Interculturality and Critical Thinking in a Public Educational Institution in Pasco - 2022

By

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Abstract

For many years, the value of interculturality has been an important factor in educational development due to the involvement of culture, customs and beliefs. Along with this, the value of critical thinking has played a major role in the development of interculturality to make its practice process more flexible. Therefore, the research objective was to establish the relationship between interculturality and critical thinking in a public educational institution in Pasco -2022. A quantitative approach, non-experimental design, and correlational level applied to 80 teachers were considered. The results show a Rho correlation with a value of 0.687**, which is between 0.5 and 0.7, a moderate relationship between interculturality and critical thinking. Therefore, it concludes that there is a relationship between the study variables.

Keywords: Interculturality; Critical thinking; Pedagogical practice; Basic education.

Resumen

Durante muchos años el valor de la interculturalidad es un factor importante en el desarrollo educativo; debido al involucramiento de la cultura, costumbres y creencias. Junto a ello, el valor del pensamiento crítico ha jugado un rol principal dentro del desarrollo de la interculturalidad, para que su proceso de práctica sea más flexible. Por ello, el objetivo de la investigación fue establecer la relación entre la interculturalidad y el pensamiento crítico en una institución educativa pública de Pasco -2022. Se consideró un enfoque cuantitativo, diseño no experimental, de nivel correlacional aplicados a 80 docentes. Los resultados evidencian que muestra una correlación de Rho de un valor de 0,687** dicho valor se encuentra entre 0.5 y 0.7, es decir una relación moderada entre la interculturalidad y el pensamiento crítico. Concluye que existe relación entre las variables del estudio.

Palabras clave: Interculturalidad; Pensamiento crítico; Práctica pedagógica; Educación básica.

Resumo

For many years, the value of interculturality has been an important factor in educational development, due to the involvement of culture, customs and beliefs. Along with this, the value of critical thinking has played an important role in the development of interculturality, so that its process of practice is more flexible. Therefore, the objective of the research was to establish the relationship between interculturality and critical thinking in pedagogical practice in a public school in Pasco-2022. It is a quantitative approach, non-experimental design, correlational level applied to 80 teachers. The results show that it presents a Rho relationship with a value of 0.687**, a value between 0.5 and 0.7, that is, a moderate relationship between interculturality and critical thinking. It is concluded that there is a relationship between the study variables.

Keywords: Interculturality; Critical thinking; Pedagogical practice; Basic education.

Introduction

The value of interculturality is an important factor in educational development; due to the involvement of culture, customs and beliefs so that students feel valued for their identity; in addition to critical thinking, they have the opportunity to explore their ideas and those of others. At the same time, multicultural society has inevitably led to the coexistence of people from different worlds, whose ways of thinking, traditions and customs may be significantly different from who they are (Olcina et al., 2020).

Meanwhile, in educational institutions where traditional education occupies a dominant space, it has presented obstacles in the acceptance and assimilation of disadvantaged groups, where the belief of development is only given by social scales (Martínez et al., 2020). This leads to a greater emphasis on the perceptions and criteria in learning societies under traditional education in a dominant space separated from historical homogeneity and inequality (Arias et al., 2018).

At the international level, the intercultural perspective allows not only equity between cultures and their members but also the strengthening of identity, the exchange of relevant and contextualized knowledge, democratic and harmonious relations, the development of practical skills to know how to act in the world and the construction of a model of human and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2017). Therefore, a multicultural perspective enables not only the equality of cultures and their members, but also the promotion of identity, appropriate and contextualized communication, and democratic and harmonious relations.

Education must develop a multicultural space permeated by reflective dialogue, respecting the traditions and customs of all; also, the approach to teachers in promoting the practice of values that guarantee the rights of different nationalities or cultures, likewise, generating training that is inclusive and flexible thinking (Higher Education Council, 2017). To carry out both this reflection, learners at all levels are not always critical thinkers, but most mistakenly think about the ability to think; without realizing that this is an action; since thinking has its limits and involves complexity in the face of different scenarios (Collazos et al., 2019).

At the national level, education is ruled by norms and guidelines established by the state so that they can be of guides and carried out by the teacher; however, experience has shown that even when these provisions are formally included in statements or documents, they may not lead to the desired practice (Cépeda et al., 2019). Currently, there is concern about the declining viability of the educational system, as various social problems (condition, violence,

and poverty) have led to the failure of education and understanding of respect for interculturality (Sepúlveda, 2018).

