Collaborative Online International Learning (Coil) in Teaching-Learning: Bridging the Student Mobility Gap in Internationalization of Higher Education.

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Abstract

Movement of individuals and knowledge across boundaries is usually one of the parameters for the Internationalization of education. This has a huge limitation for a country like India where traveling abroad is a still privilege of people with strong social and economic background. Hence mobility is not an option if the Internationalization of education has to reach masses in India. The paper explores COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) as a method for internationalization of education for all. The paper is shares insight into the collaborative teaching experience between two faculties; one in India and the other in the United States. To the best of the knowledge of researchers this is the first paper regarding COIL from India. The paper is an attempt to bring forth how COIL can provide students with a unique opportunity to interact and work together virtually. The economic model of COIL provides a platform for countries like India to provide a good learning experience to students. Going forward COIL can be an innovative, economical, and useful way of Internationalization.

Key words: COIL, Student Mobility, Internationalization of Higher Education, Teaching-Learning, India

Background

Globalization is one of the forces which is reshaping the world today. It has not only changed the economic, social, cultural, political, technological environment but has also impacted the field of education drastically. Globalization, as defined by most of the researchers, is an uncontrolled process but a more conscious effort that is more disciplined is termed as Internationalization.

With the changing world, the perception of millennialconcerning classroom teaching and learning is changing. The traditional form of knowledge delivery i.e. in the form of classroom lecture delivery no longer appeals to them. This is due to the multiple changes in and around them. One of the most important changes is concerning the technological environment. Technology has provided them with the flexibility to access information in no time. They can access anything, anywhere and anytime with just one click. Therefore, Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) is facing a challenge to provide students with unique academic opportunities that act as a point of difference (POD) for them in the cluttered marketplace. Also, coupled with these technological changes multiple global external forces increasingly demand globalization of societies and economy. This means that IHE has a vital role in preparing the students for this multicultural, multilingual, multinational work environment with appropriate

skills and attitudes (Marcillo-Gómez &Desilus, 2016). But the important question is How? One probable answer to this question is via the Internationalization of Education.

1.1 Internationalization of Higher Education

Internationalization of Higher Education is one the most important agenda for most the institution of higher education across the world. It has grabbed the attention of policymakersalso, as the economical performances of any state are affected by the cross border flow of knowledge, mobility of students, and the faculty exchange programs (Hawawini, 2011).

Knight and Wit (1997) have defined Internationalisation of higher education as:

"the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research, and service functions of the institution."

The above definition discusses internationalization as a process where there is an amalgamation of both global and local factors. Hawawini (2011) argues that the above mention definition is narrow in its approach. The major emphasis here is on introducing a dimension of internationalization in the already existing arrangement or procedures. However, internationalization should be looked like a broad process whose "ultimate goal should be to integrate the institutioninto the emerging global knowledge and learning network". The orientation should be outward-looking rather than inward-looking (Hawawini, 2011).

Also, internationalization should not be confused with globalization. Both are related to each other but are not the same(Altbacha& Knight, 2011). Globalization refers to the process of the economic integration of many economies in one global economy as a result of free trade, free capital flow as well as easy and uncontrolled migration of human capital (Daly, 1999). Internationalization means between the nation (the basic unit remains the nation)(Daly 1999) and includes all the policies and practices embarked by academic institutions to muddle through with the effect of globalization on academics (Altbach& Knight, 2011).

1.2 Approaches to Internationalization

The process of internationalization is cyclical and not linear. Qiang (2003) revealed that authors in the past have used the following four approaches to describe the process of internationalization. These approaches are:

The activity approach: This approach is one of the most prevalent approaches found in past literature and describes internationalization in terms of particular activities and programs. For example promotion of activities such as student/faculty exchange, curriculum enhancement technical assistance to student and faculty, etc.

The competency approach: The competency approach emphasizes the development of competencies such as skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values so that the students, faculty, and staffbecome more "internationally knowledgeable and intercultural skilled".

The ethos approach: The ethos approach stresses the creation of an organizational culture that supports intercultural perspectives and values.

Theprocess approach: This approach main emphasis is on the integration of an international dimension into various processes, procedures, and policies.

