

INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS IN COMPANIES: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EMPLOYEES



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ABSTRACT

The article discusses the challenges of intercultural communication in the workplace, emphasizing its relevance in a globalized context. By investigating the difficulties in the interaction between Brazilians and foreigners, the study identifies the lack of integration and insertion programs as the main obstacles. By presenting hypotheses about the difficulties in creating links and communication, the paper highlights the importance of specific approaches and integration activities to overcome these barriers. In addition, it explores cultural diversity and inclusion as continuous processes that require effort and dedication. The research reveals the predominance of cultural, linguistic and personal experience elements in the formation of bonds and communication. The results suggest that informal activities, language courses and social events can promote a more inclusive environment. Based on quantitative and qualitative analyses, it is concluded that intercultural relations in the workplace face significant challenges, but effective strategies can facilitate integration and promote more harmonious coexistence. However, the study acknowledges the limitations of sample size, emphasizing the need for more research to generalize the results and improve organizational practices related to cultural diversity and inclusion.

Keywords: Culture. Diversity. Cultural diversity. People Management. Workplace Relations.

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INTRODUCTION

According to Aranha (2009), the main characteristic of the human being, which distinguishes him from other animals, is culture, which is the fundamental determinant of a person's desires and behavior. Regarding human culture, the author (2009, p. 21) states that each "individual grows up in a different environment, with his own culture that defines how he acts with other men and his relations with society". That said, culture is not produced as a rational project, in fact, its formation is spontaneous, being the product of relationships between people in society through coexistence, beliefs, challenges, needs, fears and desires of people.

Culture, however, can be related to different characteristics of the human being and the one that will be the object of this research is the national culture of each individual's country of origin.

In this sense, it is relevant to remember that, with the advance of telecommunications, the exchange of business through travel, the exchange of information and ideologies, and the spread of the English language, the world is increasingly integrated (Gil, 2019a). As a result, the encounter of cultures that are often extremely distinct is also becoming increasingly common in organizational environments. Because of this, it is important for companies to be prepared to receive and know how to deal with so much diversity. According to Gil (2019a, p. 36) "With globalization, managers must have not only interpersonal skills but also intercultural ones."

In this way, it is perceived that the business world is directly affected by the new globalized era. In this context, conflicts certainly appear, since the greater the linguistic-cultural distance between the members of a sector of an institution, the greater the need to seek mechanisms for its management (Rodrigues, 2010).

In addition, new forms of decision-making, leadership style and management can be some of the adversities encountered and that even influence the integration process between members of the same company with different cultural origins (Tanure & Duarte, 2012).

Therefore, managers and employees of global and transnational companies must be well prepared to deal with the issue. On this topic, Gil (2019a, p. 36) evokes Ulrich (2000), who comments.

Therefore, a company seeking to develop global organizational capacity must ask itself to what extent its human resources are prepared to meet this challenge. How many of your managers have these global competencies? How many are sensitive

to the culture and peculiarities of each market? How many are able to adequately represent the company's interests to a global audience? What percentage might feel comfortable at a dinner with important clients from other countries? What incentive systems can encourage employees to move around the world and share ideas globally? How the company can create a mindset that respects local conditions while promoting global thinking (Ulrich, 2000, p. 18).

With this, it is clear that there is a good selection and preparation for the managers of such companies. However, how does the Brazilian employee feel in this organizational environment characterized by employees from another country or from several countries?

In this context, this study aimed to identify, in the perception of employees, the difficulties that a company may have to face in the relationship between employees from different countries, ranging from informal interactions to the understanding of employees in the celebration of meetings, projects and activities. In the planning of the research, it was hoped to find the main factors that unite people (a commemorative date, for example) and those that can make coexistence unpleasant.

To carry out this study, the perception of Brazilian employees of a multinational communications company in New Zealand about the relationships with people of different nationalities (mainly Brazilians and New Zealanders, but also from other backgrounds) who interact in daily work was analyzed. As the company's headquarters are located in New Zealand, it is necessary to hold virtual meetings and chats on a daily basis, which requires contacts and interaction with people from different cultures.

In addition, according to one of the members of the company, at least once a year, the New Zealand director and a small team visit the Brazilian office to check its activities and performance. At these times, employees' cultural skills are put to the test, as they need to be used at all times.

