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Ethnography and emotions: cultural intelligence applied to motherhood migration process.

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Abstract

In the first part, the theoretical basis of the theory of emotional intelligence and convenience intercultural training for immigrant women are exposed and that they can better adapt to the environment from a general and theoretical point of view. Then we serve authors who since the 90s as P. Fernandez Berrocal (1997), Fernandez et al (1997) investigating the relationship between culture and emotion, that is, how the assimilation of a culture allows individuals some emotional filters to interpret reality and how certain cultures even allow emotional control (Mesquita, 2003) by supernatural and mystical references.

Then we attend the practical part following the detailed exposition of a unique case in terms of a qualitative field study with immigrant Muslim women to Spain. This case, called instrumentally unique case, is an exemplification of how a culture can lead itself own emotional complication for individuals. This makes more sense to have the convenience of a basic emotional education for immigrants and provide them with other references about the most rational reality to suit her motherhood, to new country women, etc. without losing or threatening the essence of their culture.

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1. Introduction and theoretical framework

Daniel Goleman considers that being intelligent is being able to solve problems in the most satisfactory way for the organism; this issue requires the ability to think and decide the strategies to solve the problem. Originality and creative

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thinking in the creation of intelligence is highlighted. From a psychological point of view, intelligence is related to the reasoning ability, curiosity, adaptation, attention, problem-solving ability, memory, making judgments or display of certain talents that differentiate and characterize us. It also plays an important role in the development of organizational, analytical and visual skills.

Interpersonal intelligence is a subtype of intelligence that is placed among the eight proposed by Gardner (1995) in his theory of Multiple Intelligences, which later Salovey and Mayer (1990) deepened until they developed the construct of "Emotional Intelligence". It's defined as "the ability to perceive, assess and express emotions accurately, the ability to access and / or generate feelings which facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotions and emotional knowledge and the ability to regulate emotions by promoting emotional and intellectual growth "(Mayer and Salovey, 1997, p.4).

Emotional intelligence as a new coined concept, reached its highest diffusion and impact point with the work of Goleman in 1995. There are five types of emotions which are considered as the primary ones: fear, anger, joy, surprise, and sadness. And from their mixture or melt, the whole ranges of them are considered. Traditionally, emotions have been divided as positive and negative, thus contributing to the attempted suppression of the emotions that were supposedly negative, and therefore they were invalid and harmful for individuals. However, every emotion, including those called negative ones, are useful and adaptive (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso, 2002). Being emotionally intelligent involves identifying and recognizing the emotions you feel, identifying the reason and knowing how to manage in a more suitable way the emotional state to express it, changing and thus self-regulating anxiety, impulses and moods, as well as perceiving and understanding the others' emotions.

Following an investigation by Peña, Diez and Garcia (2012) we understood that people who are emotionally developed know how to be motivated, they preserve themselves towards frustrations and they develop positivism. They also generate empathy and they look reliable to others; they know how to listen to them, they put themselves in other's place and they are wanted by their friends because they know how to give good advice; in short, people with EI have the capacity to adapt themselves and interact with the world receptively and with good manners. This way, this ability is directly linked to the empowerment of social intelligence spread by Goleman in 2006 in which they share their empathic ability and they meet and connect with others and their world. Social intelligence skills are detected when people know how to treat others and they develop a special sensitivity to serve the disadvantaged members. Emotional intelligence in the educational world has found its way since emotional management means a very important benefit for humans; furthermore, it is a more affordable technique. We think that precisely the formation of immigrant women in E.I. can be beneficial and necessary, as it will help them overcome social obstacles and they adapt socially better.

There is another article that supports this issue, Fernandez Berrocal, Salovey et al. (1997) have also conducted a study funded by Ministry in several countries: Spain, Chile and the US, according to the fact that cultural aspects can moderate the current relationship between the IEP and emotional adjustment. They conclude that in this transcultural study, Emotional Adjustment is primarily associated with IEP (23% out of the variance) and with cultural dimensions (approximately 7%). Likewise, people believe themselves to be very skillful in relation to their emotional understanding ability and in their ability to regulate their emotional states, it is a very good way to show how balanced they are and their capacity to adapt to many other cultures. Masculinity-Femininity dimension did moderate the relationship between IEP and Emotional Adjustment as predicted in the study. On the one hand, cultural masculinity is associated with higher anxiety and depression rates, which is consistent with other studies in which cultural femininity is related to low levels of neuroticism and a lower frequency of negative emotions (Lynn and Martin, 1995.) On the other hand, people from feminine cultures could appreciate how the relations between IEP and Emotional Adjustment were emphasized. It is a potentiating effect that is related to the greatest emotional intensity associated with feminine cultures.

