



Multi-Ethnic Individuals and Their Position in Society

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Abstract

Critical conversations regarding identity, social integration, and cultural representation have emerged as a result of the rising frequency of multi-ethnic identity in contemporary cultures. In this study, we look at how multicultural policies, social structures, and education have shaped the lives of individuals from a variety of ethnic origins and the possibilities and problems they encounter. Multiculturalism fosters inclusion and fair opportunity, although discrepancies remain owing to structural prejudices and social preconceptions. The rights of multi-ethnic individuals are protected, equitable representation is guaranteed, and discrimination is prevented through the implementation of legal frameworks and government initiatives. The role of education in promoting cross-cultural relationships and mitigating biases is crucial for establishing peaceful societies. Analyses of the past and the present show that cultural identity is fluid and changes over time as social interactions and political situations change. Societies can increase acceptance and equity for multi-ethnic individuals by promoting policies that foster diversity and social cohesion. In order to strengthen societal unity, the study emphasises the necessity of inclusive methods that recognise and celebrate a variety of identities.

Keyword: Multi-ethnic identity, multiculturalism, social integration, diversity policies, education, cultural representation, ethnic inclusion, legal frameworks, social cohesion, globalization.

INTRODUCTION

Individuals whose heritage includes more than one ethnic or cultural background are said to have a multi-ethnic identity in terms of their personal and social lives. A distinctive blend of traditions, values, and perspectives is the result of a combination of heritage, upbringing, and societal interactions that define this identity. (Personal & Archive, 2022)

In contrast to unique ethnic identities, typically anchored in a homogeneous cultural background, multi-ethnic identity is dynamic and changeable. People from more than one ethnic background may have to deal with different societal norms, languages, and traditions, which can make it hard to figure out who they are. Depending on the social setting, individual experiences, and outside factors like institutional regulations and public approval, their identity may change.

According to sociologists, the concept of multi-ethnic identity casts doubts on the permanence of ethnic identity (Colombo, 2015). Instead, it emphasises the dynamic character of cultural belonging, showing how individuals navigate their many heritages to influence their social relationships and growth as individuals. The complexities of multi-ethnic identity are exacerbated by historical migration patterns, globalisation, and growing intercultural contacts, making it an important subject of research in modern society. (Giordan, 1994) (Bajpai, 2015)

Historical Perspectives on Multi-Ethnicity

For centuries, the amalgamation of ethnic identities has been a feature of human history, influenced by migration, trade, colonial expansion, and globalisation.

As societies developed, individuals from a variety of ethnic backgrounds established relationships, resulting in culturally diverse and wealthy populations (Worrell et al., 2006).

Some civilisations celebrated these blended identities, while others enforced social and legal obstacles that hindered their recognition and acceptance. The view and integration of multiethnic individuals within society were influenced over time by changes in political systems, economic patterns, and cultural contacts. The table below shows important times in history and how they affected people with multiple ethnicities.

Table 1 History of multi-ethnicity

Era	Key Developments	Impact on Multi-Ethnic Identity
Ancient Civilizations	Trade routes like the Silk Road facilitated cultural exchanges.	Blending of traditions, languages, and ethnic identities.
Roman Empire	A vast and diverse empire with ethnic intermingling.	Formation of mixed-ethnic communities across Europe, Africa, and Asia.
Colonial Era	European colonization led to migration and intermarriage.	Creation of Mestizo, Mulatto, and Creole identities in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Southeast Asia.
19th-20th Century Migration	Industrialization and global conflicts caused large-scale migration.	Rise of ethnically diverse societies, particularly in the U.S. and Europe.
Legal and Social Evolution	Laws evolved to grant recognition to multi-ethnic individuals.	Greater acceptance, multicultural policies, and protection of identity rights.

Social Perceptions and Challenges

Due to cultural norms, societal attitudes, and individual identity difficulties, multi-ethnic individuals frequently face challenging social environments (Vora et al., 2019). Even while diversity is being more and more embraced, problems like prejudice, marginalisation, and conflicts over personal identity continue. Geographical location, cultural standards, and governmental legislation are some of the variables that affect these encounters (Abu Bakar & Mohamad, 2017). Key social attitudes and the difficulties multiethnic individuals experience are described in the table below.

Table 2 Social perception and challenges

Aspect	Social Perceptions	Challenges Faced
Identity Recognition	Viewed as unique but sometimes questioned about their "real" identity.	Struggles with self-identification and external validation.
Cultural Acceptance	Celebrated in some societies but seen as "different" in others.	Pressure to conform to one dominant culture.
Stereotyping	Assumed to possess traits from multiple backgrounds.	Misconceptions about their heritage and identity.
Social Inclusion	Encouraged in diverse societies but marginalized in homogeneous ones.	Feelings of isolation and lack of belonging.
Family and Relationships	Seen as a bridge between cultures but may face generational misunderstandings.	Navigating different cultural expectations within families.
Representation in Media	Often portrayed in stereotypical ways.	Lack of authentic representation in mainstream narratives.