Human coexistence can be very conflictive and, even between people in a small social circle, disagreements can occur. By bringing together people with different opinions and cultures in the same environment, you increase the possibility of awkward situations. For example, some of the hand gestures and expansive manner of Brazilians may be considered extremely rude and disrespectful by some Eastern cultures. Thinking about the example, in the corporate environment, it is necessary to pay attention to the way the person reacts to the situation, if it is something they are uncomfortable with or if they end up disregarding because they have gone through many similar situations that led them to get used to it or reveal the fact.

In addition, the company may present conflicting internal management for its foreign employees because it is ill-prepared for multicultural coexistence, given the large number of conflicts and even wars between different nations. With this in mind, it is also necessary to identify the problem (or problems) in question in order to, if necessary, adopt a readaptation of the company in this regard.

As a general objective of this study, it was sought to find the main difficulties in the relationship of people created in different places, but who need to work together and what are the main actions that can make the interaction conflictive. Specific objectives include: to analyze the personal relationship in the organizational environment of a company in Brazil and to understand the interpersonal difficulties faced by people from different cultures.

This study is justified because globalization has brought significant changes in the organizational environment, with the increase in cultural diversity and the need for coexistence between people of different origins, so that the personal relationship between employees becomes a fundamental factor for the success of the organization. In addition, cultural differences can lead to conflict and relationship difficulties in the workplace, so it is important to study this topic to understand how people deal with these differences and how organizations can promote a healthy and respectful living environment. It is also worth noting that the researchers' organizational experience allowed them to experience situations of disrespect in relation to cultural differences in the work environment, so the study can contribute to the understanding of the interpersonal difficulties faced by people from different cultures and to the development of strategies to promote respect for differences.

To carry out the research, two hypotheses were used, namely, that the main impasse faced by companies is in the integration between members of different cultures, due to the difficulty in communicating and maintaining dialogues that are not professional; and that the lack of programs for the insertion of new cultures within the organization makes the environment uncomfortable for Brazilians and foreigners, which makes it difficult for them to be included.

THEORETICAL REFERENCE

Diversity is the variety of human characteristics and experiences that exist among people. It can be defined by factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation,

religion, age, disability, social and economic origin, among others. Diversity is important in business because it can lead to a number of benefits, including increased creativity and innovation, better decision-making, higher employee satisfaction, and better customer service, so companies that promote diversity and inclusion are better positioned to succeed in an increasingly globalized and diverse world. Specifically, the diversity of people from different countries is called cultural diversity, that is, the variety of cultures that exist in the world, being defined by factors such as religion, language, customs, traditions, values, beliefs, among others (Camilo et al., 2019).

Inclusion is the process of creating an environment where everyone feels accepted, valued, and respected, regardless of their differences, that is, it is an ongoing process that requires effort and dedication. Companies must commit to creating a work environment where everyone feels welcome and valued. It is a complement to diversity, as it focuses on ensuring that people from different backgrounds and experiences can fully participate in society. Companies that promote inclusion are better positioned to succeed in an increasingly globalized and diverse world, as there is a relationship between diversity and inclusion of complementarity, because if diversity is the variety of human characteristics and experiences that exist between people, inclusion is the process of creating an environment where everyone feels accepted, valued and respected, regardless of their differences (Amato, 2022).

Therefore, for diversity to be truly beneficial for companies, it is important that it is accompanied by inclusion, because a diverse but non-inclusive company can be a hostile environment for some employees, which can lead to problems with productivity, talent retention and customer service.

CULTURE

Culture is a Latin word, originating in the basic economic activity of human existence: survival cultivation (Martins, 2014). Created by humans themselves, culture is the main characteristic that distinguishes each individual and makes our society richer and more diverse. Aranha (2009, p. 21) says that she "provides us with a series of emotions through everyday language, through a set of words that end up designating the types of emotions".

In addition, it encompasses different points by which it can be related. Martins (2014, p. 30) says that culture encompasses the distinctive elements "by which each

individual refers his or her personal identity to the set of factors that define it: language, space, time, religion, kinship, gender, particular ties, in short, the bundle of intersections historically given that it is processed and incorporated subjectively by each person".

