



Cooperation in the Latin American behavioral sciences: Motivation, evaluation and difficulties

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the motivation for establishing partnerships, how these partnerships are evaluated, and the difficulties encountered in the partnerships among Latin-American researchers in behavioral sciences. A hundred Latin-American researchers who had published scientific work indexed in *Psycinfo* in which another author from the continent participated. The participants answered a questionnaire on the above-mentioned topics. The results indicated that the main reasons for establishing partnerships with other Latin-Americans were to seek broader and more significant results and increased productivity or the visibility and recognition of production. As regards the evaluation of the results of the partnership, most participants indicated that the partnership has resulted in an increase in publications and publications of higher scientific level and greater visibility. Several difficulties were recognized, which in general, were access and communication in order to maintain the partnership. The main difficulties in conducting research were related to the final writing of the paper, as an article, chapter or other, as well as data collection. In terms of work infrastructure, the main barriers were financial constraints and lack of time to devote to the partnership. It can be concluded that the main reasons to cooperate are qualitative and quantitative advances, and that the difficulties in the partnerships are secondary.

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Cooperación en las ciencias del comportamiento latinoamericanas: Motivación, evaluación y dificultades

R E S U M E N

Palabras clave:

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Este estudio investigó la motivación para el establecimiento de asociaciones para cooperación, cómo se evalúan estas asociaciones y las dificultades encontradas entre los investigadores latinoamericanos en ciencias de la conducta. Participaron un centenar de investigadores latinoamericanos que habían publicado trabajos científicos indexados en Psycinfo con otro autor del continente. Los participantes respondieron a un cuestionario sobre los temas antes mencionados. Los resultados indicaron que las principales razones para el establecimiento de asociaciones para cooperar con otros latinoamericanos fueron: buscar resultados más amplios y significativos y aumento de la productividad o de la visibilidad y el reconocimiento de la producción. En cuanto a la evaluación de los resultados de la asociación, la mayoría indicó que la asociación se ha traducido en aumento de las publicaciones, en publicaciones de mayor nivel científico y en una mayor visibilidad. Se reconocieron varias dificultades. En general, las principales dificultades fueron el acceso y la comunicación para mantener la asociación. Las principales dificultades para llevar a cabo la investigación se relacionan con la redacción final del documento, como un artículo, capítulo u otro, y la recopilación de datos. En cuanto a la infraestructura de trabajo, las principales barreras fueron las limitaciones financieras y la falta de tiempo para dedicar a la asociación. Se puede concluir que las principales razones para cooperar son los avances cualitativos y cuantitativos, y que las dificultades en las asociaciones son secundarias.

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International cooperation in all areas of science has increased over the years (Gama & Velho, 2005; Kliegl & Bates, 2011; Leydesdorff & Wagner, 2009; Wagner, 2006). The data available for Latin America also point to the growth of international cooperation in various fields of science (Fernández, Gómez, & Sebastián, 1998; Fernández, Frank, & Pittaluga, 2005; Paz López & María Torga, 2013; Russell & Ainsworth, 2013; Russell, Ainsworth, Del Río, Narváez-Berthelemot, & Cortés, 2007; Vanz, 2009) including by social networks (Pinto, Efrain-García, Rodríguez Barquín, & Moreira González, 2007). The growth of international cooperation also affects psychology, as found in a study of the production which occurred resulting from cooperation in the 1975–2007 period, in 12 of the leading journals of Psychology (García-Pereira & Quevedo-Blasco, 2015; Kliegl & Bates, 2011; Quevedo-Blasco & López-López, 2011). However, scientific cooperation seems to be less significant when it comes to Ibero or Latin American production in Psychology (García-Martínez, Guerrero-Bote, Hassan-Montero, & Moya-Anegón, 2009; García-Martínez, Guerrero-Bote, & Moya-Anegón, 2012). López-López et al. (2010) found low levels of cooperation in the Ibero American Psychology, pointing to the difficulty of establishing and maintaining networks of national and international cooperation. López, Silva, García-Cepero, Bustamante, and López (2011) also observed lack of cooperation in Latin American Psychology, based on journal articles in Latin America included in the Redalyc system between 2005 and 2007, suggesting that research communities in Latin America have yet to be articulated concerning research and publications, highlighting the need to strengthen cooperation

networks. These findings provide the basis of what can be the first attempts in our community to consolidate an academic community, which we believe could be decisive in the scientific and technological development of our region.

In a documentary related to investigation on scientific cooperation between countries in Latin America based on Psycinfo data for the period 2001–2010, García, Acevedo-Triana, and López-López (2014) found low levels of scientific cooperation between Latin American countries in Psychology and related sciences, with a total of 528 publications for the decade. Countries that published more cooperative investigation in the period were Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, Chile and Peru. These results are coherent with other researches on cooperation (López-López, de Moya Anegón, Acevedo-Triana, García, & Silva, 2015). The tentative explanation for that revolves around lack of communication between researchers and the standards of competitiveness that hinder cooperation.

The literature on international scientific cooperation generally indicates more advantages than disadvantages in cooperation programs between countries. Furthermore, scientific cooperation is – in local contexts – a main variable for production within research groups (Ramírez, Mihi Ramírez, & Noguera Hidalgo, 2014). Similarly, this literature points more reasons to cooperate internationally than difficulties and problems to overcome in these partnerships. Vanz and Stumpf (2009, 2010) proposed a list of reasons for national or international scientific cooperation based on the systematization of national and international literature on the subject, including – inter alia – the following:

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