1.3 Internationalization: Motives and Benefits

There are a variety of rationales or motives behind internationalization. Past literature has classified the rationales or motives into four broad categories i.e. academic, economic, social/cultural, and political (Knight, 2004; Wit, 1999).The brief explanation of the above mention category is as follow:

Academic motives for Internationalization

- Knowledge Acquisition

- Enrichment of Curriculum and programs

- Research – The amount of skill and resources required in certain research projects are huge and thus calls for mutual coordination and collaboration between higher education institutions.

- To fulfill the educational mission of the institutions- The educational mission of the institution is a key driving force in the case of internationalization (Hawawini, 2011).

- To attract the best students and faculty worldwide- Institutions with credible internationalization strategy find it easy to attract good students and faculty from around the world.

- Quality Improvement- Achieving International quality standards in teaching and research (Knight, 1997).

Economic motives for Internationalization

- Commercial advantage- The recruitment of students from foreign countries has become a significant source of revenue for the institution as well as a contributor to the national economy of the host country (Qiang, 2003). The internationalization of education is a major driver of international mobility (Collins, 2008).

- To meet the demand of internationally knowledgeable and interculturally skilled labor force and make them more competitive in the global marketplace (Warner, 1992).

- Cross-border collaborative arrangements in Research and Development (RandD) projects.

- Marketing of Higher education where higher education is viewed as an export commodity (Wit, 1999).

Social/ Cultural motives for Internationalization

- To develop an understanding of different cultures around the world.

- To learn from the world.

- A better understanding of intercultural and international issues so that students can contribute to social transformation (Warner, 1992).

Political motives for Internationalization

- To get a global identity.

- International education as a source of peaceful relation between nations (Scott,1992)

- A better understanding of other economies.

- Promotion of local language or culture

- International security (Aigner et al.,1992)

1.4 Internationalization: Challenges and Obstacles

Internationalization of Higher Education has multiple benefits. However, to achieve these benefits there are multiple challenges and obstacles. Following are the important roadblocks in the path of internationalization:

Cost of Internationalization- Internationalization is a process and not an activity with a start and endpoint (Wit,1999). This entire process is ongoing and cyclic and involves huge costs and resources. This can act as a huge obstacle in the case of most of the institutions especially in a growing economy like India.

International Initiative can be Risky and involves time – Creating international contact and partnership involves active participation and time. Also, there is an element of risk involved in the entire process.

Lack of Interest in stakeholders- The stakeholders such as faculty or students may lack interest due to multiple reasons such as lack of financial resources, no reward system, personal reasons, and so on.

Lack of Mobility Option- Lack of mobility opportunity as well as financial support for the same act as one of the major obstacles in the case of the Internationalization of Higher Education. The percentage of mobile students is meager when compared to the total population. This situation is very common in an economy like India where a substantial portion of the population is the middle class who can't afford to travel abroad for educational purposes.

1.5 Mobility: A Major Challenge in Internationalization of Higher Education

An important aspect of internationalization is the movement of individuals and knowledge across national boundaries. In other words, internationalization of education is a key driver of international mobility (Collins, 2008). However, in a growing economy like India, it is still viewed as an elite privilege that is reserved for the niches who have a strong financial and social background. Thus, mobility as a tool to enhance internationalization is not an option for the masses.

Therefore, if internationalization has to reach the masses other methods have to be framed.The answer lies in the use of technology either fully or in the form of blended learning (Marcillo-Gómez &Desilus, 2016). Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) in Teaching-Learning is a wonderful approach to enhance internationalization by reaching to the masses.

1.6 Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) in Teaching-Learning

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) is a pedagogical approach and involves the use of digital technology to deliver 'experiential international learning' without anymobility (De Castro et al., 2019). The American Council on Education (2016) defines COIL "as a new teaching and learning paradigm that develops intercultural awareness and competence across shared multicultural online learning environments."