Therefore, it is understood that culture can encompass national, regional, organizational, or even generational factors, therefore, it is always necessary to define the type of culture addressed when conducting any study. In addition, it has a strong influence on the decisions and customs of each person. The choice to read a book or watch a movie, for example, is influenced by the environment in which the individual was raised.

BRAZILIAN CULTURE

According to Queiroz (1989), one of the greatest challenges for Brazilian social scientists is to understand the characteristics of "Brazilianness", precisely because it is composed of different dimensions, which

[...] it would be composed of two aspects: a cultural heritage made up of elements harmonious with each other, which would remain similar through space and time; and the sharing of cultural heritage by the vast majority of the country's inhabitants, in all social strata. Such elements would consist of material goods (ways of life) and spiritual goods (ways of thinking). The totality of this cultural heritage could present differences across time and space; but they would be superficial differences; a deep central nucleus would persist the same as itself throughout the ages, at all social levels and ethnicities (Queiroz, 1989, p. 30).

However, Brazilian authors have different views on multiculturalism in the country. Mário de Andrade (2022) addresses the issue in his 1928 book *Macunaíma*, through its protagonist. His African, European and aboriginal origins are what make the character original and rich in culture, alluding to most Brazilians.

Oswald de Andrade (1978), in turn, says that Brazil has the habit of taking on the features of other countries and, therefore, its culture is the result of so many other passages forced to mix. Therefore, these arrangements are where the specificity of Brazilian civilization lies.

Therefore, it is understood that Brazilian culture is not completely its own, unlike most other countries. In this way, many concepts defined within the field of foreign social sciences cannot be applied to our country. Queiroz (1989, p. 45) also comments that the use of "notions such as national identity and cultural identity, in a way that is different from what happens in Europe, shows on the contrary that concepts are constantly being redefined to adapt to the peculiarities of the country".

Therefore, due to the great cultural diversity found in Brazil, there is no single characterization of culture that can be applied to the entire population.

MULTICULTURAL RELATIONSHIP IN COMPANIES

In view of what has been discussed so far about culture, it is necessary to understand the relationship that is established between them in the organizational environment and entrepreneurial business. On the subject, some authors consider that the relationship can be conflictive, as Mendes (2021, p. 12) indicates:

It is often cultural factors that pose potential difficulties in conducting international business. Unfortunately, not all organizations and professionals are aware of the importance of multiculturalism and are not prepared to deal with cultural differences, which ends up causing the loss of business opportunities posed by economic and technological globalization, the occasional lack of multicultural sensitivity and knowledge.

Knowing this, it is important to highlight the reason why these barriers may exist and the lack of preparation for multicultural coexistence. Also according to Mendes (2021, p. 22):

Culture determines what behaviors, language, symbols, or principles are acceptable to members of a given culture, and these characteristics vary from country to country. Therefore, such characteristics can prove obstacles to international business, because individuals from each culture can make negative judgments about the characteristics of other cultures.

Martins and García (2011, p. 3) comment on the conflict caused by the interaction of people from different cultures:

When people from different cultures come into conflict, they often have different expectations about how to deal with it, from defining the conflict-related problem, its triggering event, and how they view goals for resolution.

Therefore, multicultural sensitivity, understood as the ability to understand and respect cultural diversity in a world where people from different cultural backgrounds increasingly interact, that is, to recognize that different cultures exist, with their own beliefs, values, behaviors and norms, and to adapt their behavior according to these differences, It is important in a variety of contexts, including work, school, community, and personal life. At work, multicultural sensitivity can help foster a harmonious and productive work environment in which people from different cultures can work together effectively. However, to have multicultural sensitivity, academic and linguistic knowledge is not enough, as it is

also necessary to have a good cultural background. In fact, in learning a new language, there must also be knowledge of a new culture, which allows for a more harmonious environment for the interlocutors (Mendes, 2021). It is therefore equally important to highlight the difficulty of accepting new cultures, taking into account the context of international negotiation.

