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Inclusive Culture and Interculturality: The Colombian Stereotype as a First Impression of Interaction with Russians in Russia's Soccer World Cup

Por: Laura Marín¹
Robert Ojeda Pérez²

Abstract

Stereotypes have allowed many people to carve out 'prejudices' about different type of topics and humans. In the Colombian case, they, despite their own prejudices, have adapted in a positive way towards the place they arrive, because of the inclusive culture that is managed in various educational institutions has allowed their identity fulfillment. There is no exclusion but that each foreigner or native is known through their culture, for which there have been some cases of success of Colombians in Russia since the soccer world cup. In this article, we identify some stereotypes as well as some inclusive actions about culture and interculturality.

Keywords

Inclusive Culture, Interculturality, Stereotypes and Interaction

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Variables

1. Inclusive culture in Colombia in terms of interculturality
2. The stereotypes that identify Colombians in Russia
3. Effective interculturality: Colombians in Russia and their interaction with culture.

Introduction

As *Loonuyck* says: “During the last decades, the concept of interculturalism has been used increasingly in philosophical, political and public debates on diversity issues. Especially in response to the so-called failures of multiculturalism, it is receiving more and more positive attention.” (2016, p. 225). So that interculturalism has arranged on the contemporary debate.

Therefore, this work aims to see how interculturality is better adapted to the inclusive culture that is been developing in various educational institutions, given that, many people are being affected by social prejudices, leaving empathy out of hand.

In fact, some perspectives on prejudice and discrimination claim that prejudices may arise not from antipathy, but from the perceived incongruity of a person’s social role with the stereotypes associated with them (Eagly and Karau, 2002).

In that way, the inclusive culture has allowed that, by accepting the differences, Colombians adapt better to the place to which they go abroad, so in that sense, it allows inclusiveness to be managed effectively in interculturality.

Problem statement

Interculturality has gained strength because the world has found itself in a constant globalization process, so culture has not been an exception when integrating with the rest of the world. Therefore the term interculturality arises and it’s defined as “the ensemble of interrelations that structure a given society in terms of culture, ethnicity, language, religious denomination, and/ or nationality, an ensemble that is perceived through the articulation of different” us “versus” them “groups that interact in often” (Dietz, 2018, p.2)

In this way, inclusive culture has been implemented in the education of several people in different parts of the world, so that it is easier to understand cultural differences, however in many cases the are still existing many wrong stereotypes of other cultures. In the words of *Neculaesei* (2017) “Stereotypes are often erroneous generalizations or even misinterpretations of the values of another

group; but at the same time, they provide additional knowledge about the elements of cultural specificity ”(p.206).

Therefore, stereotypes not only have negative but also positive effects since they give added value to each culture, and that is that no country is the exception to being conditioned by this type of prejudice. This is either the case of Colombia, or it is what the analysis is made of, based in how difficult it has been to maintain a good image of the South American country. As *Barbosa et.al* (2018) say, violence and drugs have taken over the generalized view of Colombians. That means for instance that for a foreigner, Colombians are the ones who get lost in the drug cartel and on an environment of violence.

In this way, it has been noted over time that the respect for the other has been implemented regardless of sex, race, or religion, and has remained within the territory of each country, but what can happen when someone from another country arrives (specifically from Colombia)? We could think that they will be treated with the same categories (respecting differences) but, is this true? In effect, the question arises: In what way does inclusive culture allow the interculturality of a Colombian in Russia to be effective?

Question

In what way does inclusive culture allow the interculturality of a Colombian in Russia to be effective?

Objectives

1. Identify inclusive culture as a support element in the interaction with foreign cultures in terms of interculturality
2. Define the stereotypes that Colombians have in Russia.
3. Exemplify the different experiences of Colombians abroad and their way of interacting with the Russian culture.