The COIL approach allows two or more faculty from different geographical regions to come together and co-create and co-taught a topic/syllabus of common interest. The main objective is to provide students with international experience in teaching-learning regardless of economic challenges or personal constraints (Potter &Bragadóttir, 2019). De Wit (2013) stated that COIL or Collaborative Online International Learning syndicates the four indispensable dimensions of real virtual mobility i.e. Collaborative: It is a collaborative exercise including teachers and students from different countries; Online: Online technology is used for interaction and collaboration; International: it includes international dimensions in the entire process and student experience, and Learning: this is unified into the learning process

COIL provides a more interactive and collaborative method of international teaching and learning when compared to MOOCs or Massive Open Online Courses (Wit, 2013) which is unidirectional in its approach. On the other hand, the concept of COIL is based on the premise of 4 Cs i.e. collaboration, cooperation, co-creation, and co-teaching.
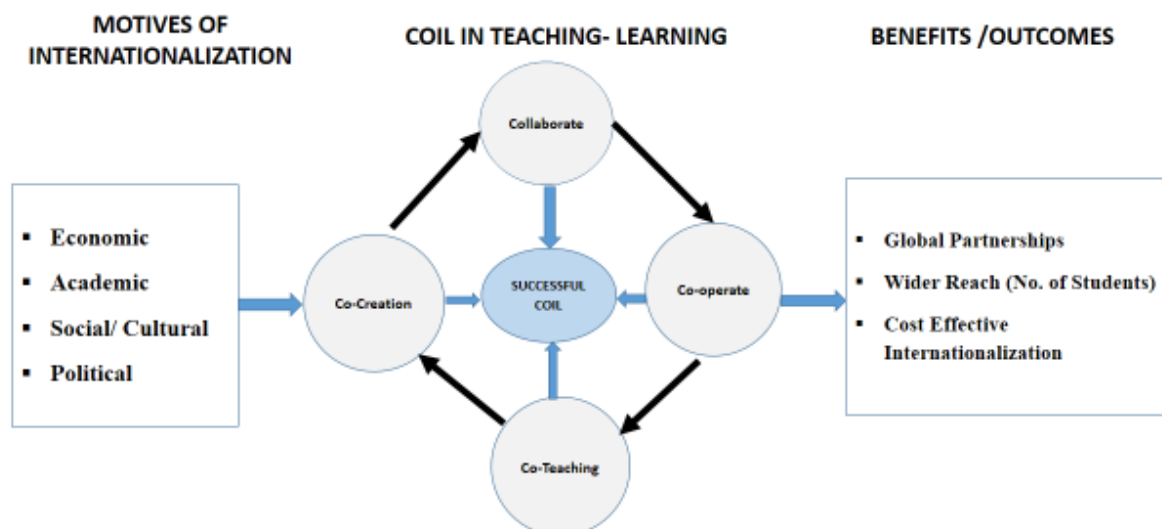
Fig 1. Conceptual Model summating the Motives, 4Cs and Benefits of COIL

(Author's Own)

Collaboration in COIL comprises of the coordinated and synchronous efforts like administrative support required, issues of time, issues of language, course content, assessment of learning, issues of technology, institutional cultures and expectations to ensure the decided course(s) can be run smoothly so that the overall objectives of the course can be achieved. Cooperation in COIL can be achieved by division of tasks among students and teachers through mutual respect, transparency, idea sharing at individual and group level to make sure each participant is responsible to solve the portion of problem for attainment of final teaching learning goals. Co-teaching in COIL is the involvement of two or more teachers from different institutes/universities/ nations working together with groups of students from respective institutes/ universities or nationality. Both the participating groups mutually decide on the session plan, pedagogy, learning materials, assessment tools to make sure the learning objectives of the course are achieved effectively and efficiently. All this leads to the co-creation in the form of assignments, projects, curriculum development, research paper(s), case studies etc.

COIL approach is very useful in economies like India because of its cost-effective resolution to update curriculum, inculcating the element of internationalization in the program structures, developing new global partnerships, and providing maximum students with international learning opportunities (Zang& Pearlman, 2018). COIL also helps students to develop intercultural competencies (Junior&Finardi, 2015)which according to Chun (2011) is "[…] an understanding not only of the culture and language being studied but also the readiness to suspend disbelief and judgment about the other culture and the willingness to reflect on one's own culture and question the values and presuppositions in one's own

cultural practices. "Thus COIL approach is a cost-effective and innovative instruction method to foster internationalization at home.

