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Language and cultural barriers. An approach to intercultural communication inside NGOS in Ayacucho

Barreras lingüísticas y culturales. Una aproximación a la comunicación intercultural al interior de las ONG en Ayacucho
Linguagem e barreiras culturais. Uma aproximação à comunicação intercultural nas ONGs de Ayacucho

ARTÍCULO GENERAL

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ABSTRACT

This paper sought to analyze the existing linguistic and cultural barriers in intercultural communication within NGOs in Ayacucho. It was a quantitative investigation, a non-experimental - cross-sectional study. the Survey of the representative sample (35 people from 20 to 45 years old) was used. The instrument was the questionnaire, it has 80 items. Likewise, these questions are broken down into blocks, the first being on acculturation (1-26) linked to; then on multiculturalism (27 to 34), prejudice (35 to 42), intercultural sensitivity (43 to 70), sociocultural competence (71 to 80). After analyzed the results, was possible to conclude that, even with support, it is very limited and concrete actions are required to make possible the integration of the cultures at stake, both that of the resident.

RESUMEN

Este trabajo buscó analizar las barreras lingüísticas y culturales existentes en la comunicación intercultural dentro de las ONG en Ayacucho. Fue una investigación cuantitativa, un estudio no experimental - transversal. Se utilizó la Encuesta de la muestra representativa (35 personas de 20 a 45 años). El instrumento fue el cuestionario, cuenta con 80 ítems. Asimismo, estas preguntas se desglosan en bloques, siendo el primero sobre aculturación (1-26) vinculado a; luego en multiculturalidad (27 a 34), prejuicio (35 a 42), sensibilidad intercultural (43 a 70), competencia sociocultural (71 a 80). Luego de analizados los resultados, fue posible concluir que, aún con apoyo, es muy limitado y se requieren acciones concretas para viabilizar la integración de las culturas en juego, tanto la del residente.

RESUMO

Este artigo procurou analisar as barreiras lingüísticas e culturais existentes na comunicação intercultural dentro das ONGs em Ayacucho. Tratou-se de uma investigação quantitativa, não experimental - estudo transversal. foi utilizado o Survey da amostra representativa (35 pessoas de 20 a 45 anos). O instrumento foi o questionário, possui 80 itens. Da mesma forma, essas questões são divididas em blocos, sendo o primeiro sobre aculturação (1-26) vinculado a; depois em multiculturalismo (27 a 34), preconceito (35 a 42), sensibilidade intercultural (43 a 70), competência sociocultural (71 a 80). Depois de analisados os resultados, foi possível concluir que, mesmo com apoio, é muito limitado e são necessárias ações concretas para possibilitar a integração das culturas em jogo, tanto a do residente.

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Introduction

The notion of communicating with someone who is different from us, a cross-cultural "outsider", lies at the heart of cross-cultural communicatio. In this context, the stranger, later referred to as a 'sojourner', is an individual who visits another culture over a period of time but retains his or her original culture. Thus, the experience of residing or visiting often provides people with a unique perspective to view both the host and source cultures (S. Liu et al., 2015).

It is worth mentioning that in such situations, cultural differences that have been created and sustained by a complex set of forces that are rooted within the members of the culture can deepen. These forces that generate cultural differences include a culture's history, ecology, technology, biology, institutional networks, and interpersonal communication patterns (Lustig & Koester, 2010).

Regarding the last element, communication, the same source points out that differences in interpersonal communication patterns are both the cause and the result of cultural differences. Situated in specific social-historical circumstances, the Other we perceive is always outcomes of communicative practices (Y. Liu & Kramer, 2019). So, verbal communication systems, or languages, give each culture a common set of categories and distinctions with which to organize perceptions. These common categories are used to order objects and ideas and to give meaning to shared experiences. Nonverbal communication systems provide information about the meanings associated with the use of space, time, touch, and gestures.

In this way, it is clear that the gap between two forms of communication can widen in the case of an interlocutor with a different culture from that of the receiver. In addition, (Birner, 2013) explains that there are many ways in which a speaker's intention can be more evident than is apparent simply from the semantics of the uttered sentence, as well as the need to consider context when inferring meaning. intended by a speaker; having more and more intrinsic aspects in the interaction.