Mesquita (2003), an academician with Arab background who lives in Holland, is another author who explores cross-cultural approaches, emotion, schemes and social models. Specifically the study carried out in (1992) in which she reviews the bibliography of some studies, and she concluded that cultural differences in emotions appear to be due to the differences in the types of facts or schemes, the specific evaluation tendencies of the culture, behavioral repertoires, or regulatory processes.

Mesquita (2003) has another article even more interesting if possible, for this dissertation . In this article, it is suggested that transcultural assessment of emotional disorders would benefit from the consideration of cultural

differences in the way they were faced, as well as social regulations according to emotions. It is provided a summary about the literature research on cultural differences about emotions, particularly in preceding events, subjective emotions, assessment and behavior. Cultural differences in emotion are understood functionally, so that most prevailing emotional phenomena are those that fit and reinforce one self's different cultural models (ie, objectives and practices) and social relationships. It is argued that a cultural approach with sensitive closeness to emotional disturbing phenomenon would involve the evaluation of emotional phenomena that are dysfunctional for self-affirmation and social relationship cultural prototypes.

2. Objectives and methodology

The main aim of this dissertation is to analyze a case study of an immigrant woman in the theoretical framework of cultural intelligence and how emotional models of self-assertion and social relations could determine how to face her family situation and socialization in an adopted country. The innovation of this text is that the approach of this study is interdisciplinary by connecting psychological and anthropological studies.

In the first part of this dissertation, methodology deals with the bibliographic review about emotional intelligence and other studies related to cultural models and schemes which affect the imaginary side and the individuals' emotional experiences. In the second part, it is dealt with the description of a magazine deepening a case in a detailed and qualitative way. This interview belongs to ethnographic work (2013-2015) held in the town of Campo de Nijar (Spain) between the female immigrant population of sub-Saharan origin (in a total sample of twelve studies). The case study is instrumental, because of its characteristics, it is studied as a particular case in which it is highlighted to what extent mystical cultural references determine it emotionally, it is selected from a sample of an ethnographic case study. This qualitative technology allows us to fix abstraction in an example, however there are fewer conclusions as they are just related to this case (Peña, 2011).

3. Results

The sorrow experienced by those people who initiated the immigration process should not be confined to a mere episode of a mental disorder or emotional negativity (grief), but it must be apprehended as the beginning of a new but dialectical process of loss / reconstruction of the identity (mourning). In this reconstruction, we can find that the disembedding (Giddens, 2009) of their cultural references, in this case just due to that minimum moderation of those models indicated by Fernandez Berrocal and Salvoy (1997), come from an emotional disarrangement and a higher incidence in the IEP, until the long process of identity reconstruction is completed in a migratory process.

In our case study, we will focus on the female culture of two immigrant women in the maternity process, whose mourning/grief state in which they are, it is experienced from a higher emotional breakdown. This problem has already been highlighted and analyzed in detail from an interdisciplinary approach by Moro (1998,2010,2011), she is an author who has studied the different interactions that take place between mother and son in relation to immigrant mothers. The cultural context evidently organizes the interaction mother-son, as well as it helps the mother initiate herself in her status as a mother. From the moment when the child is born, that cultural context takes care of the mother as the guide; it teaches her how to feed the child, how to wash him, massaging him, how to get adapted to him, to his requests, to his personality. It shows her the way she should show her baby. In the exile, the mother has no direct contact with this context. Giving birth is a biological equality fact, but in cultural diversity it gives place to inequality.

Pregnant immigrant women, from the beginning of their journey, their arrival to the first destination, the search for their first job and home, their first contact with that new reality in an environment that seems threatening and which makes them feel alone (as they are very far from their family to support them), they carry out an authentic grief in which they will experience deep heartbreak, sadness, absorption and fear schematizations. These emotions are mentioned by those immigrant mothers who are interviewed and coming from Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa, they are interviewed along their working day in the countryside in the almerian town of Nijar (Spain), it is still a strange and distant landscape to them. As we cannot be very extensive, we will only deal with one case study where identities have remained hidden behind false names.