With this background, the purpose of this paper is to share insight about the collaborative teaching experience between two faculties; one in India and the other in the United States. The paper is an attempt to bring forth how COIL can provide students with a unique opportunity to interact and work together virtually. The economic model of COIL provides a platform for countries like India to provide a good learning experience to students. The paper highlights the cultural similarities and differences between the two groups. The importance of technology is another aspect that the paper seeks to present.The paper is arranged as follows: It starts with the background of the study, a detailed note on Internationalization-its approaches, motivation and Challenges, and Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) in Teaching-Learning in the very first section. The next section consists of methodology and demonstrates the research design, sample size, demographics of the participants, and the measuring instrument details. This is followed by a detailed note on COIL preparation and experience as portrayed in the finding and discussion sections.

Methodology

For the present study, the researchers opted for an observational research method.Observation has been defined as the systematic description of events, behavior, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study (Marshall &Rossman, 1989) The Researcher is able to learn about activities of people in the natural setting in Participant observation (Dewalt&Dewalt, 2002). Participant observation is described as the "heart of ethnographic fieldwork" by allowing researchers the opportunity to experience with participants during those natural situations that comprise daily life. The participant-observer needs to build a rapport with the community/group in the study so that they behave naturally and yet at the same time he needs to maintain a sense of objectivity. The process includes more than observation; it may also include interviews, conversations, and questionnaires (Dewalt&Dewalt, 2010; Kawulich, 2005; Mulhall, 2003). This helps in understanding how political, social, economic, cultural environment enables or creates barriers for people (Kushner & Morrow, 2003). Three roles of participant-observer were defined by Lutz and Iannaccone (1974):

(1) The participant as an observer-Participant as an observer is a natural member of the group being studied,

(2) The observer as a limited participant- The researcher is not a natural member of the group as the observer as a limited participant. Researcher interacts with the members of the group for the stated purpose of studying it scientifically,

And

(3) The observer as a non-participant -In the third role researcher remains detached from the group under study and at times misses the activities at which only group members are present.

In the study described in this paper, the role of the observer as a limited participant was selected as the most appropriate role. The researcher was a faculty interacting with the group and hence he was accepted to the group.

In a similar study done by Marcillo-Gómez andDesilus (2016), observational research was used for the International Business course at two different universities- one in the United States and one in Mexico City. The study shares a detailed insight about the experience of two faculties regarding collaborative teaching. The study approximately included twenty-five students from each university. The present study also used a survey. Ferketich (1993) advocated the use of the survey as an instrument for cross-cultural research. The survey was conducted in order to collect feedback from the students after the COIL was conducted. The survey included thirty Indian students and twenty American students, between the ages of 20 and 35 years and completing their undergraduate/graduate degrees in the area of Business Administration.The following section includes the details related to COIL inception, conduction, and findings as reflected by the post-COIL survey.

The feedback form includes both open and closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions help to take a holistic and comprehensive look at the issues being studied (Allen, 2017). In our case, it helped us to assess their feeling through diverse opinions on the COIL course. Closed-ended question jog respondents' memory and help to generate more accurate responses (Clow& James, 2014) and provide us their attitude or belief about something (Allen, 2017). In our case, it helped us to collect their belief about student colleagues' counterpart, group behavior on task completion, execution of the COIL course along with demographic data.

The integrated approach of observation and feedback form gave us a holistic view which includes belief, feeling, and behavioral aspects of participants about the COIL course.

3.COIL Preparation

The idea of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) was a result of a workshop conducted at our University and we were proactive to take the next steps to make it a reality. However, the next few months were vital for the success of COIL and required detail planning along with the faculty from the other university in the US with regard to a number of factors as detailed below: first was the duration of the project – for the project to be successful the duration had to be for a minimum of 4 weeks and could go on to as long as an entire semester; in our case, it was for 5 weeks for two reasons – one it was our first COIL collaboration and we decided to take it slow and second, our semesters were so spaced out that we do not go on with the project for longer than 4 weeks. The next important decision was regarding the syllabus/ module to be covered. Over our weekly discussions we realized that since the students at both the places would be studying Microeconomics for the first time, we mutually agreed on co-teaching Demand and Elasticity of demand and also decided to base our COIL Project on the same. It was further decided that our students would use the Blackboard – LMS of the US University and we shared the email ids of our students who were added onto their LMS and had access to everything related to COIL. The biggest

problem that we foresaw was the time difference 9.5 hours, so when it was 6:00 pm in India it was 8:30 am at our US Partner University, and thus this was the best time for us to conduct meeting with students from both the places. We thus explored tools that would help the students join the meetings and sessions from the comfort of their places.