Multi-Ethnic Identity in Different Contexts

Depending on their context, multiethnic individuals manage their identity differently. Their experiences are influenced by cultural norms, society attitudes, and interpersonal relationships. Although certain environments promote greater inclusivity, others may present obstacles regarding acceptance and belonging. Key areas in which multi-ethnic identity is significant are as follows: (Joshi, 2014)

- **Family and Upbringing:** Numerous cultural traditions are frequently balanced by multi-ethnic individuals as they mature. The degree to which both cultures are integrated into daily life, family dynamics, and parental backgrounds all influence the development of their identity. Some individuals may experience a profound affinity for both ethnic heritages, but others may gravitate towards one influenced by extrinsic factors.
- **Education and Socialization:** Identity is heavily influenced by schools. Students may feel like they belong in diverse education settings, but in less diverse environments, they may be asked questions or have misunderstandings about their background. They are influenced by their peers, the curriculum's portrayal, and institutional policies.

- **Workplace and Professional Life:** Multiethnic individuals may face both benefits and difficulties in the workplace. They may be admired for their broad ideas and cross-cultural awareness, but they may also encounter biases or assumptions about their identity (Abutbul-Selinger, 2020). The workplace experience of employees can be substantially impacted by the policies of the company that promote inclusivity and the representation of them in leadership positions.
- **Media and Popular Culture:** Media representation influences the self-perception of multi-ethnic individuals and societal perceptions of them. Affirmative and precise representations can promote acceptance, whereas stereotypes may perpetuate misunderstandings. Being able to read different kinds of stories makes culture more welcoming.
- **Community and Social Interactions:** Cultural norms and the degree to which a society is accepting of diversity determine the degree to which a community is accepting. While some may experience pressure to adhere to a certain ethnic identity, some individuals blend in with their surroundings with ease. Community projects and support systems can aid in creating a feeling of inclusion.

Government Policies and Legal Recognition

Multi-ethnic individuals have been recognised and protected by a variety of government policies and legal frameworks around the world. Many countries have changed their laws to accommodate the expanding diversity of their people, ensuring that individuals from different backgrounds have equal rights and opportunities. The identity of multi-ethnic individuals has been significantly influenced by citizenship policies (Törngren et al., 2021). Although some countries permit dual or multiple citizenships, acknowledging the intricacies of heritage, others impose limitations that necessitate individuals to select a single national identity. These rules affect both legal status and personal identity, as well as social affiliation.

Anti-discrimination legislation has been crucial in safeguarding multi-ethnic individuals from prejudices in employment, education, and public services. Many governments around the world have passed laws to stop racial or ethnic discrimination. This lets people from all walks of life fully join in society. The success of such laws, however, is reliant on their implementation as well as social

awareness (Contini & Maturo, 2010). Individuals may be at risk of exclusion or marginalisation in particular situations due to loopholes in legal protection. Fair policy implementation is difficult to achieve, especially in cultures where prejudice runs deep.

The experiences of multi-ethnic individuals have also been influenced by representation and inclusion efforts. By promoting varied representation in corporate, educational, and political spheres, many countries foster multiculturalism. Programs that highlight ethnic diversity promote social integration and generate a sense of value for mixed-heritage individuals. However, societal attitudes can take longer to adapt than legislation, making policy implementation an ongoing process. It is crucial to work for more cultural acknowledgement, rights protection, and inclusion for multi-ethnic individuals so that they may freely traverse their identities. Policies must change to reflect the increasing diversity of cultures as globalisation advances and encourage individuals to embrace their rich history.

LITERATURE REVIEW

(Khushboo & Samy, 2021) The study gives a balanced view of the many emotions surrounding multiculturalism. Correspondence is essential to multiculturalism, and the incorporation of others is its fundamental significance. The main idea is that people of different races and ethnicities should not be biased against one another and should strive for equality. In addition to implying the challenges faced by multicultural societies, my goal in writing this paper is to analyse the multiculturalism hypothesis and provide the best interpretation of it. Due to the same social structure of their general population, individuals in multicultural societies value fairness, dignity, and individuality. Multiculturalism involves the inclusion of social minorities into the dominant social hierarchies in light of these considerations. The term "multiculturalism" refers to a set of values that encompasses a wide range of social and lifestyle practices, as well as a general appreciation for and support of diversity in the human population. It suggests a bright future and an anti-racist society. A major trend for the twenty-first century is multiculturalism. It opens the door for different social hierarchies and groups of people to unite around a shared appreciation for the semantic underpinnings and social disparities among them. Value, social equality, and opportunity are the main advantages of a heterogeneous society. Within their social hierarchies, every single people group on the planet strives to achieve these advantages.