Methodology

For these studies we want to underline the epistemological value of conversation for qualitative methodologies:

Conversation is understood from its limit concept: as a plural logic of subjective interconnection and as a possible dimension of common sense or everyday. Conversations for understanding – those in which rank is highlighted. Intersubjective speaking, as opposed to conversations for action- designate a speaking devoid of any instrumental dimension, which reports, to the sociological gaze, a control or developmental epistemology: as control, they inform what society is. As

development, conversations transform reality into what it can be. Finally, as resource for development, the role of conversation in the restitution of contacts between the subjectivity and decisional systems.

Inclusive culture in Colombia in terms of interculturality

According to *Borboa* (2006), “when speaking of interculturality, it must refer to some type of contact, interaction or exchange between human groups from different cultures” (p.46). Interculturality refers not only to interactions that occur geographically, but also to every situation in which there is a difference. It must be considered that interculturality depends on many factors, such as different cultural concepts, communication barriers, lack of national policies, social hierarchy and economic differences.

The birth of a fusion culture stems from education and its implementation in schools. According to *Lasso* (2015), “the fusion culture aims to develop values that allow the establishment of safety, enthusiasm and motivation in communities” (page 24). That’s because prejudice plays a very important role, and prejudices and stereotypes of the Society have been modified, which has led to the acceptance of other people who are obviously different from us.

Therefore, it is important that institutions teach how important inclusion is and the positive consequences it can bring, now how this is implemented in Colombian schools. According to a study carried out at the *Yarima Integrated School*, which is located in Santander, many of the students belonged to various parts of the country, some were displaced due to violence or were part of indigenous communities, which is why there was a diversity of individuals with different characteristics, who in a way of looking are forced to interact together. In this study it was concluded that education is the best inclusive and interaction strategy for students to accept the present diversity that is evidenced in life outside of school. In which school, leads to tolerance and respect for others as primary tools of acceptance.

In accordance with the above, the education strategy allows Colombians to accept those who belong to other cultures, and not only those who are in South America, but also those who come from other parts of the world, leaving aside prejudices and stereotypes. So that when the average Colombian goes abroad, it becomes easier for him to interact with the natives, allowing efficiency when interacting with them.

The stereotypes that identify Colombians in Russia

With the Soccer World Cup in Russia 2018, the recognition of Colombia spread throughout the world, and the concept of Colombians on many occasions was positive, “they are very happy, they are always smiling, they stand out everywhere for their

passion, for his country and for football. I have seen that they are friendly, and I like that they come and get to know Russia”(Henao, 2018, par. 11).

Likewise, there was a negative concept of Colombians during the celebration of the World Cup, given that there were many criticisms at the time of dirtying the stadium in sporting events, this gave much to talk about the lack of culture and adoption of the rules in the Eurasian country.

Now, each culture has stereotypes all over the world, thanks to globalization, they have expanded and have reached a single concept according to each person from another country. Colombia is no exception, so an investigation by *Gregory James* in 2012, of a quantitative nature, we determined the following stereotypes that foreigners, including Russians, have about Colombia:

- Drug trafficking
- Drugs and violence
- The best coffee in the world
- Hot weather
- Some celebrities from Colombia are Shakira and Fernando Botero.
- Exotic fruits

In Gregory James’s study, a survey was conducted of several foreigners including Russians, and the following results were obtained that the same author showed in the work he did.

