

# THEATRICAL STRATEGIES TO REDUCE XENOPHOBIA AND ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION IN ECUADORIAN YOUNG PEOPLE

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# INTRODUCTION

- Beliefs and attitudes: most important risk factors in xenophobia and ethnic discrimination.
  - Ecuador: some policies have been directed to redefine the concept of national identity with a especial interest in the indigenous collective.
  - The number of immigrants has led to a rise in the racist attitudes towards this group of people, a phenomenon that happened in many Latinamerican countries, and specifically in Ecuador.
  - Multicausal variables.
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# METHODOLOGY I

**-Participants:** 50 people approximately from Technical University of Ambato. Students from Social Communication and Social Work careers.

**-Phases:**

1. Investigation and analysis.
  2. Strategic design.
  3. Development, production and revision of materials and methods.
  4. Management, implementation and monitoring.
  5. Impact assessment.
  6. Planning for continuity.
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## METHODOLOGY II

- Phases were applied in three social theater workshops executed every six months during a year and a half.
  - Participants discussed the myths and mistaken ideas about xenophobia and ethnic discrimination.
  - After analyzing the most pressing problems in the focal population, improvisations were made in small groups with plots and characters related to these aspects.
  - At the end of each dramatic exercise, the rest of the participants debated about the degree of similarity with reality and, especially, they analyzed the most relevant arguments of each character and what other argumentative elements could have been added or eliminated.
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## METHODOLOGY III

- Afterwards, the director, the assistant director and the playwright worked on the scripts from these improvisations and from the notes extracted by them.
  - It was intended that the duration was about 5 minutes and that the scenes generally had an open end.
  - With opposing arguments so the future public was able to debate and reflect on the witnessed, the situation of the characters, their possible development, and the solutions they would propose in each plot.
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## METHODOLOGY IV

- The scripts are never completely definitive, but adapted according to the characteristics and particularities of the target audience (message is closer and provokes greater empathy and identification with what is presented).
  - Performance would constitute half of the exercise. Other half corresponds to the subsequent debate.
  - Both parts (drama and discussion) are necessary and complementary to reach awareness and change attitudes.
  - Actors must be trained in this type of interpretation, as well as good moderators specialized in these topics.
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# RESULTS I

-Performance with 4 or 5 scenes of 5 minutes each plus a debate of 10 minutes for each one (one hour approximately).

-Methodological sheets of each scene are set up so that anyone can follow the instructions on how to work them and their utilities.

-Instructions include among its components: objectives, topics to be discussed, synopsis, duration, activities to be worked on or complementary resources.

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## RESULTS II

-Plays are exhibited in different educational and cultural centers.

-The impact is measured while new proposals are elaborated to follow the continuity of the methodology used.

-As far as possible, the scenes are shot in order to create cinematographic sketches to be uploaded to Internet attaching the methodological sheets that can be used in any context without the need of the acting presence.

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# CONCLUSIONS

- The strategies used had an impact when it came to sensitizing the spectators about xenophobia and ethnic discrimination.
  - The social workers who attended and the majority of the audience concluded that the scenes, beside the debate generated, were fruitful in raising awareness and in promoting social skills to fight the dramatized problems.
  - The research carried out has shown how the methodology and the different strategies used are helpful and viable so they can be used in other contexts under similar approaches.
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**THANKS**

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