The impact on the negotiation of these cultural factors arises to the extent that human beings have difficulty framing the culture of the "other" in these dimensions within their own culture, and tend to consider the culture of the other as incorrect and their own as correct. Being prepared for the peculiarities that will arise with multicultural relationships helps to overcome this "cultural myopia". In fact, a good international agent does not belong to a particular country; it must be a global citizen, it must be geocentric (Mendes, 2021, p. 15).

In addition, there are activities that are only present in multinationals, precisely because they need differentiated management. Some of these are expatriate management, job or country rotation programs, and the coordination of international training efforts (Hiltrop, 2002).

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CULTURES

According to Fosslie and Duffy (2020, p.138), "communication is one of the most powerful tools we have to effect change". Thus, the importance of having an environment that allows communication and, above all, with people who are prepared to carry it out efficiently is concluded.

However, according to Milliken and Martins (1996), there is a tendency for groups with greater cultural diversity to establish more formal and less frequent communication compared to less diverse groups.

On the other hand, it is clear that Brazilians do not have great difficulties in establishing such relationships. In a survey conducted by Videira and Queiroz (2017), the influence of Brazilians' relational capacity for labor relations was analyzed. As a result, it was shown that, in general, Brazil has a culture of good hospitality, relationship and ease of mobilization, indicating a tendency towards easy interaction with other nationalities.

New Zealand, the home country of the company that is the subject of this study, was a British colony in Oceania, which developed an inclusive relationship with native Maori and learned to promote sustainable development with respect to nature. The excellent infrastructure, public safety and the offer of tourism rich in attractions only came to be consolidated after decades of work and the country is famous for ensuring the good

management of public resources, offering quality education in exchanges and being open to entrepreneurship and, currently, it is part of the Community of Nations. so its ruler answers directly to the monarch of the United Kingdom, being a reference for countries that need to balance economic development with social justice. New Zealand culture is a vibrant and diverse culture, made up of a mix of European, Maori (Polynesian people who arrived on the islands of New Zealand around the 13th century) and other world cultures. New Zealanders can be said to be welcoming, respectful and passionate about nature, good-humoured and with a relaxed attitude. New Zealanders are known for their optimism and positive attitude. They always see the positive side of things and are always willing to try new things (Gomes, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

Gil (2019b, p. 10) teaches that the word method comes from Greek and has the meaning of "path to reach an end", referring to the "set of basic rules for developing research with a view to producing new knowledge or correcting and integrating existing knowledge". Therefore, it can be said that its role is to guide academic research to reduce errors.

To carry out the work, an exploratory research was carried out, which according to Gil (2022, p. 41) "[...] aims to provide greater familiarity with the problem, with a view to making it more explicit or constructing hypotheses." In this type of research, there is a plan to follow that facilitates data collection, although it can be changed taking into account the needs of the researcher.

The research strategy was the case study (Martins, 2008), which consists of an in-depth investigation of a specific phenomenon or social unit (the New Zealand company), with the aim of understanding its nature and its relationships with the context in which it is inserted. According to the author, the case study is a qualitative research methodology, which is characterized by the collection and analysis of non-numerical data, such as textual, visual and sound data, which are collected from primary sources, such as interviews, observations and analysis of documents, or from secondary sources, such as books, articles and reports. This research strategy is widely used in academic research in applied social sciences, especially in Administration, and is justified for several reasons, including: investigating complex and multifaceted phenomena, understanding the context in which the phenomenon occurs, and the possibility of generating ideas and new theories.

As technical research procedures, a bibliographic survey was initially carried out, looking for materials in books, other scientific research and articles and a survey by survey, which consists of the direct questioning of people whose behavior is to be known. Thus, a questionnaire was constructed, based on the theoretical framework, and sent to the members of the company, which contained closed questions and 3 open questions, prepared from the theoretical framework, the link to which was sent by WhatsApp to the Brazilian employees.

According to Gil (2019b, p. 43), the universe "is a defined set of elements that have certain characteristics". Therefore, the research universe is the company's employees who will not be identified in this study. It is clarified that the company selected for this study was chosen for the convenience of the researchers and that it will not be identified (at the request of the organization itself). It is a manufacturer of technological equipment for radiocommunications, based in New Zealand, which has offices in the United States to serve the North American market and in São Paulo, Brazil, with the aim of serving Latin America.