(Behera & Sahu, 2009) The researchers took a close look at how different ethnic groups influenced social progress in South Asian countries and other Third World nations. Compared to economic growth, the idea of social development encompasses a broader range of factors. Only by collective action and mobilisation can progress be achieved. Many different kinds of collective activity, including ethnic solidarity, have significant implications for ethnic revival in contemporary society. When one ethnic group grew politically powerful, other ethnic groups gradually faded into the background, unable to participate in national affairs as equals. All of a sudden, people of different ethnic backgrounds start to see each other through the prism of political hostility. The inevitable result was the politicisation of every conceivable way. Social Many people use the word "ethnicity" for political reasons. Two things are necessary for an ethnic group to be considered cohesive: first, its members must come up with clear claims about what they stand for in comparison to other groups in society, and second, there must be some level of ideological and organisational mobilisation of group members to put these claims into action.

(Mostafazadeh et al., 2015) Researchers have long been interested in the two-way link and influence between culture and education. That is to say, on the one hand, a society's culture is the sum of its members' upbringing and the lessons passed down through the years. We must not overlook the significance of this approach in the education system, which is responsible for socialisation and the transmission of values and culture, due to the breadth of the concept of culture and the impression of culture and curriculum. An educational setting that prioritises diversity in terms of ethnicity, race, and culture is one example of how this approach rejects racism and other types of prejudice. The purpose of this paper is to examine multicultural education and its definition in light of theoretical research issues. We will also summarise relevant records and discussions. Based on our research findings, we can acknowledge that culture and all its benefits have been taken into account in certain countries in recent years.

(Salway et al., 2011) According to the study, researchers, commissioners, and members of the ISR/ethics committee would find these kinds of concise papers valuable. Our responders came up with a variety of ideas on the spot, such as checklists with links to supplementary resources, advice manuals linked to research bids from research commissioners, and bulleted lists to help researchers remember important details to include when preparing their

studies. More extensive assistance is required to boost competence and confidence in this area, according to our results. Researchers' input was valuable in suggesting ways to organise and display these resources in a way that would be used by researchers of varying experience levels and from a variety of fields and settings. Multiple responders brought up the idea of having a grading system so that researchers of varying skill levels may easily access the materials. People who are unfamiliar with the topic and would benefit from some background information on ethnic diversity should be provided with some introductory materials. However, seasoned researchers, particularly those who put in a lot of time in the area, should not feel patronised or as if instruction is useless to them.

(Gautam, 2013) Diasporic identity structures and settlement patterns have many similarities. As a foundation, the Indian ethnic network has allowed the Indian diaspora to take root via shared heritage. One way that communities come together is via sharing their cultural heritage and the values that it represents. The dimension of ties amongst diasporas is expanded upon after the community is unified. The situation becomes problematic when young people who have grown up in a European environment are unable to conceptualise India. The first generation's parents pass the identity of being Indian on to the second and third generations via cultural forms, rituals and festivals that they observe, and oral traditions. For them, India and Indians are only a concept. They lose track of their identity and become muddled. They continue to believe their parents' stories about their cultural background. The truth is that they have European pals and were born there. The media has made it known to them that India is seeing a rapid economic rise, similar to China.

(Frangipane, 2015) The paper begins by reviewing some basic information about cultural contact in prehistoric and protohistoric societies, how people in those times understood territory and its "borders" and "membership," and then it moves on to look at three cases of multiethnic societies in the Near East, namely Upper Mesopotamia and Southeast Anatolia, from the fifth, fourth, and early third millennia BCE, respectively. We address these instances as paradigmatic instances of various social models, interactions with foreign groups, degrees of integration, and development processes. The cases are analysed by looking at their socioeconomic context, archaeological evidence of "multiethnicity," the manner in which various components interacted, the level of cultural integration attained, and how these factors affected the societies' change dynamics and

development. The paper's goal is to demonstrate, by analysis and comparison of these cases, how various kinds of societies, the goals and motivations for the contact, and the level of integration attained were affected differently by interethnic contact.

(Jahan & Mahmud, 2013) The ideal of social cohesiveness is a society in which all members are prepared to pitch in and do their bit to accomplish the common good, based on a set of shared values and principles. From a socioeconomic vantage point, the research sought to investigate the inner workings of assimilation into mainstream culture of a particular immigrant population. Looking at social cohesion through the lens of qualitative research, a collection of indicators has been created drawing from several policy and academic literatures. This research aims to examine the social cohesiveness pattern of a certain immigrant group in relation to both mainstream culture and other immigrant societies; predominantly, it focusses on Bangladeshi immigrants in the Stockholm area.