(Abril & Martín, 2011) already explained that communication is a broad concept, which is not limited, as mentioned, to the mere exchange of verbal information: it is a social and cultural interaction, which, as such, reflects paraculture. (national culture) and diaculture (interest group, professional or gender) of the interlocutors, and is conditioned by the social framework in which it develops.

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Within this problem, in Ayacucho, Peru, there are four NGOs that receive foreign volunteers and who, due to the lack of adequate pre-induction and guidance during their volunteering, deal with communication difficulties, which affects the organization and internal coexistence and with the locals either because of the language or the cultural aspect. For this reason, it is necessary to implement better communication strategies before and during your stay so that disinterested collaboration can be used efficiently. Based on this, this paper sought to analyze the existing linguistic and cultural barriers in intercultural communication within NGOs in Ayacucho.

Methodology

It was a quantitative investigation since quantifiable data was collected and statistics were used to explain the results. In addition, it is a non-experimental - cross-sectional study since the variables were studied in their natural state, that is, they were not subjected to manipulation and cross-sectional because the data collection took place at a certain time.

Regarding the technique, the Survey of the representative sample (35 people from 20 to 45 years old) was used. However, the sampling of this research is non-probabilistic, intentional, since the choice of the elements will not depend on the probability but on the characteristics of the research and the decision made by the researcher.

The instrument was the questionnaire, it has 80 items. Likewise, these questions are broken down into blocks, the first being on acculturation (1-26) linked to; then on multiculturalism (27 to 34), prejudice (35 to 42), intercultural sensitivity (43 to 70), sociocultural competence (71 to 80). Regarding the validity of the Questionnaire, it has already been validated in (Ramírez, 2017)

For this purpose, a scale from 1 to 5 was used, where 1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither agree nor disagree; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree.

Resultados y discusión

After the application of the questionnaire in the sample, object of study, the following findings were obtained:
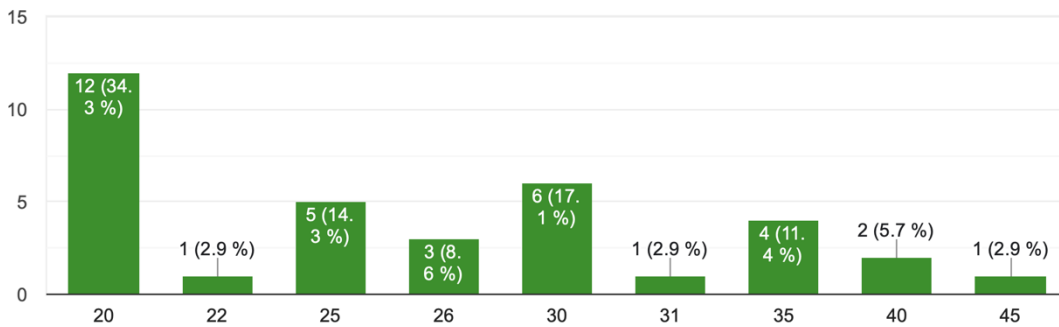
The results have been ordered by placing the general data of the participants at the beginning and continuing with the responses to the items. Of the 80 questions, the ones that most reflected the objective of this have been placed.

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Figure 1.

Age

Edad
35 respuestas

Most of the people in the sample (34.3%) stated that they were 20 years old, followed by 17.1% who claimed to be 30 years old; This allows us to infer that the majority of individuals that made up the study sample were between 20 and 30 years old, although the spectrum reached up to 45 years. Thus, it can be indicated that the participants were, mainly, millennials.

Figure 2.

Sex

Sexo
35 respuestas
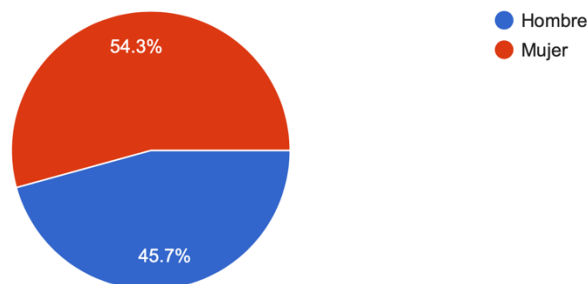
Likewise, it is important to mention that most of the people in the sample (54.3%) identified themselves as female.