3.1 COIL – 1.0

The course we had chosen was Microeconomics, and the modules covered for the COIL were Demand and Elasticity of Demand since the students were studying this subject for the first time, we felt this would be apt for the COIL Project. The students were expected to understand the concepts of Demand and Elasticity of demand and then submit a final project in groups by the end of the collaboration. The development and progress were divided on a weekly basis.

Week I – The first week was for an ice-breaking activity, where the students would introduce themselves on the Blackboard highlighting their name, the course of study, interests, hobbies, etc. In addition, they were expected to go through the introductions of others to identify their peers with similar interests. This we felt would help the students get familiar with each other and help in bonding with each other since this was the foundation of the entire collaboration.

Week II – In the second week, the students would work locally (US partner University students on US system and Indian students on Indian System) to create a Price Elasticity and a Demand curve that describes individual health care and consumer behavior based on the class population's own preferences (they could use a small sample of their peers to come up with the demand curve). Once done, the students would share their reports with each other on the Blackboard. In addition, a session was planned for the Indian students to be delivered by the partnering Faculty on the Health Care Delivery System in the US.

Week III – Students from both institutions compare and contrast findings and identify common individual behavioral themes and differences, this was to help the students engage in discussions. Students are asked to identify asymmetrical information problems.

Week IV – Students to work in groups (3 Indian students and 2 US students) to discuss how firm behavior (supply) will be impacted by the elasticity and demand curves. Ultimately we wanted the students to discuss with each other, how their respective health care systems worked, and what were the economic incentives to suppliers are in each system. This we felt would lead to further discussions and help students finalize their projects.

Week V – The groups were to submit their projects which would include their original perspective of their respective health care systems, the similarities and differences in the health care systems of US and India; discussion regarding the similarities and differences which would include their conclusions, discusses market efficiency and identifies "normative" and ethical implications of the understanding of each other's systems.

Findings

The world is now a global village and it is argued that academic institutes should inculcate Global citizen activities in the curriculum to help students get career ready. This was a group of two students located on two different continents. They had never interacted before this. Yet it was interesting to note that the diverse group agreed on a common point that COIL is useful. The comments provided an insight as to how the group viewed the merit of COIL not only in terms of academics but beyond academics.

4.1 Helpful in Professional life

"The COIL experience gave us an opportunity and a platform to interact with students from a different country altogether to work upon a project which would help in understanding the topic in a more comparable manner. This exposure is beneficial for our future endeavors if we are to have made any connections or have to work upon a project with people who we are not familiar with" (Indian Student, henceforth IS).

"The COIL experience would be beneficial for my professional life as it helped me interact with a whole bunch of new unknown people which boosted my morale and I would now be more comfortable doing the same in near future" (US Student henceforth USS).

"Yes, the COIL experience will help my professional life as it helps me interact and socialize and at the same time exposes me to international market dynamics" (IS).

"An initiative like COIL will surely help me in my career as it is an experience of understanding different views and perspectives of students around the world" (IS).

"I think this opportunity has allowed us to look into things with much more depth on how different countries operate. I am a Marketing student, and this is a skill that is always needed. When you define your target market, you must pay attention to how you express things and make a positive impression on those people. You also have to look into how to spread the word. I think this can be very beneficial to any business student for sure" (USS).

"COIL experience will surely help me in my professional life because it helped me interact with minds having different opinions" (USS).

The students perceived COIL to equip them with required skills which would further help them in their career. While some found the opportunity to interact with international students as a plus point; some saw this opportunity to understand different market dynamics. Overall it definitely gave them the confidence to work in diverse teams.

4.2 Beyond career

The group also found the COIL experience useful beyond career. While the word culture dominated, some students also saw this as a lever to strengthen their communication skills and knowledge.

"It provides us a platform for us to interact with students from across the world thus improving our cultural knowledge and it's a new experience all together" (USS).