Therefore, several factors indicate a gap between what is established in the formal curriculum and what happens in the classroom (Tapia and Cueto, 2017). In this sense, it is important to know how teachers understand curricular approaches and contents and how much they coincide or not with their conceptions since it is known that these influence their classroom practice. Therefore, there is a need to employ ways to promote the development of an open mind, correct judgment and positive thinking where diversity and respect between cultures can be welcomed.

In view of this, the research focused on a public educational institution in Pasco where it is evident that education professionals do not consider the intercultural aspect in a relevant way; that is, they do not take into account that their students often come from different areas, have very divergent customs among other aspects; this is reflected in their performance in terms of their academic progress so that the development of critical thinking of the students is also undoubtedly affected.

Therefore, the general problem of the research was: What is the relationship between interculturality and critical thinking in a public educational institution of Pasco -2022? The research objective was to establish the relationship between interculturality and critical thinking in a public educational institution in Pasco -2022. In this way, it seeks to contribute academically based on the development of interculturality in conjunction with critical thinking generating its impact on members and educational agents.

The theoretical justification is given to the extent that literature related to the topic addressed in this research will be reviewed. In the practical and social justification, the study will allow sensitizing teachers to consider intercultural education in curricular planning, evidenced in critical thinking. As a product, teachers' pedagogical practice in public educational institutions is linked to interculturality, and as a product, it will be evidenced in the improvement of student learning. The methodological justification was developed in a correlational design and quantitative approach, using an instrument that determined the relationship between the variables.

Regarding international studies, Sobkowiak (2021) developed a study on intercultural teaching applied to teachers through a descriptive design. He concluded that more than 60% of teachers evidenced positive attitudes and experiences in intercultural teaching. However, the teachers' accounts indicated that they put intercultural communication in the background and focused on language and sociolinguistic development. Likewise, Garzón (2019) developed a study considering a descriptive and quantitative method. The results infer that 20% of students refer that teachers offer tools to intervene in "changing structures, institutions and social relations, creating different conditions for being, thinking, understanding, learning, feeling and living."

Meanwhile, Delbury (2020) elaborated a study on inclusive interculturality and thinking, considering a descriptive design. He concludes that the insistence on authenticity, clarity and internal colonialism of intercultural processes creates differences in latitude conditions believed to be dominant. In addition, it evidences the conflicting attitude of students towards their place of origin and homeland when referring to a supposed disability that orients their worldview and cultural diversity should be misinterpreted as a deficit.

Espinoza et al. (2019) developed a study on intercultural in teacher education with a quantitative and descriptive design. The results show that in 86.7% (39), the teacher

consciously considers the principles of educational activities related to the intercultural dimension: universality, values education, emphatic law, learning community, equality and inclusion, and interculturality. Consequently, 73.3 % (33) of these learning activities evaluated the presence of educational strategies to show how cultural integration is achieved in the process context. Through them, teachers help to reduce the asymmetry between the standards and the practical limits of the curricula.

Medina et al. (2022) conducted a research on interculturality and critical thinking, considering a descriptive and quantitative design. The results showed that teachers' understanding of multiculturalism developed as an egalitarian process closely related to identity negotiations and overcoming power relations. These results show that professional development opportunities for teachers can contribute to the creation of a multicultural foreign language project that respects and harmonizes with reality, problems and diversity.

In national antecedents, Álvarez et al. (2021) elaborated a study on interculturality in rural education, considering a non-experimental cross-sectional design of descriptive scope. The results show that the average score on the citizenship test in the fifth grade in rural areas is higher than that of children in urban areas and decreases when entering the ninth and eleventh grades. It concludes that there is a deterioration of social and cultural structures; furthermore, the practice of dialogue, dialogue, and the construction of cultures with identity, difference and flexibility are fundamental.

Cangalaya (2019) conducted a study on communication skills and thinking, considering a quantitative approach, non-experimental design and correlational type. The results obtained showed that there is a positive correlation between the variables ($r = 0.67$). On the other hand, it is also observed that different areas of communication skills are related to aspects of critical thinking, so it can be concluded that both the general and specific hypotheses are supported.

Also, Rojas and Vega (2018) developed a study on teachers' attitudes toward interculturality conformed by 58 educators. The results showed that an attitude of acceptance prevails. Still, emotionally, the results showed that 13.79% of initial teachers have an attitude of acceptance towards multicultural education and 48.28 of primary education% have an attitude of acceptance towards multicultural education. And 37.93% of secondary school teachers have an attitude of acceptance toward multicultural education.

In relevance, Vigotski's cultural-historical theory addresses multiculturalism through the contributions of cultural psychology and the paradigm of critical multiculturalism, where concepts from the theory of cultural history are introduced, helping to reflect on the practical possibilities of intercultural education (Pederiva et al., 2022). Regarding interculturality, the term arises as a response to the unifying mission of Latin American nation-states through formal education committed to constructing national identity in countries characterized by their ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity (Vázquez, 1994; Walsh, 2009).