(Alund, 1999) The article used Sweden as a case study to examine how ethnicity and identity function in today's multiethnic society. Despite its rich multiculturalism, Sweden is seeing a schism along ethnic lines. People often attribute cultural differences to social inequality. The majority of European nations appear to have undergone this transformation. Culture is often associated with racial and ethnic identities and is thought of as something unadulterated, as a "essence," or linked to a timeless and primordial ethnic foundation. Through this method, crucial

facets of the cultural dynamics within a mixed society go unnoticed. Emergence of composite identities and cultural crossovers are often overlooked. Emergence of distinct ethnic groups, cultural practices, and ways of life is a key component of multicultural societies. Issues of cultural essentialism are addressed, departing from some broad aspects of the prevailing narrative around ethnicity, its origins, and its connections to culture and multiculturalism.

(Ahmad et al., 2018) A teacher's role in fostering cultural diversity in the classroom and the importance of cross-ethnic friendships were both explored in detail in the essay. The school actively encourages and facilitates social interaction among its diverse student body, allowing pupils to meet and form friendships with classmates from the same and different ethnic backgrounds. However, pupils in schools where only one ethnic group attend have fewer opportunities to make friends from other backgrounds. There was a correlation between students' reports of having more friends from the same ethnic group and their attendance at schools with low levels of ethnic diversity. Lessening of prejudice, strengthening of shared identity, and intimacy among individuals were all results of good relationships amongst people of diverse ethnic backgrounds. The role of teachers as unifying forces in the classroom should include helping students develop the social skills that will allow them to communicate and work together with peers from a variety of cultural backgrounds and linguistic abilities, ultimately leading to greater understanding and acceptance of one another's ethnic backgrounds.

Table 3 Literature Review on Multi-Ethnic Individuals and Society

Author(s) & Year	Key Focus	Findings
Khushboo & Samy (2021)	Concept of multiculturalism	Multicultural societies emphasize inclusion, equal opportunity, and anti-discrimination. Shared values and cultural integration define their success.
Behera & Sahu (2009)	Ethnic groups in social development	Ethnic identity influences social development, with dominant groups often marginalizing minorities. Political mobilization is key to representation.
Mostafazadeh et al. (2015)	Education and cultural influence	Schools play a role in shaping cultural identity, rejecting discrimination, and promoting diversity in education.
Salway et al. (2011)	Research guidance on ethnic diversity	Researchers require structured support to address ethnic diversity, including checklists and graded materials for different expertise levels.
Gautam (2013)	Diaspora identity formation	Indian diaspora struggles with cultural identity, as younger generations often disconnect from their ancestral roots due to their new social environments.
Frangipane (2015)	Multi-ethnic societies in ancient times	Historical examples from Mesopotamia and Anatolia show varied levels of integration and impact of interethnic interactions on social change.
Jahan & Mahmud (2013)	Social cohesion among immigrants	Immigrant groups integrate at different levels, influenced by socioeconomic conditions and policy support in host countries.
Alund (1999)	Ethnicity and multiculturalism in Sweden	Ethnic divisions impact social structures, with cultural identity evolving through dynamic interactions rather than fixed origins.
Ahmad et al. (2018)	Cross-ethnic friendships in schools	Schools fostering multi-ethnic interactions reduce prejudice, strengthen unity, and promote positive relationships among students.

CONCLUSION

Different social, cultural, and political aspects influence how multiethnic individuals are seen in society. The degree of openness in their surroundings, the laws governing ethnic diversity, and the general perceptions of multiculturalism all have an impact on their experiences. According to the literatures, multiculturalism promotes social integration by increasing equitable opportunities and lowering prejudice. However, issues persist, particularly in nations where dominant ethnic groups marginalise minority communities. In order to guarantee representation and protect rights, political mobilisation and legal frameworks are essential.

Education is a critical component in the development of cultural identity and the promotion of diversity. Educational institutions that promote cross-ethnic relationships aid in diminishing prejudice and enhancing social cohesion. Media depiction and public discourse similarly affect the self-perception of multi-ethnic individuals and their societal perception. The way individuals from different backgrounds navigate their identity is heavily influenced by the role of government policies in defining citizenship, legal protections, and opportunities.

From both historical and modern points of view, cultural identity is not fixed but changes over time as people connect and adjust. Although cultural interactions have risen due to globalisation, discussions surrounding ethnicity and identity have also heated up. In the future, communities should work on making diversity an asset, not a liability, by fostering welcoming spaces for all people. Communities will become more cohesive and tolerant if policies that favour equitable representation, culturally sensitive education, and media that represents a range of identities are encouraged. Societies may improve social peace and create a more inclusive future by acknowledging and appreciating multi-ethnic identities.

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