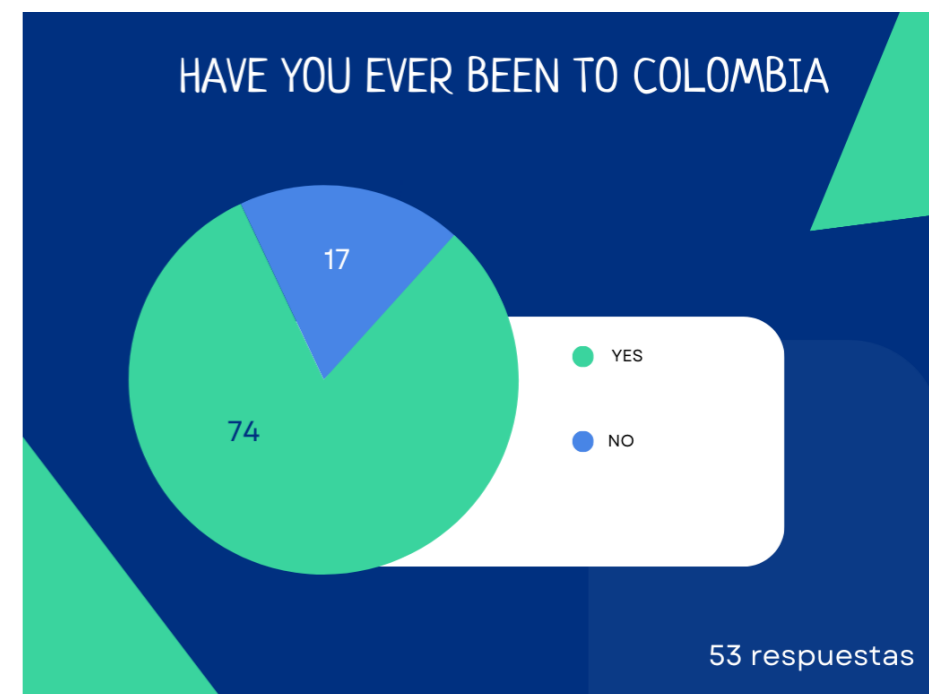


Figure 1. First survey question from Gregory James study

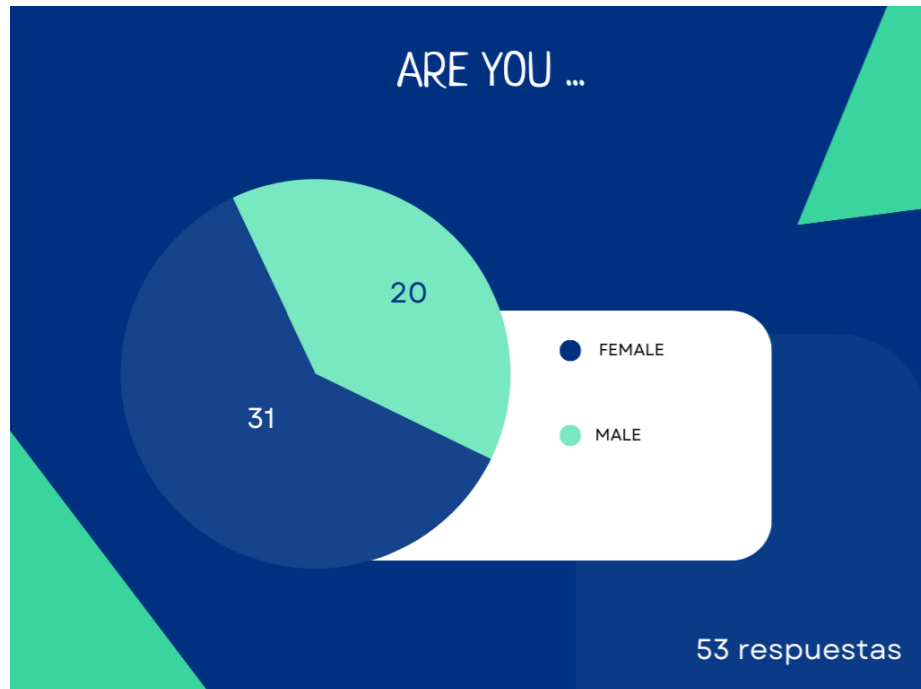


Figure 2. Second survey question from Gregory James study

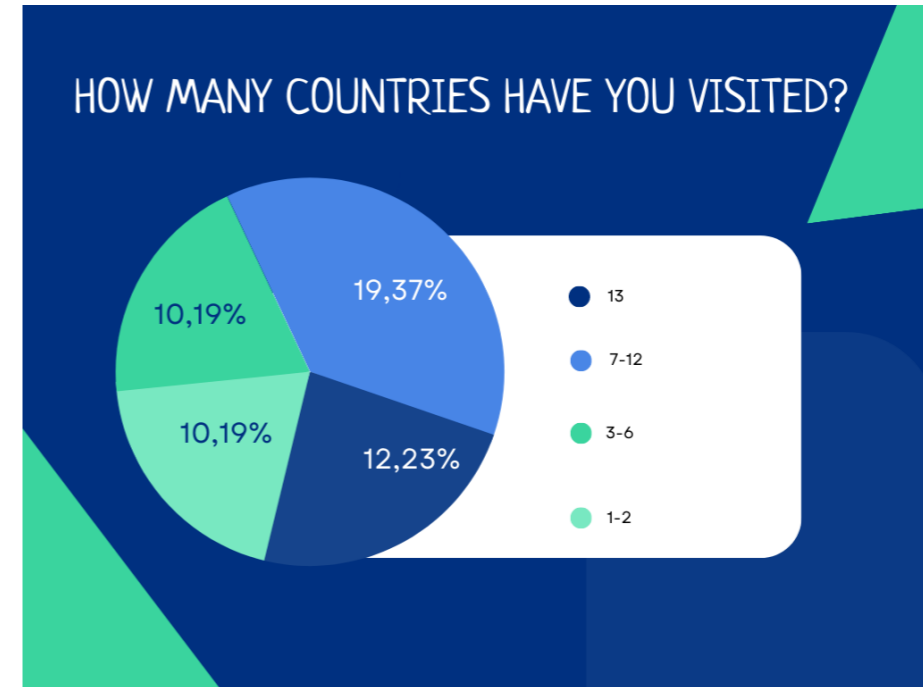


Figure 4. Fourth survey question from Gregory James study

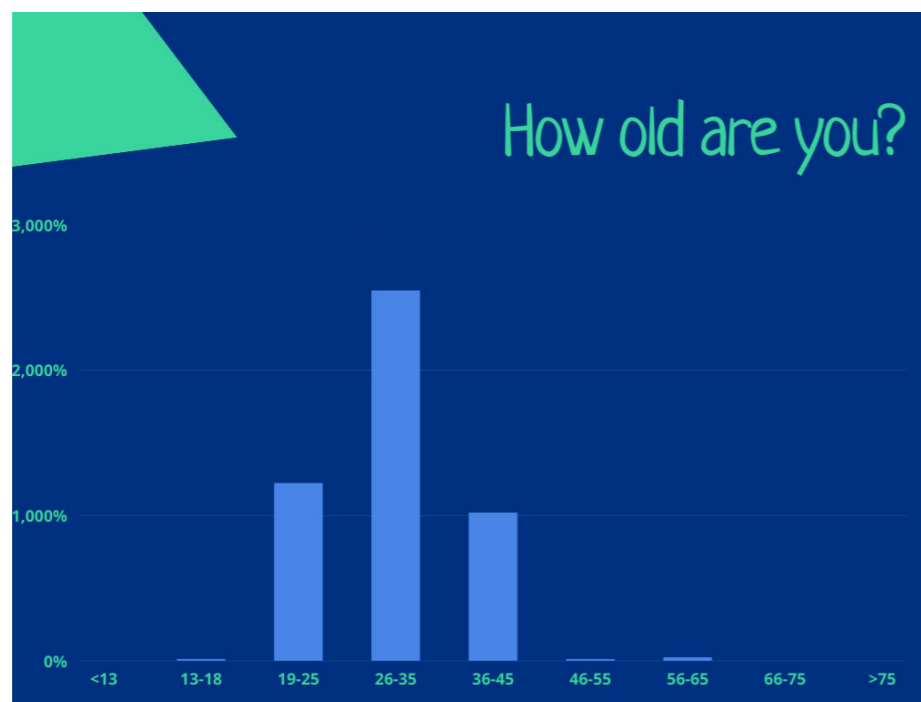


Figure 3. Third survey question from Gregory James study

Therefore, according to the study and several sources consulted, it is determined that Colombians are associated with both negative and positive aspects, which in a certain way influence the interaction with foreigners when they go to their countries, and although in the past the element of drug trafficking, currently still is, but not with the same intensity thanks to the popularity that the country has taken for the peace agreement with the FARC and the different advertising campaigns that invite more foreigners to get to know Colombia, putting aside prejudices.