The employees who respond to the survey are from the Brazilian office. Of the total of 22 employees of the office located in São Paulo, 20 employees, all Brazilians, answered the questionnaires, representing 90.90% of the office's workforce. The survey was conducted in the months of July and August 2023. It is observed that the survey did not involve any type of intervention or collection of sensitive data nor did it present risks for the participants, in addition to the fact that the respondents did not identify themselves individually. Therefore, the confidentiality of everyone and of the organization itself was guaranteed. For this reason, it was not necessary to obtain the registration or evaluation of the Research Ethics Committee, as recommended in item I of the Sole Paragraph of Resolution No. 510 of the National Health Council (2016), which deals with specific ethical guidelines for the human and social sciences, which explains that public opinion research with unidentified participants will not be registered or evaluated by the Research Ethics Committee of the university.

However, questionnaires and interviews were only answered after recognition on the Informed Consent Form (ICF) prepared in accordance with the participants' informed consent process. Therefore, the survey was conducted in accordance with the following ethical principles: Information (participants were informed about the objectives of the survey, the procedures involved, and the potential risks), Consent (participants provided

their free and informed consent to participate in the survey), and Confidentiality (the data collected was treated confidentially). In view of the above, the non-presentation of the Certificate of Ethical Appreciation is justified.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

For Gil (2019b, p. 74 to 75), "The data obtained, in order to make sense, needs to go through the process of analysis and interpretation". Thus, all the data was analyzed using the Canva platform, which allows the construction of graphs and tables.

Of the twenty respondents, 75% (15) declared themselves to be male, and the remaining 25% (5) female. 60% (12) of the people who answered the questionnaires are from generation X (born between 1965-1980), 25% (5) from generation Y (1981-1996), 10% from the Baby-Boomer generation (1946-1964) and only 5% (1) from generation Z. All respondents were born in Brazil and have Portuguese as their mother tongue, and 75% (15) reported having children.

In addition, it can be observed that the majority of the company's employees who responded to the questionnaire have completed postgraduate studies, accounting for 55% (11) of the responses, 40% (8) completed higher education, and 5% (1) completed secondary school.

Regarding respondents' positions, 40% (8) are senior professionals, 15% (3) are junior professionals, 15% (3) are managers, 10% (2) directors, 5% (1) interns, 5% (1) young apprentices, 5% (1) full professionals, and 5% (1) supervisors. Therefore, it can be seen from the results that there is a predominance of senior employees in the company, representing almost half (40%) of the total. Regarding the respondents' areas of activity in the company, the following was raised: 20% (4) operations, 15% (3) financial, 15% (3) projects, 15% (3) marketing and sales, 15% (3) general administration, 10% (2) logistics, 5% (1) legal and 5% (1) Network Operation Center.

When it comes to national culture, individual customs and behaviors are of great importance and, in this topic, it is relevant, especially taking into account endomarketing actions, to know the preference of employees regarding the most important holidays to be celebrated, which is shown in Table 1. As can be seen, the commemorative date that employees consider essential for the celebration is Christmas, with 90% of the votes, followed by New Year's Eve, with 80%. In this question, it was possible to choose more than one alternative.

Table 1 – What holidays do you consider essential to be celebrated?

CHRISTMAS	EVE	EASTER	CARNIVAL	INDEPENDENCE	JUNE PARTY
90%	80%	50%	10%	30%	15%
18	16	10	8	6	3

When asked what they liked most in their country of origin, i.e. Brazil, the research participants expressed the results shown in Table 2, highlighting the climate/temperature and cuisine, indicated, respectively, by 75% and 70% of the participants.

Table 2 – What you like most about your country.

CLIMATE	CULINARY	TRADITIONAL FESTIVALS	DIVERSITY	PEOPLE	CUSTOMS	ECONOMY	PUBLIC POLICIES
15	14	11	10	10	4	1	1
75%	70%	55%	50%	50%	20%	5%	5%

When asked what makes Brazil unique, respondents indicated the results shown in Table 3, and the vast majority (75%) considered it to be people.

Table 3 – What makes Brazil unique.

