my close female peers and their concerns and our discussions on gender roles”

“One of the things I learned about gender inequality while in India is how present it is on a regular basis and not just in extreme cases of violence. Many of the women on this program have had completely different experiences than me at the same places we have visited because of the way they have been treated. This has made me realize the inequalities that exist implicitly, but can still have a large impact on the lives of women.”

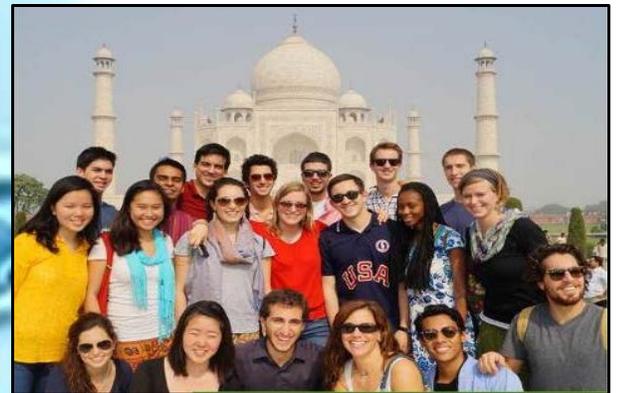
“ Yes, there was a lot of learning about the countries I was in, but there was also a lot of learning about the countries that people with me represented and their own diverse cultural interactions with different people.”

“Watching someone from Cali, Colombia interact with someone from New Delhi, India was just as educational as my own interaction with someone from Shanghai, China. I feel that I’m much more receptive now to the weight an individual’s culture may have on their interactions – regardless of where in the world they are.”



Important Considerations

- Cohort feature is often criticized
- Diverse student bodies are fragmented on campus (Retreat)
- Student narratives suggest much more interaction across race, gender, and nationality when abroad (No Retreat)
- Students with ethnic connections to destination grow in unique ways



The importance of the diversity of the cohort suggests that just as diversity is a compelling educational imperative at U.S. institutions of higher education, the same is the case when students travel abroad. The diversity in the cohort created unique opportunities for learning and engaging with the environment beyond what a homogeneous group would offer.



DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS



THANK YOU

REFERENCES

- Bennett, M. J. (1993). Towards ethnorelativism: a developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In R. M. Paige (Ed.), *Education for the intercultural experience* (pp. 21-71). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.
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