"…... Now I will think about things from a different perspective and even do research according to different countries and cultures" (IS).

"I believe it is a great opportunity to see how the world is different in other countries compared to us and gives us great communication skills" (USS).

"The experience helped me gain some of the new information available which I was not aware of much to such an extent" (USS).

"The COIL project gave us a platform and a motive to interact with students and gave us a new perspective on a topic from the vision from another part of the world. Thus, increasing our knowledge and insight on a larger base"(IS).

"Getting the chance to work with someone from across the world and making a new friend"(IS).

"It was the free flow of communication"(IS).

"The interaction was the best part"(IS).

"Getting to virtually meet the India students" (USS).

COIL was appreciated not just from a professional point of view but students found it useful in various areas ranging from communication, interaction to making friends across the globe. It generated enthusiasm among the group and helped them to bond on issues beyond academics.

4.3 The barriers

The experience had its share of problems also. India and the USA are in two different time zones and the difference between the time zones is huge. This proved to be a hiccup for some.

"I learned some interesting things about healthcare in India, but I don't think it's something that will help me in my career" (USS).

"I think the COIL experience is a great idea and opportunity, but it is very difficult and inconvenient due to the time difference. If there wasn't such a huge time difference, I think the experience would be a lot more beneficial" (USS).

"Finding an appropriate time that doesn't interfere with students' personal/work lives to work on this project with the India students is a big obstacle, unfortunately" (USS).

"If we could get more time to interact with others, it would have helped"(IS).

"Probably would love if the COIL project duration would be extended more which would produce more detailed and concrete results" (USS).

"I wish we could have been able to interact over face time or Skype to actually meet the other students" (IS).

"The time difference makes it almost impossible to adequately interact with the India class" (USS).

COIL had its share of problems also with time difference dominating the list. The huge time gap between India and the USA was at times a hindrance in helping students contribute to the maximum of their potential.

4.4 Cultural aspect

"The cultural similarities noticed between USA and India is that all commit to their work and strive to finish it within the adequate amount of time"(IS).

"The cultural similarities between USA and India are that they are dedicated towards their work and commit to it"(IS).

"Both countries have adapted to using technology for everyday tasks. They seem to like music that is popular in the United States" (USS).

"Similar resources used for the project"(IS).

"The will to learn was shown from both the group's" (USS).

"That we think the same. We both are among the largest countries in the world. Both are democracies" (USS).

" I noticed that everyone was having little knowledge in the topic related and was excited to enhance their knowledge" (USS).

"Students are inclined to learning new things as in India"(IS).

"India families are closer-knit, and American families tend to be more widely dispersed" (USS).

"Indian culture is more conservative and diligent while American culture is more open and enthusiastic"(IS).

"The main thing was seniority. Since they all were working whereas we are students, there was a level of difference in professionalism"(IS).

"The cultural difference we noticed was that the people were more easy-going on their health issues and facilities than in India. Moreover, home remedies were more profound in India in order to provide first-hand treatment" (USS).

"It was the work-life balance which was greatly seen in the USA" (USS).As can be seen, both groups agreed on a common similarity between Indian and American culture and that was the dedication to work. Both groups found the other culture to be willing to learn and contribute. The use of technology in everyday life was another topic of agreement. The difference was

noticed in the family life and approach to health. Family in India was perceived to be closer-knit.

The benefits of COIL in comparison to regular internationalization is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. COIL VS Regular Internationalization (Benefits)

Benefits	COIL	Regular Internationalization
Profession Life	Students are benefitted in their Professional Life, Career and Future endeavours	Students are benefitted in their Professional Life, Career and Future endeavours
Economical Aspect	Less costly in nature (Involves only infrastructural cost such as internet etc.)	More costly in nature (Involves travelling, accommodation cost etc.)
Beyond Career	Different perspectives, communication skills, new friends, Provides virtual experience.	Different perspectives, communication skills, new friends, Provides first-hand experience.
Cultural Aspects	Knowledge related to various cultural aspects, Better understanding of intercultural and international issues.	Knowledge related to various cultural aspects, Better understanding of intercultural and international issues.