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Figure 3.

We should keep our own customs (type of food, celebrations, entertainment and upbringing).

1. Deberíamos mantener nuestras propias costumbres (tipo de comida, celebraciones, entretenimiento y crianza).

35 respuestas
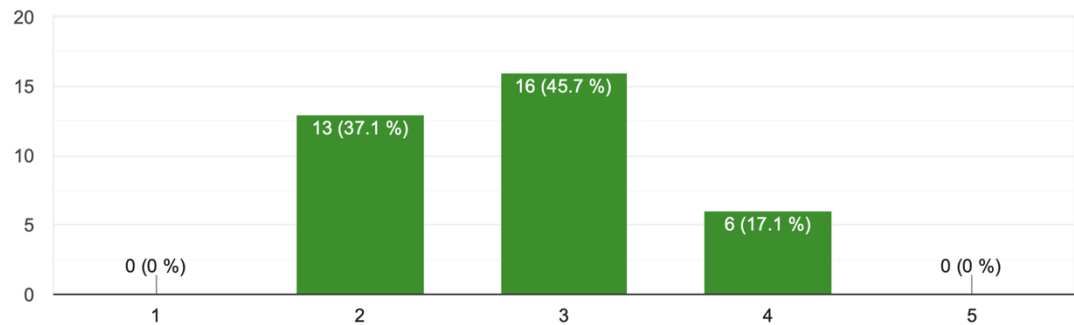
The majority of the sample (45.7%) indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed regarding the question of "maintaining our own customs (type of food, celebrations, entertainment and upbringing)".
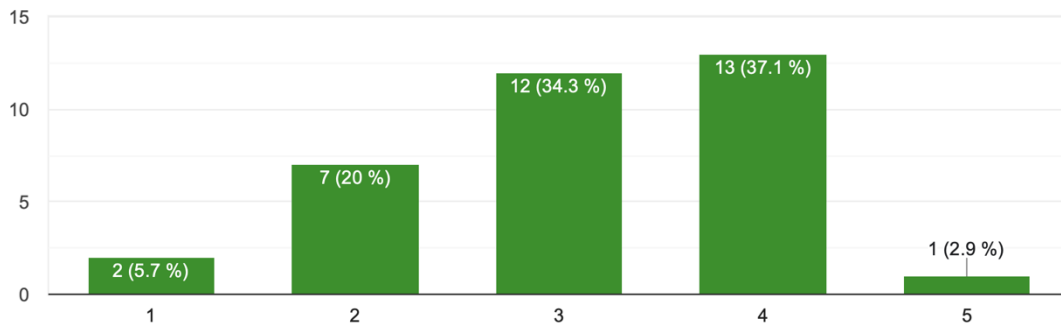
This allows us to infer that the majority of volunteers have not taken a position either in favor or against cultural exchange, but rather remain neutral. This already, in itself, is an analyzable fact since immigrants are not willing to change their culture nor are Peruvians so open about opening their doors completely to foreigners. However, I already explained (García & Verdú, 2008) that the immigrant faces a new identity, by integrating into a social hierarchy where his person is situated at the lowest levels and the cultural values that shape his personality are directly and indirectly threatened. Therefore, it can be inferred that the immigrant is seeking to protect his identity or is in the process of rethinking where he stands in said society.

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Figure 4.

Peru is developing, in part, thanks to the work and presence of foreigners.