On the other hand, it was found that people from other countries are also very aware of Colombian beaches, friendly people and good music. It is surprising that people know or have heard about places such as Andrés Carne de Res, arepas, fruits such as cape gooseberry and even songs that Colombians listen to say goodbye to the year that ends.

Effective interculturality: Colombians in Russia and their interaction with culture
Russia has become a strategic place for many Colombians both for educational opportunities and in some cases of work, according to Franco (2018) when Colombians arrive in Russia, they realize that it is a safe, organized, and with clean and spacious public spaces.

In itself, when arriving in Russia “it is necessary to know something of the native language, since many do not speak English, much less Spanish” (Franco,

2018, Parr.6), and the strong cultural shock that may exist is evident, since Colombian people travel thousands of kilometers for an opportunity. An average of Colombians are accustomed to the fact that at their home there is more empathy from strangers, while “Russians do not smile at strangers, they tend to be not very expressive and many times, the marked accent of their language makes those of us not used to hearing them think that they are shouting at them ”(Franco, 2018, Parr. 9)

However, for a Colombian it is easy to adapt to different customs and cultures, although at first it is difficult to do so, but as mentioned above, there is a cultural clash, from which both Russians and Colombians can learn from each other’s culture. As well *Franco* (2018) mentions it, the issue of food is a bit complicated since rice is not present in all meals in Russia, as if it occurs in Colombia, as well as other types of foods, which can be replaced over time with other similarities, in addition to the fact that the language, although it can be presented as a barrier, serves as an opportunity to learn both Spanish and Russian.

Interculturality is key when interacting with Colombians with Russians, and for this to be more effective, it’s necessary to understand the dynamics of Russian culture and how it “is used to” in their daily life. Many Colombians have given positive testimonies about the interaction they have with the natives, given that they have adapted to the country and its rules effectively, generating friendly or loving relationships that promise a good future.

From another perspective, with my own experience in a small interaction with a Russian who studied modern languages. She said that it was very common to identify Colombians as passionate about soccer, because of their yellow t-shirt and joy. However, they shared a common point that was a view from abroad related to the mafia and corruption, often generating bad opinions of the country. In this way we both come to the conclusion that the best way to get to know a culture is by interacting and learning from it, based on respect for differences of thought and traditions.

Conclusion

Interculturality refers not only to transactions that take place in the field, but also to situations in which there is disagreement. It should be noted that cultural differences depend on many factors, including cultural differences, communication barriers, lack of national politics, social structure, and economic diversity. Considering the above, educational strategies allow Colombia to accept people from other cultures, and not only from South America, but from other parts of the world.

With the 2018 World Cup in Russia, the recognition of Colombia spread throughout the world, and the concept of Colombians on many occasions was positive, that

most of them are very happy and cheerful. Likewise, there was a negative concept of Colombians during the celebration of the World Cup, since there was a lot of criticism when it came to dirtying the stadium in sporting events, this gave much to talk about the lack of culture and adoption of the rules in the Eurasian country.

According to the study by *Gregory James*, it was determined that Colombians are classified by stereotypes as: Drug trafficking, drugs and violence, the best coffee in the world, hot weather, some Colombian celebrities are Shakira and Fernando Botero, and exotic fruits. Therefore, for Colombians it has been to adapt to any environment, and in the case of Russia it has been just as easy since they know that they are not native and so they adapt, know, respect, and appreciate the country they are in. Going thru that will be the strategy about intercultural management approach.

In this way interculturality is key to interact with Russia and Colombia, and to be effective, we need to understand the impact of Russian culture and how it is used in our daily lives. Many Colombians have provided strong evidence of contact with the natives as they fit into the country, creating friendships or love relationships that promise a good future.

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