

Doing (No) Good? Specialist and non-Specialist Perspectives on Applied Interculturalism

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Master & critical approach

Research-action project run with MA students in Dijon: providing cultural awareness training for migrants and social workers / volunteers in associations.

Context: immigration « crisis » in France. How to help migrants to adapt to French society: (assimilationist) French integration model.

Intuition: fortune spent on cultural awareness training for business people. What about migrants suffering from culture shock?

Rich associative structure but little formal training. Desire not to reproduce Hofstede-style models and idea that the university can help out with a more critical/anti-essentialist intercultural approach.

The Project: Three Phases

1. Benchmarking

To discover what cultural awareness training currently exists locally (in the Dijon area), nationally and internationally.

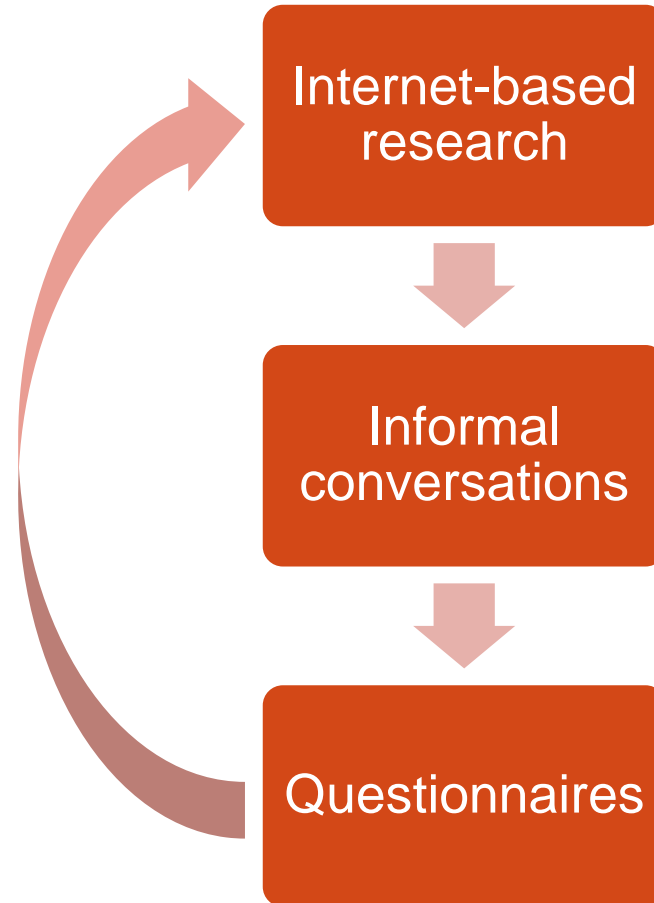
2. Developing

Designing and testing training tools to help develop cultural awareness training for migrants.

3. Rolling out

Producing and distributing online facilitator toolkits for associations around France wanting to set up training.

The Project: Phase 1



Dispositifs d'intégration de migrants en France

Ce questionnaire anonyme, administré par les étudiants du master en management interculturel de l'Université de Bourgogne, est destiné à des personnes travaillant dans des structures accueillant des migrants. Merci pour le temps que vous accordez à nous aider dans notre étude.

*Obligatoire

Dans quelle(s) structure(s) intervenez-vous en tant que salarié, bénévole, etc., auprès d'un public composé, au moins en partie, de migrants ? Où se situe(nt) elle(s) ? *

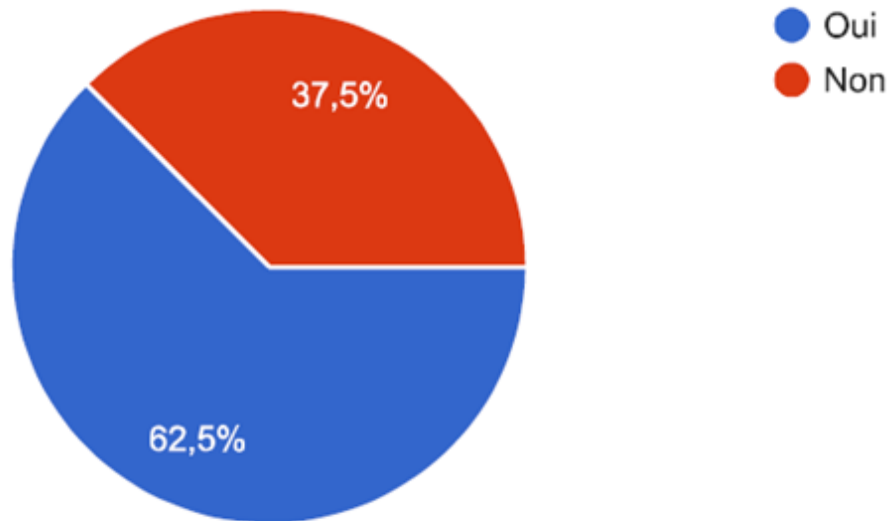
Votre réponse _____

Depuis combien de temps intervenez-vous dans cette/ces structure(s) ?