26. Perú se está desarrollando, en parte, gracias al trabajo y presencia de extranjeros.
35 respuestas

The majority of individuals surveyed Agree that Peru is developing, in part, thanks to foreign labor. This allows us to infer that in this study, the interviewees recognize the work of immigrants, their value in society, and allow them to be seen as a contribution from which the entire community benefits as a whole.
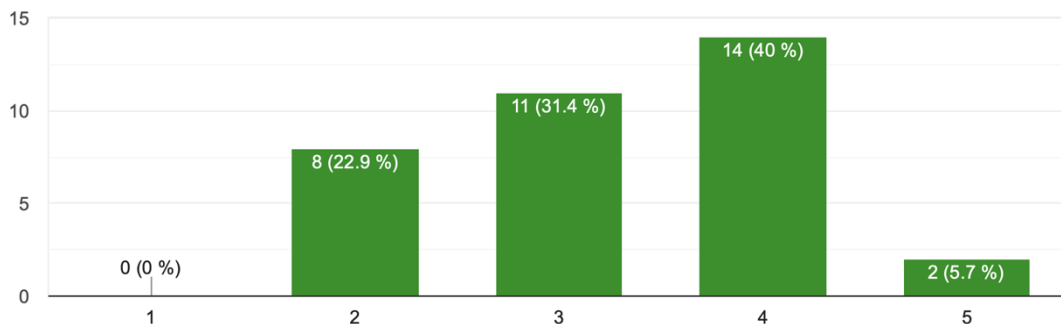
who are influenced by the attitudes of both immigrants and the host population (Grigoryev et al., 2018). And in the case of the study population, it is expressed in the exposed questions that this occurs in this way, and that immigrants see the mixture of cultures with something positive, despite having some resistance from the host culture.

Figure 5.

Peruvians should recognize that society is made up of groups of different cultural backgrounds.

27. Los peruanos deberían reconocer que la socieda...ta por grupos de diferentes orígenes culturales.
35 respuestas

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The 40% of the sample said they agreed, regarding the fact that the society of this country is made up of diverse cultures. This allows us to infer that not only is there recognition of cultures and subcultures within the country, but little by little, and with increasing frequency, Peru represents a mixture of customs and traditions that are reflected in its history, food, habits and that, by inheritance, leaves the door open to more and new tendencies, as well as to the contributions of the immigrant brothers.

Figure 6.

The best thing for Peru is that all foreigners forget their different cultural origins as soon as possible

29. Lo mejor para Perú es que todos los extranjeros se olviden de sus diferentes orígenes culturales lo antes posible.
35 respuestas
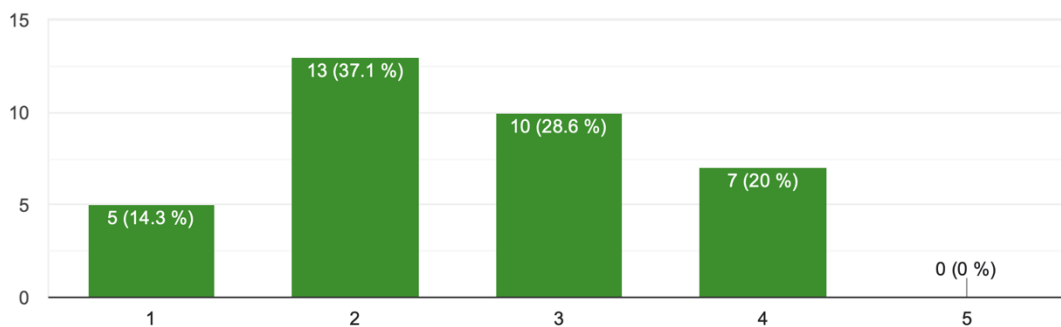
The majority (37.1%) of those interviewed stated that they DISAGREE that foreign immigrants forget their cultures "as soon as possible". In this line, the tendency in these interviewees has been a somewhat passive behavior that is cut short in this question since their position is emphatic and they respect that "the other" has their culture present, although without detracting from the Peruvian one.

Thus, it can be seen that the notion of multiculturalism is applied. Multiculturalism can be defined as the experience in which a person is exposed to and internalizes two or more cultures. As a result of exposure to and learning from two or more cultures, one can develop a multicultural identity, which is the outcome of having strong bonds of affiliation with different cultures.

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Multicultural identity is part of one's social identity, organized around core categories that allow the individual to feel like a participant in certain social groups (family, friends, work, gender) and which provide elements of differentiation. In social contexts which involve contact between cultures and languages, both are particularly important when defining social identity (Garcia et al., 2017).