PEOPLE	DAILY CUSTOMS	CULINARY	CLIMATE	CELEBRATIONS	TONGUE	PUBLIC POLICIES	CULTURE	LANDSCAPES
15	10	8	6	4	4	4	1	1
75%	50%	40%	30%	20%	20%	20%	5%	5%

In addition to these more idiosyncratic questions, each one was asked what they admire most in Brazil, in European and Asian countries, to get a comparative view. The data shown in Table 4 was achieved, distinguishing cuisine and diversity in Brazil with 75%, safety in European countries with 85% and Asian countries with 65% of preferences.

Table 4 – What do you admire most in the countries?

REASON	BRAZIL		EUROPE		ASIA/OCEANIA	
	QUANTITY	MINUTE.	QUANTITY	MINUTE.	QUANTITY	MINUTE.
Culinary	14	70%	7	35%	10	50%
Traditional festivals	10	50%	1	5%	8	40%
People	10	50%	5	25%	10	50%
Public policies	1	5%	9	45%	6	30%
Cultural diversity	17	70%	3	15%	5	25%
Economy	1	5%	14	70%	8	40%
Everyday habits	1	5%	3	15%	8	40%
Freedom, Respect, Discipline	1	5%	1	5%	1	5%

The results in Table 4 show that people have different opinions about what they admire most in their home countries and in other countries. It can be inferred that this is

due to their personal experiences (they tend to value things that are familiar to them, such as culture, language, etc.), their beliefs and values (they tend to admire things that are aligned with their own beliefs), and the information they have access to (people who have limited access to information about other countries may base their opinions on stereotypes). People who have traveled or lived in other countries may admire things that are different from their own experiences.

Table 5 summarizes the data on the responses pertinent to the organizational environment and shows that 85% of respondents have frequent direct or virtual contact with foreigners in the daily life of the company. In addition, 90% consider having friendships at work, of which 60% say that it is only with people of the same nationality and 40% say they have friendships with people of different nationalities. It should be noted that 35% (7) of respondents reported having worked in four or more multinationals, 25% (5) in at least three multinationals, 15% (3) in up to two multinationals and 25% (5) in the company in the study alone.

Table 5 – Questions about the organizational environment of inclusion, diversity and integration.

QUESTION	YES	QUANTITY
In your day-to-day work in the company, do you have frequent direct or virtual contact with people of other nationalities?	85%	17
Do you consider yourself to have friendship(s) at work?	90%	18
Are your friends at work, if any, the same nationality as yours?	60%	12
Do you find it easier to interact with people of the same nationality?	65%	13
Do you think there are great difficulties in communication between members of different nationalities in the workplace?	65%	13
Do you realize that there are activities that promote integration and knowledge of different cultures in your work environment?	60%	12
Do team member integration and inclusion activities work?	80%	16

For the open-ended question "Explain why it is easier for you to bond with people of the same nationality as yours," the word cloud was developed in Figure 1, which summarizes employees' perceptions. It is noted that respondents who agreed that it is easier to bond with people of the same nationality cited customs, culture and language as the main reasons. In fact, these three elements are fundamental facilitators in a first contact to establish communication, since people who speak the same language, for example, find it easier to understand each other. In addition, people who share the same customs are more likely to find common interests and identify with each other.

To complete the questionnaire, an optional space was left for participants to write about programs, dynamics, or actions that would help make the workplace an inclusive place for all nationalities. Of the total, 75% of those surveyed presented their ideas. The main suggestions were the promotion of informal meetings and activities, the provision of language courses, conducting exchanges, inclusion and respect for diversity campaigns, social events and the making of new member introduction videos, in which their country, family, professional career and favorite commemorative dates would be introduced, focusing mainly on different cultures, inclusion and development of various soft skills (behavioral competencies), as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 – What do you suggest to make the work environment more inclusive for all nationalities?



The results obtained with the open questions highlight the importance of cultural, linguistic and customs factors in the formation of bonds and communication between individuals of different nationalities in the work environment. The analysis in Figure 1 reveals that employees perceive customs, culture, and language as key facilitators in making connections with colleagues of the same nationality. These common elements promote more fluid communication and help to find common interests, increasing mutual identification.

On the other hand, Figure 2 shows that language is the main obstacle to communication between members of different nationalities, resulting in a lack of mutual understanding. The language barrier can lead to misunderstandings, mistakes, and even conflicts, highlighting the need for specific approaches to overcome these challenges in the work environment.