- Moins d'un an
- 1 à 2 ans
- 3 à 5 ans
- plus de 5 ans

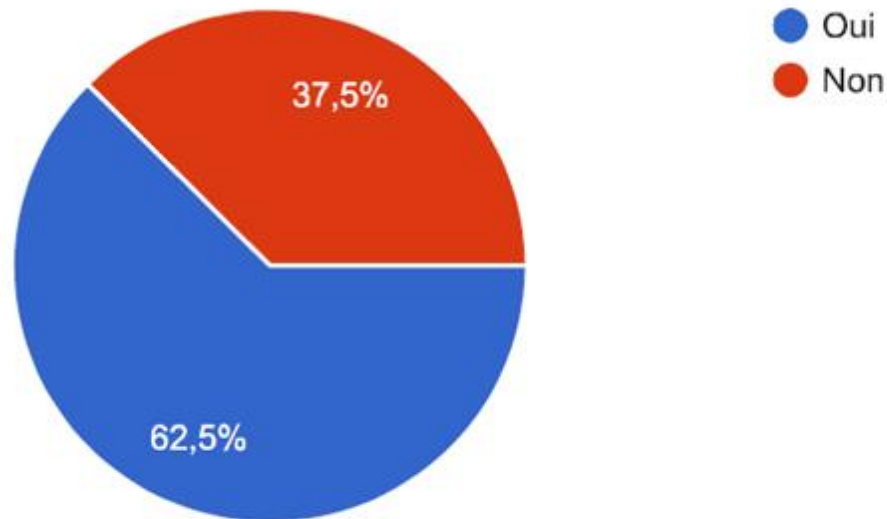
Have you ever had any specific training for your work?

16 réponses



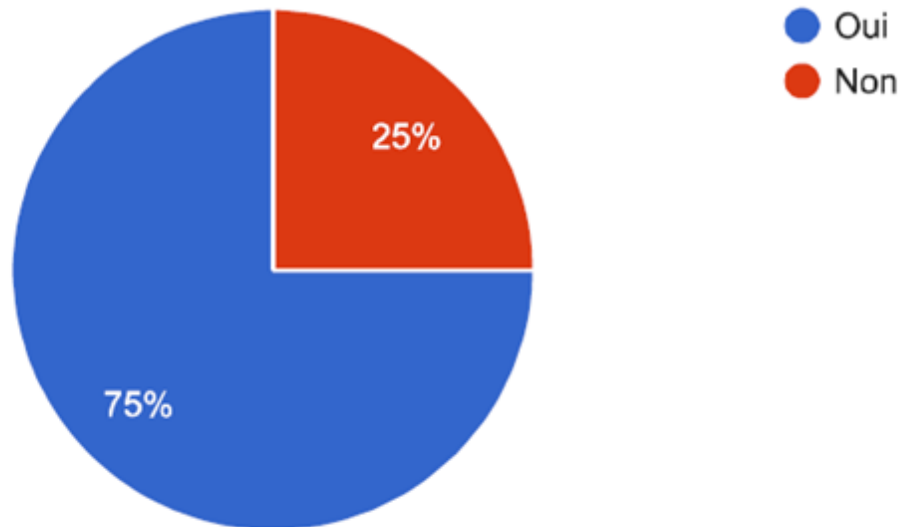
Do you ever encounter any cultural differences that can lead to misunderstandings or discomfort?