Figure 7.

Respect
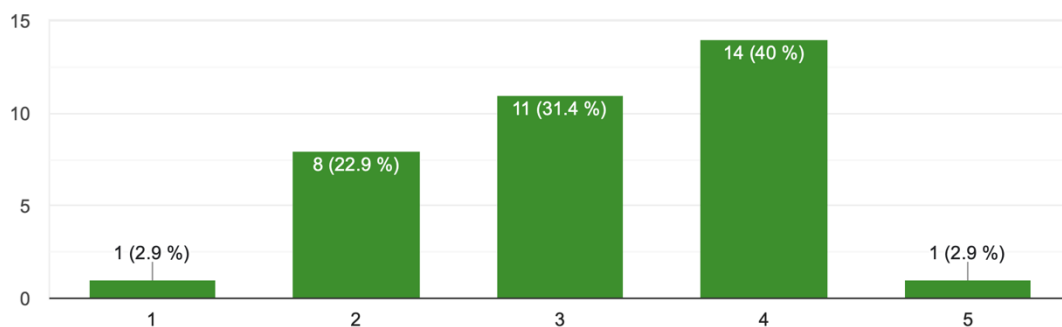

40. Respeto.
35 respuestas
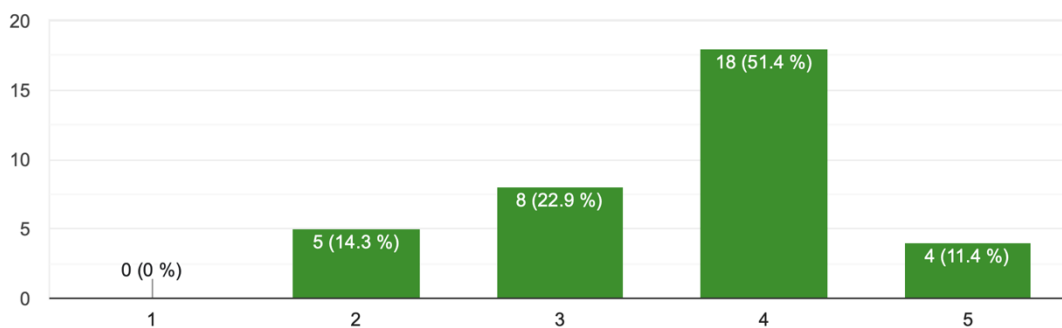
Regarding the emotions they felt regarding Peruvians, the sample indicated respect as the most common, which allows us to infer that immigrants are held in high esteem in the country. Even knowing all the hatred and xenophobia that has been seen in recent years, this generation claims the opposite.

Figure 8.

I try to get as much information as possible when interacting with people from other cultures.

61. Trato de obtener la máxima información al relacionarme con personas de otras culturas.
35 respuestas

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Regarding the item, I try to obtain the maximum information when interacting with people from other cultures, the volunteers indicated that they did. This is aligned with multiculturalism to the extent that there is awareness that taking information from customs and new forms and lifestyles is valid, and has support to the extent that you enrich yourself as a human being, gaining from the crossing of teachings that both worlds have to offer.

Finally, this is linked to the affective dimension. According to (Fernández-Borrero et al., 2016), it has to do with an individual's ability to develop positive emotions toward understanding and appreciation of cultural differences that promote appropriate and effective behaviors in intercultural communication.

Conclusion

Most of the immigrant volunteers have lived in Peru for a few months, despite this, it is likely that they have not completed their integration process due to various barriers such as social, religious and language. Therefore, their needs are comparatively higher than the needs of those who have been settled for a longer time. It is necessary that, although there is a positive look at immigrants, this does not mean that the doors are fully open for them, on the contrary, indifference has prevailed in most of the results, I leave some positive ones previously shown. This makes it possible to conclude that, even with support, it is very limited and concrete actions are required to make possible the integration of the cultures at stake, both that of the resident and that of the immigrant.

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Declaro no tener ningún conflicto de intereses, que puedan haber influido en los resultados obtenidos o las interpretaciones propuestas.

Declaración de consentimiento informado

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