



Introduction

- ✓ In recent decades, globalization has made the world increasingly complex and interdependent. As a result, the world is now witnessing the compression of distance and time, and accelerating the movement of people, goods, and ideas between nations (Portera, 2020).
- ✓ The tourism field made a cultural bridge between nations by fostering dialogue and comparison with different civilizations (Deardorff, 2009).
- ✓ This research investigates the intercultural competences used to communicate, promote, and enhance the cultural heritage of Verona and its province, with respect for diversity, inclusion, and intercultural interaction.

Intercultural Competences, Culture, and Territory: Research on Intercultural Skills for Communicating and Promoting Art and Local Heritage in a Diversity-Respectful Manner

Research Objectives

- ✓ To investigate how communication regarding the culture and enhancement of Verona and its province is implemented, analyzing the flow of information from the web.
- ✓ To identify the key intercultural competences in relational and communicative contexts to be adopted or acquired by cultural operators.
- ✓ To develop a cultural communication model for cultural operators that incorporates intercultural competences within a pedagogical framework of inclusivity and respect for cultural diversity.



Research Question

Which intercultural competences are useful for cultural operators to possess in enhancing the territory, promoting dialogue and interaction with foreign tourists?

References

- ✓ Berelson, B. (1952). *Content Analysis in Communication Research*. Free Press.
- ✓ Deardorff, D.K. (2009). *The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. SAGE, Thousand Oaks.
- ✓ Giusti, M. (2017). *Teoria e metodi di pedagogia interculturale*. Laterza.
- ✓ Hansen, A. & Machin, D. (2019). *Media and Communication Research Methods*. 2nd edition. Red Globe Press.
- ✓ McQuail, D. & Deuze, M. (2020). *Media & Mass Communication Theory*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
- ✓ Portera, A. (2020). *Manuale di pedagogia interculturale*. Editori Laterza.
- ✓ Riffe, D., Lacy, S. & Fico, F. (2014). *Analyzing media messages. Using quantitative content analysis in research*. 3rd edition. Routledge.
- ✓ Veltri, G. (2019). *Digital Social Research*. Polity Press.

The research in 3 steps

1st step: exploratory research

Objective

To collect thematic units of analysis on the communication of cultural tourism of the city of Verona and its province.

Research Design

Sequential Explanatory Design (Mixed-method approach): quantitative analysis with SocialMeter and digital content analysis.

Tools

- SocialMeter to collect the units of analysis on web
- Digital research protocol
- Sampling of units of analysis
- Coding sheets and NVivo for the qualitative content analysis
- Structured interviews with stakeholders to explore emerging themes

2nd step: action research

Objective

To map and analyze both existing and missing intercultural competences among cultural operators.

Research Design

Sequential Explanatory Design (Mixed-method approach): quantitative analysis with Jasp and qualitative content analysis with NVivo.

Tools

- Questionnaires
- Semi-structured interviews
- Data analysis with Jasp
- Coding sheets and NVivo for the qualitative content analysis with the data from the interviews

Participants

Workers in the cultural tourism field (tourist guides, cultural operators, etc.)

3rd step: educational proposals

Objective

To propose a model of intercultural competences and a training program concept aimed at including intercultural competences into the management of foreign tourist flows.

Model structure

The model could be a visual representation based on communicative competences, know-how, and attitudes.

Training goals

To address identified gaps, promote inclusivity, and enhance effective communication.

Future ideas to continue research

Participatory observations to assist cultural operators in applying the IC acquired during the training course.

Outcomes from the exploratory phase

A collection of 6 key themes, communication issues, and stakeholder expectations on the culture tourism of Verona and its province.

The information derived from the 6 identified key themes were used to structure the questionnaires and questions for the second phase of research and to further investigate the context in which intercultural competences are to be included.

Expected results from the research

To better understand the needs and requirements of cultural workers managing tourist flows.

To investigate the mediation, conflict management, and problem-solving competences employed by cultural operators to enhance interaction with foreign tourists.

To understand which communication and interpersonal skills to implement to better welcome tourists.