In the conceptual framework, cultural identity is defined through the relationship between the individual and society, being a phenomenon that determines in part the appearance, belonging to a group or the development of a person in the world as cultures, traditions and languages (Ruiz and Delgado, 2021). The interculturality criterion goes beyond its relational and functional perspectives, as it seeks to generate structural, institutional and conceptual changes in social systems, thus generating different conditions of existence, thought and coexistence (Kwon, 2020; Ferrada et al., 2021).

The interpenetration of cultures creates the need for mutual recognition to establish common values or principles as a basis for coexistence, from respect for cultural differences to treating them as their value, considering the dimensions: Positive attitudes towards cultural diversity, communicative skills and ability to reflect on culture (Ballesteros and Fontecha, 2019). Therefore, intercultural pedagogical practice can contribute to the development of plurality, identity and understanding of the difference in the thematic axis, as observed by student teachers (Rivera et al., 2017). In addition, to create spaces of understanding between traditional knowledge and general knowledges (Krainer et al., 2017).

Therefore, teachers become mediators and the behavioral and attitudinal aspects of intercultural mediation (Areskoug et al., 2022; Lévano, 2022). Because there is a great challenge for education is often found in the discourses created over time, which change the way things are taught (Garrard, 2022). Therefore, educational practices and basic education courses have traditionally dealt with cultures and pose alternatives for constructing a multicultural education that aims to promote recognition and dialogue between these peoples (De Campos et al., 2022; Farías, 2017).

In reference to critical thinking, the theory of naturalistic intelligence has found that, after early childhood education, children acquire a progressive basis for critical thinking and the satisfaction of their cognitive needs in a method that fosters the improvement and development of people's thinking skills (Cacioppo and Petty, 1982). Thus, critical thinkers are curious, analytical, firm and sure of reality, truth-oriented, and persistent. A critical thinker turns criticism into a method, as well as an art, of finding and formulating analyses and judgments based on different concepts, consistent reasoning and sustainable referents (Rios et al., 2020; Tobón, 2018; Mata et al., 2019).

Likewise, critical thinking is recognizing arguments and assumptions, identifying important connections, drawing correct conclusions, evaluating evidence, and drawing conclusions (Rubinelli, 2020; Lopez et al., 2021). Thus, it comprises six categories that progress from knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation to learning, which is the process of critical thinking to deepen knowledge and apply it for various purposes (Bezanilla et al., 2018)

In this sense, critical thinking involves conversational and cognitive skills, as they also drive cognitive processes (Ossa et al., 2017). If the above criteria are incomplete or not self-correcting, the answers and solutions developed will not analyze the real needs of the situation (Garro et al., 2022). Without this understanding, teachers have information limitations in developing critical thinking, which should involve preparing and applying specific competencies (Agata et al., 2020; Castillo, 2020; Tan, 2017).

Therefore, critical thinking is the construction of judgments based on objective and subjective data previously interpreted and analyzed, facilitating individuals' reasoning on the consequences of their decisions. It considers the dimensions: Interpretation and analysis of information, the judgment of a specific situation with objective and subjective data, and inferences of consequences of the decision in self-regulated judgment (Olivares and Lopez, 2017). Overall the integration of important aspects of critical thinking must be accompanied by new concepts that support cultural diversity, autonomy, and social movements (Valdés, 2020; Nogueira et al., 2019).

Therefore, learning development from a monocultural perspective must be alienated from school curricula and employ a dialogic pedagogy (Mata, Sabater and Blanch, 2019; Xi,

2020; Mora, 2019). In these circumstances, it is necessary to justify the existing alternative and critical thinking on cultural diversity as a contribution to the educational system, especially in the case of Latin America, due to its uniqueness and cultural identity (Vurdien and Puranen, 2018; Chambi, 2021). This is further emphasized by the growing gap between recent developments in intercultural communication theory and practice (Crozet et al., 2021).

Methodology

The methodology had a non-experimental design because the study did not manipulate the data and was carried out in a single event. Meanwhile, the descriptive correlational level will determine the relationship between the variables. A quantitative approach proceeds with data collection and numerical processing (Gallardo, 2017). The population is composed of a universe of people with similar characteristics to conduct a study (Muñoz, 2015). The population was of census type, and it was composed of 80 educational teachers from a public educational institution in Pasco.