16 réponses



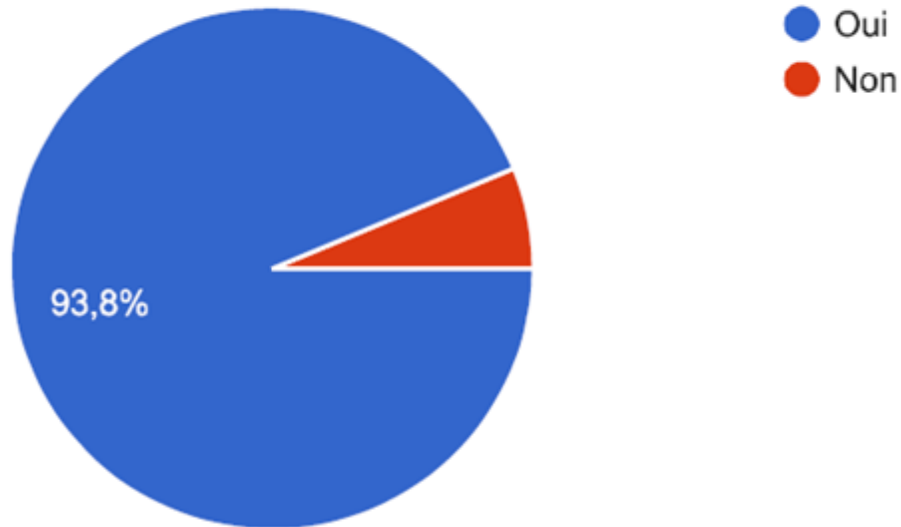
Do you ever give advice to migrants on what they can do to adapt better to the French lifestyle?

16 réponses



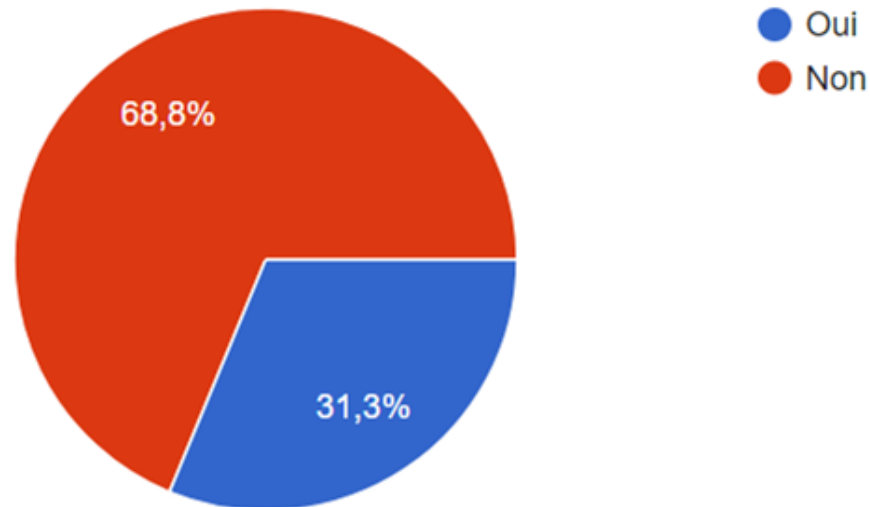
Would it be useful for migrants you are working with to have access to workshops on cultural differences and French cultural specificities?

16 réponses



Do you offer this type of training on cultural differences within the structure for which you work?

16 réponses



Essentialising vision

Cultural differences are seen as existing and being operational/problematic.

Integrationist approach.

Secularism.

Pragmatic solutions to everyday problems (gender relations).

Limits of questionnaire (essentialising)

Critical Self-Analysis

- Ethical agenda – desire to help, but essentialism in approach to cultures.
- Othering implicit in the project (Mathieu).
- Patronising approach & ivory tower (concepts vs everyday problems to solve regarding admin / money / food / violence).

Limits of hidden ideological agenda of theory (focus on cultures as academic artefact, implicit in the questionnaire and project conception).

How can we reconcile this with our own “critical approach” to the way people “use” multiple cultural identities to make sense of and for one another, in order to deconstruct this and make it useful for people?

Opposition between critical approach rejecting culture as an essentialising concept and the reality check of the migrant experience (social norms and expectations, stigmatisation). Culture is important in peoples' representations (professionals, general public and migrants themselves). How should we deal with this?

Spivak.

Gilroy.

Intersectionality?

'Good' Ideas?

- Social mixity (not reserved for migrants)
- Moving beyond classic tools which lead to stereotyping / stigmatisation / othering
- Replace culture-based discourse with talk about different identities and associated representations
- (Artistic) activities and sharing experiences, plus critical reflection on identities and people's social expectations (based on perceived cultural differences)

'Good' Questions?

- How can we legitimize the focus on identities and micro-level interactions without appearing to deny what are experienced as tangible differences on the macro level?
- How should we present this to professionals / volunteers / migrants / the general public?
- What activities and what contents for whom?

The Context: Migrant Integration in France

Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration (OFII)

The Republican Integration Contract:

- Around 50% of migrants obtaining residence permits
- Begins after around 14 months (asylum seekers)
- 50-200 hours of French, up to A1 level
- 12 hours of civic training (Republican values & institutions; public services)

A rich associative sector

“Système D”