3.1. Maternity and sorrow among the immigrant population: Kadidia's case (Cabo Verde) in Almeria

Kadida was born in Cabo Verde, she comes from ethnic Diolula, matrilineal. Her mother tongue is Diolula. As she wants to clarify, at the beginning of the interview, she is Muslim, as her ethnic, her mother, her husband, her sisters and her entire family is. She arrived Almeria to meet her husband; he had already immigrated to Spain four years before. His husband works in a hothouse in El Ejido, and now he is working in 'El campo de Nijar' town. Kadida has not worked since she arrived, first of all, as she states, because she wanted to take care of her home and her husband, she had some difficulties with the new language and also, she soon got pregnant of her first daughter Animata.

Animata is a thirteen months old baby, she is slight, very restless and she has a subdued looking. In Torrecardenas hospital (Almeria), they refer us the case of this child who is being assisted by Psychologists. The diagnosis is that she suffers from a 'massive separation heartbreak', these separations produce such an extreme desperation in the child as well as in the mother; they even talk about terror suffered by the child. The mother and the child do not live separated, quite the opposite, as the whole small family (father, mother and daughter) lives in Balsaseca, but from a clinical point of view, the ties between mother and daughter are unbalanced, to the extent that the mother is getting a treatment, concretely painkillers as the psychologist told me. We are also told how behavioral relationships as well as affective interactions are poor, not very reciprocal and very atypical:

'she hardly touches her daughter, she doesn't stimulate her, she doesn't carry her on her back, she doesn't massage her...if we compare her with the prevailing stereotypes on African mothers, she has a minimum tactile relationship with her baby. It seems as if she was afraid of this child. In fact, she told us' (Teresa, Psychologist, Torrecardenas hospital, Almeria)

Now, we will transcribe some parts of the conversation we maintained with Kadidia.

C: Can you tell me about the first moments when Koumaré arrived?

Kadidia: I have suffered a lot, she cried all the time. She has drunk milk from the feeding bottle. I woke up all the time, more than three times along the night. When she was three months old, I woke up because she was crying all the time in the dawn; I wondered whether she was my daughter, I was afraid, I could feel my heart beating very hard. I stopped, I was exhausted, I did not want her to be with me. I feel alone, I have a headache. I wanted to give her some sleeping pills, but she was not old enough.

Total silence

Kadidia: Diolula children are not like this, they are not that way, they start walking in a very early age, when they are one-year-old.

Kadidia: Up to now, I am afraid of her. I have already told it to her father. One day she hurt me. I gave her a slap.

To better understand these sentences, we have to go in depth into a part of Kadidia and her daughter, Aminata lives' as well as into some aspects of their cultural references. Aminata is called as one of her maternal aunts who died when Kadidia was pregnant; it was decided by her father. Kadidia got engaged with her cousin because of an wedding Alliance established by the maternal side, and she settled down with her husband's family, where Aminata also lived. She was also the aunt of Kadidia's husband, although she was much more than an ordinary aunt, she was her husband's 'little mother'. Kadidia's husband was given to Aminata when he was very young, probably in order to alleviate her infertility. Aminata, the aunt, married a *marabout* (a diviner), whom she abandoned. After this broken alliance, she did not get married again and she did not have any children.

Giving the child the name of a grandparent or a death ancestor is a common practice that means respect versus the fear people feel for the deceased, it is an act of great importance and at the same time of great complexity: the name of the child, in this case the girl, contains a part of her history that will mix together with the history of the little boy or girl.

Kadidia tells us how her uncle died among strange circumstances recalling a witchcraft attack. We will lead back the interview by asking about the relationship between Kadidia and her uncle Aminata.

Kadidia: I went away from my husband's family soon and I came back with my parents. I had some problems with uncle Aminata. (...) She told me very hard things, everyday, and they got into my head. She was very

severe, I have not forgotten it. Her words still hurt me. One day we argued because she told me that I did not know how to cook, that I did nothing well, that I spent money all the time and that I was not a good wife, she told me “You are here thanks to me”. I went away some days later. People knew she was not right, people knew her but they were afraid of Aminata. She was very kind, she educated my husband. When I arrived her house she was very happy, but then she became jealous.