On the part of the instrument, it is composed of a series of closed questions (Gallardo, 2017). The instrument was an adapted questionnaire focused on teachers to measure the study variables. In the case of the interculturality variable, Ballesteros and Fontecha (2019) consider the dimensions: (a) positive attitudes towards cultural diversity (5 items), (b) communication skills (4 items) and (c) ability to reflect on one's own culture (5 items). In the critical thinking variable, Olivares and López (2017) considered the following dimensions: (a) interpretation and analysis of information (5 items), (b) judgment of a specific situation with objective and subjective data (5 items), and (c) inferences of consequences of the decision in self-regulated judgment (4 items).

Regarding validity, it will determine the degree of understanding and reliability of the instrument (Muñoz, 2015), therefore, the Crombach's Alpha test was applied to measure the degree of variables, resulting in 0.884 for the intercultural variable and 0.871 for the critical thinking variable; which reflects a high degree of reliability.

Results

In the results of Table 1, the interculturality variable shows that 40.0% of the educators have a favorable perception of the variable, 53.8% have a fair level of interculturality, and 6.3% have an unfavorable perception. Regarding dimension 1, positive attitudes towards cultural diversity, they are at a high level (32.5%), regular level (60.0%) and low level (7.5%). In dimension 2, communicative ability presents a high level (48.8%), a regular level (48.8%) and a low level (2.5%). Likewise, dimension 3, capacity for reflection on culture, presents a high level (23.8%), a regular level (47.5%) and a low level (18.8%). Thus, the interculturality variable has 53.8% approval by teachers, where they infer that there is mastery and respect for this variable.

Table 1. *Frequency distribution of interculturality*

Level	V1. Interculturality		D1. Positive attitudes towards cultural diversity		D2. Communication skills		D3. Ability to reflect on one's own culture	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Under	5	6,3	6	7,5	2	2,5	15	18,8
Medium	43	53,8	48	60,0	39	48,8	46	57,5
High	32	40,0	26	32,5	39	48,8	19	23,8
Total	80	100,0	80	80	100,0	100,0	80	100,0

Table 2 of the critical thinking variable shows that 71.3% of the teachers have a favorable perception of the critical capacity of the students, 71.30% consider a regular level on the variable and 2.5% do not consider that this variable is developed. Interpretation and analysis of information has a high value (36.3%), a regular level (61.3%) and a low level (2.5%). The dimension Judgment of a specific situation with objective and subjective data presents a high level (26.3%), regular level (71.3%) and low level (2.5%). Likewise, dimension 3. Inferences of consequences of the decision in self-regulated judgment, presents a high level (26.3%), regular level (71.3%) and low level (2.5%). Thus, approximately 70% of teachers report that students have developed their critical thinking at a regular level.

Table 2. *Frequency distribution of critical thinking*

	V2. Critical thinking		D1. Interpretation and analysis of information		D2. Judgment of a specific situation with objective and subjective data.		D3. Inferences of consequences of the decision in self-regulated judgment.	
Level	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Under	2	2,5	2	2,5	2	2,5	2	2,5
Medium	57	71,3	49	61,3	57	71,3	57	71,3
High	21	26,3	29	36,3	21	26,3	21	26,3
Total	80	100,0	80	80	100,0	100,0	80	100,0

In Table 3, the normality test was developed, resulting in a significance of less than 0.05; because the intercultural and critical thinking variable has a sig. 000; that is, the data do not have normality and do not have parametric forms. Therefore, Spearman's test is used.

Table 3. *Normality test*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
	Statistician	gl	Sig.
V1. Interculturality	,315	80	,000
V2. Critical thinking	,426	80	,000

According to Table 4, the Spearman correlation test resulted in a Rho correlation of 0.687**, a value between 0.5 and 0.7, i.e., a moderate relationship between the interculturality variable and critical thinking. Positive attitudes towards cultural diversity show a Rho correlation of 0.835**, i.e., a high relationship. Meanwhile, the dimension of Communication skills shows a Rho correlation of 0.648***, i.e., a moderate relationship. Likewise, the dimension Ability to reflect on one's culture shows a Rho correlation of 0.688***, i.e., a moderate relationship.

Table 4. *Correlation test of variables and dimensions*

	V1. Interculturality	D1. Positive attitudes towards cultural diversity	D2. Communication skills	D3. Ability to reflect on one's own culture
V2. Critical thinking	,687** Sig ,000	,835** Sig ,000	,648** Sig ,000	,688** Sig ,000

Discussion

In order to demonstrate the objectives of the study, the results show that interculturality is related to critical thinking, where they agree with Krainer et al. (2017) multicultural variables are consistent, because it is strongly related to the development of values and intercultural understanding as a dialogue of knowledge. Likewise, Sobkowiak (2021) concluded that more than 60% of teachers evidence positive attitudes and experiences in teaching at the intercultural level. However, the teachers' accounts indicated that they put intercultural communication on the back burner and focused on language and sociolinguistic development.

