

# Multiculturalism in Educational and Developmental Contexts: Relevance of Psychosocial Variables

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## Abstract

This study analyzes the possible relationship between various topics which have been studied extensively in Social Psychology, and certain difficulties inherent to the cultural diversity increasingly more prevalent in our educational contexts. We analyze to what extent various psychosocial variables can explain prejudiced attitudes and behaviors, and might even explain in some cases the appearance of racist or xenophobic manifestations.

Beginning with a brief analysis of different conceptions and possibilities of multicultural social interaction, we proceed to review concepts such as stereotype, prejudice or discrimination, and to analyze racial prejudice which may be behind a xenophobic attitude in childhood and the deterioration of childhood interactions. Of similar interest is the study of the social stigmatization concept, a phenomenon to which many children with diverse cultural origins are subjected.

After this conceptual delimitation, we continue in the second part of this study to review several current alternatives and approaches with regard to intercultural education from an applied perspective. Critical questions are examined in association with educational diversity in multicultural environments that result from the ever-increasing presence of children with heterogeneous cultural origins in our classrooms.

**Keywords:** Educational diversity, interculturality, multicultural education, social prejudice, discrimination, social stigmatization