Challenges to COIL 1.0

5.1 Time differences –

One major issue with the COIL collaboration was the time difference of 9.5 hours, India being ahead. As a result, when the Indian students were at school the US students would be sleeping and the US students would be in their schools' Indian students would be back home. This for interactions/ meetings, etc. the most convenient time was – 6:00 pm Indian Time and 8:30 am US Time. Since any time later than that it would get too late for Indian Students and anytime earlier than that would be too early for the Students. This issue was a little resolved when we moved ahead with asynchronous meetings where students could join in remotely.

5.2 Student Interaction –

One of the main objectives of the COIL collaboration was student interaction in order to help in the cultural and traditional exchange. We had expected that the students will be able to engage and interact with each other after the ice breaker session. However, this did not happen, and the student interaction was lesser than expected, as a corrective measure we put the students into groups for the final submission and this did help to a great extent, which also could mean that the students were more comfortable interacting in smaller groups.

Keeping this in mind, when we moved ahead in COIL 2.0, we made a few amends, which really helped in increasing the student interaction, these include:

- The first thing we did was put the students in groups, and it helped to a great extent.

- For the ice breaker activity, we asked them to work in groups and make a story based on the members of the group.

- In addition, we also asked the students in groups, but the final copy was to be submitted by every individual in the group.

5.3 Cultural differences –

There were also some cultural differences like the average age of the Indian students was 18 to 20 years, while the same in the case of the US students was 25 to 51 years. In addition, while the students in India were studying full time, the students from the US University were working and studying at the same time. Finally, while the students in India took care of themselves, and some even stayed with their families, the students from the US University had their own families to take care of.

Table 2. elucidates the challenges related to COIL when compared to regular internationalization.

Table 2. Regular Internationalization vs. COIL (Challenges)

Challenges	COIL	Regular Internationalization
Cost and Affordability	Cost is negligible (Involves only infrastructural cost such as internet etc.)	Entire process is ongoing and cyclic and involves huge costs and resources
Risky and involves time	Active participation and time involved.	Active participation and time involved.
Mobility	Virtual Presence	Requires Physical Mobility

COIL seems to offer most of the benefits offered by regular internationalization, as can be observed from the Table1. At the same time, it also takes care of the challenges to regular internationalization like cost and mobility issues, which may demotivate learners. Although, COIL has its own challenges in the form of the time difference and the duration of the COIL, these can be worked out (between the collaborating institutions) to make the coordination/ experience better. However, the authors do not propose COIL as an alternative to regular internationalization, but, feel that COIL is to regular internationalization just as MOOC is to a regular classroom. Thus, the COIL experience can be the first step towards a more rewarding and fulfilling internationalization experience.

Discussion

Globalization has aggravated the need for the workforce which is comfortable working in a cross-cultural environment. The need is for people who are not just intellectually competent but also able to respect diversity. The reality is also the skills required to be successful in a multicultural environment are difficult to be taught in the traditional classroom. Maybe one of the effective methods to help students acquire intercultural competence skills can be through experiential learning. Many Institutes are putting the focus on Internationalization. Study abroad is one way that has gained popularity. However, this approach requires a lot of resources that may not be available to all in a country like India. Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) is an approach that allows virtual mobility and yet helps the students understand respect cultural differences. Table 1 depicts

COIL gave an opportunity to both the group of students to work together virtually. The learning went beyond academics. It definitely helped them to understand the subject from different perspectives and hence make it more comprehensive. However, COIL provided them a platform that contributed on a much bigger scale. It helped the students understand cultural diversity and yet helped them identify the common thread of bonding. The dedication towards the project was appreciated by both the groups for each other. In a world where companies have a workforce situated in different parts of the world respect for each other's culture is an important aspect. The project also had its challenges with time difference being the biggest obstacle.

The students came away with a very unique experience and it broadened their perspective. Going forward COIL can be an innovative, economical, and useful way of Internationalization. A strong institutional support, common technology platforms to facilitate interaction among groups, similar curriculums with course credit, and of course, the will and desire to connect with student groups in different cultures and country are the key ingredients of COIL. The benefits of COIL outweigh the barriers. This virtual collaboration allows students to understand the global challenges they might face in a multicultural workforce. The extremely economical aspect of COIL cannot be overemphasized. In a country like India where traveling abroad is not feasible for many students, COIL provides the opportunity for internationalization at home.

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