In addition, the suggestions collected in the third question, represented in Figure 3, point to various initiatives that can make the work environment more inclusive and welcoming for all nationalities. Among the ideas highlighted are the promotion of informal meetings and activities, language courses, exchange programs, inclusion and respect for diversity campaigns, social events and videos introducing new members. These initiatives not only facilitate integration, but also promote the development of soft skills, essential for a harmonious and productive work environment.

In summary, the responses to the open-ended questions suggest that, in order to improve intercultural communication and inclusion in the workplace, it is essential to implement programs that directly address language and cultural barriers. Investing in activities that promote interaction and mutual respect can create a more collaborative and efficient environment, benefiting both employees and the organization as a whole.

CONCLUSION

To carry out this research, we sought to bring reflections and analysis on a topic that can often go unnoticed by those who are inserted in this daily life. With this, it is expected to create a space for reflection, as well, for the respondents.

Initially, the following hypotheses were raised: 1. The main impasse faced by companies is in the integration between members of different cultures, due to the difficulty in communicating and maintaining dialogues that are not in the professional field. 2. The lack of programs for the insertion of new cultures within the organization makes the environment uncomfortable for Brazilians and foreigners, which makes it difficult for them to be included.

Thus, it was observed that, for most of the respondents, there are difficulties in creating links with people from different cultural backgrounds than themselves, the main reasons being the different customs they practice and the language in which they communicate. Thus, he says that hypothesis (1) is true, since 65% of the total represents the majority of the population. On the other hand, nothing was said about the difficulty of

maintaining dialogues outside the professional field, precisely because of the difficulty of maintaining a simple dialogue initially.

People who responded that they did not see a difference in the creation of bonds said, in turn, that Brazilian culture plays a big role in this ease. According to the answers, the openness and charisma characteristic of our nationality simplify the whole process. It was also said that the affinity that is created with people goes beyond their creation story and, therefore, they do not find any difference.

As for communication, people who said they had great difficulty communicating with different nationalities said it was also due to the different language.

It can also be seen that the equivalent of 35% of the respondents correspond to the positions of supervisors, managers, director and president. This number is the same as the number of people who have no difficulty communicating and creating links with other nationalities. Thus, it is clear that the highest positions are occupied by people who have greater intercultural skills and, those who occupy lower positions, encounter greater difficulties.

In addition, it is observed that the percentage of responses that defend not having difficulties in communication represents the same as those who have worked in 4 or more multinationals, which indicates that passing through different companies and environments makes interaction more natural.

In addition, 40% of respondents say that there are no integration activities for foreigners in the work environment. However, the other 60% say that it exists and only 7.7% of them declare that they are not effective. Knowing this, it is understood that not all members of the company participate in such activities, and this can also be one of the reasons why they find it more difficult to communicate.

However, as shown in Figure 6, there are integration activities and, because of this, hypothesis (2) cannot be corroborated. And, even more, it can be seen that the biggest impasse for this company was, precisely, the fluency in the language, since they also stated that the use of expressions typical of the country makes it difficult to understand in the dialogues.

In summary, with this work, the perception of the importance of learning and fluency in other languages, especially English, was obtained. It has been shown that, without this first well-developed skill, it is not possible to create bonds or friendships with people who are not of the same nationality.

Therefore, it is understood that, for most of the participants, the relationship between Brazilians and foreigners is superficial due to this difficulty in communication. Therefore, finding a commemorative date or other event that brings people together was not a relevant aspect for this research.

This work raises even more questions and doubts, and leads to reflection. For those who are fluent in the language, do prejudices end up leaving relationships further apart? Are companies prepared to deal with xenophobia-related conflicts? What are the main advantages of offering diverse language courses in the company? What are the advantages and disadvantages of hiring people who have never experienced the environment of multinational companies?

With these issues in mind, the authors hope that the topic will be increasingly commented on and studied, in order to make communication and coexistence between different national cultures increasingly simple and enriching for both parties.

Therefore, it is hoped that the results obtained in the research may have the potential to suggest new studies and verifications in other multinational companies that deal with the same reality.

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