After a long time when Kadidia told us about her sister, she later explained us the second dream she had during her pregnancy. It is important to reconstruct dreams, as that is the moment when we can appreciate ‘phantasmagorical interactions’, that it is very significant in animist cultures.

Kadidia: I had a dream in which a woman snatched my baby away (...) I don't remember the woman, but she was attacking me, also a wizard attacked me, he was not a “djinnas”. (...) Aminata- daughter- she is strong, she is strong, that's why she attacked me. Aminata is strong.

These last words are very important to understand phantasmagorical and cultural interactions between mother and daughter. Aminata is not a vulnerable being, in Kadidia's representation itself; her daughter is a powerful being, in contact with other worlds that are not accessible to the mother herself. Zemleni (1985) points out his famous article about the child Nit Ku Bon, as an ordinary child, he also has an ancestor- child on the other side of the chain, a wizard-child. As it is defined, the ancestor-child has multiple potentialities. In some cases he can bring some richness to the family, but he can also be against his relatives and bring some misfortunes. On the other side, it is clinically necessary to incorporate this double valence of traditional representation, this way the story and the therapeutic work with Kadidia also requires a complete re-appropriation of traditional representation (child-wizard/ child-ancestor). Kadidia is frightened because of the uncertainty of whether her ancestor-child will bring her misfortunes and difficulties or whether it will benefit the family. This is the main mystery she has to face, this uncertainty emerges from her cultural context and it is a crucial point in the mother-daughter relationship. On the other side, Kadidia's fear is not caused by her situation as an immigrant. The relationship that her daughter Aminata has with her ancestor is not caused by the fact of having immigrated, but immigration is an obstacle for her when she has to face that fear taking some measures. Moreover, if she had given birth in her country, maybe those fears had increased. In an excessive general way, for African women, the fact of being pregnant makes them become a real wife, not of the husband, but of the lineage. It is a very important moment for women, but at the same time, it is a very dangerous moment. This danger can come from co-wives, from the mother in law, or from jealous people who put a spell against mother-son/daughter.

Probably, Kadidia in her country would have the appropriate cultural resources to face the situation and overcome the latent sorrow the deceased aunt depicts by means of suitable ritual by asking a *marabout*. Kadidia was alone with her wife in ‘Campo de Nijar’, far from her relatives, from her own ‘cultural resources’ to face her fears, it emphasizes her fears, her loneliness and sorrow, coming into psychopathological symptoms from an Occidental medical perspective. Furthermore, as her husband was not able to give her a solution, he took her to Torrecardenas Hospital, where is the child who really receives medical care.

Kadidia's testimony confirms us how changes in emotional intensity, authenticity and complexity can take place at any given moment as the result of cultural or social developmental factors, as it is announced by Hermans and Rime (2013) and Rime (2005, p.420). Specially, it happens as the intersection between the IE and the cultural environment (Mesquita, Feldman, and Smith, 2010).

4. Conclusions

In this case, it is perceived that as mystical cultural schemes are against the mother's emotional psychological adaptation, besides this woman has no resources and techniques to survive by herself, there is such a connection and dependence established with her mother or her older sister; this case is about a culture which does not provide women with emotional resources, it confuses them, it makes them look vulnerable towards reality, and also it makes them too dependent on their family. Emotional conditions and resources provided by her culture of origin in an exceedance situation towards a social and foreign context. We know that it will be advisable for her to receive some training in

order to get some other references more rational about reality to get adapted to her maternity, to a new country, etc. not losing nor threatening the essence of her culture, nor to her imaginary collective.

She could be introduced into a training and identification of those negative emotions she suffers, such as irrational fear or panic, she should practice how to approach and massage her daughter constantly in order to reduce her fear, discovering different reactions from the child and the ancestor she thinks the child has embodied. It would also be useful to give her some resources for emotional regulation, such as expressing herself orally and liberating herself, being accompanied, staying relaxed, living the moment, having some sense of humor and making her feel excited for growing individually instead of for the collective or for her family. It would also be advisable having a Spanish friend, it would help her to discover other cultural prototypes and references that determine emotional reactions, also being told some stories about women who have been able to overcome this emotional difficulty. This would make her distance herself in a cognitive way, in the way she faces reality emotionally. At the same time, we think that in this case it would be advisable an evaluation for psychological and psychiatric therapy, in order to dismiss other factors.

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