The application of Spearman's test shows a Rho correlation with a value of 0.687**, which is between 0.5 and 0.7, a moderate relationship between the interculturality variable and critical thinking. Meanwhile, the interculturality variable shows that 40.0% of the educators have a favorable perception of the variable, 53.8% consider a regular level of interculturality, and 6.3% have a non-favorable perception. Likewise, the critical thinking variable has a result that 71.3% of the teachers have a favorable perception of the critical capacity of the students, 71.30% consider a regular level on the variable and 2.5% do not consider that this variable is developed.

Given this, Garzón (2019) developed a study considering a descriptive and quantitative method. The results allow infering that 20% of students refer that teachers offer tools to intervene in changing structures, institutions and social relations. Espinoza et al. (2019) show in their results that 86.7% (39) of the teachers consciously consider the principles of educational activities related to the intercultural dimension: universality, education in values, learning community, equality and inclusion and interculturality.

Therefore, in the educational orientation of teachers, they must have training to increase their teaching to promote the better practice and cultural respect for students and improve their critical judgment. Therefore, to ensure a strong multicultural education, it is necessary to address a multicultural model which combines the concepts of culture and inclusion to promote individual and group education; also through critical thinking and judgment, it will be possible to generate a better understanding and clarity.

Interpretation and analysis of information has a high value (36.3%), a regular level (61.3%) and a low level (2.5%). The dimension Judgment of a specific situation with objective and subjective data presents a high level (26.3%), regular level (71.3%) and low level (2.5%). Similarly, dimension 3. Inferences of consequences of the decision in self-regulated judgment, presents a high level (26.3%), regular level (71.3%) and low level (2.5%), with a predominance of perception at the regular level.

In this sense, Medina et al. (2022) refer that for teachers' understanding of multiculturalism, an egalitarian process closely related to identity negotiations and overcoming power relations must be developed. Likewise, Lopez et al. (2021) mention that teachers agree that critical thinking is a necessary and adequate skill for the development of students because it helps them to better cope with situations that arise in everyday life. Also, for Rivera et al. (2017), it is necessary the development of values and adequate moral judgment to put oneself in their place and understand their feelings.

Education must promote the development of new attitudes towards cultural diversity and the recognition of other values and ways of life: this is the application of education with various and diverse differences. Meanwhile, thinking about the need to develop critical

thinking invites people to learn to question themselves, we often find ourselves in uncertainty, which mobilizes our ability to think, because reacting to certain arguments is not a sign of intelligence but of profound ignorance of something.

Since critical thinking in any context requires reflective autonomy and responding to different approaches with solid arguments, it is necessary to develop skills that require a clear and precise formulation of problems and questions. Pedagogical practice deals only with the obvious elements of culture; it does not address fundamental issues such as the beliefs and practices that the learners' families may carry out.

Therefore, teaching for student learning includes conducting the teaching process through an approach that values inclusion and diversity in all its expressions. In addition, the pedagogical mediation of the teacher in the development of a favorable climate for learning, the management of content, the permanent motivation of students, the development of diverse methodological and evaluation strategies, as well as the use of pertinent and relevant didactic resources. It includes the use of diverse criteria and instruments that facilitate the identification of achievement and challenges in the learning process, as well as aspects of teaching that need to be improved.

Conclusions

The results show that there is a relationship between interculturality and critical thinking (r= ,687**), where educators develop a positive affection due to the understanding of cultural aspects in teaching and the development of critical reasoning. In addition, the teacher's effectiveness in achieving the participation and success of students in respecting and practicing interculturality.

Intercultural education was developed to develop those based on inclusion due to the respect for cultural diversity, where the creation of activities that create human relationships is important in the coexistence of different experiences. Likewise, critical thinking is not only focused on traditionalist thinking but rather on the consonance of opinions, because discussing multiculturalism is immersed in interculturality, where the recognition, acceptance and acting on the diverse knowledge is developed.

Regarding the importance of intercultural education, different studies generally mention a growing gap between recent developments in the theory and practice of intercultural communication, due to different factors. For this reason, there are educational guidelines in which the aim is to encourage practices that are closer to reality. Therefore, critical thinking in pedagogical practice will play a preponderant role when representing similar but not the same cultural traits that allow socialization between agents of the school community, in addition to promoting the improvement of coexistence within schools and the improvement of education based on interculturality

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