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EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT IN DIVERSITY OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

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CALL FOR PAPERS

The purpose of this thematic section is to document experiences of educational assessment in contexts of social and cultural diversity, such as urban, urban-marginal, rural, among others, where schools are characterized by the coexistence of culturally, socially, and linguistically diverse students (indigenous, non-indigenous, students with disabilities, immigrants, among others), known as "minority groups" (Llorent-Bedmar, 2014; United Nations, 1966, 1992). It is precisely in contexts like these where educational assessment has been questioned for its limited cultural relevance, reflected in low academic and educational outcomes. Thus, assessment acts as a mechanism that contributes to homogenizing the population without considering its particular specificities (diverse populations are evaluated under the same content and using the same criteria and assessment tools), resulting in high levels of segregation.

Educational assessment has been primarily characterized as a coordinating and controlling mechanism of the educational process, both in the functioning and performance of educational institutions (school and higher education) and in the teaching and learning process at the classroom level (Sánchez-Amaya, 2013). In this sense, educational assessment is not neutral but coherent with the epistemological models underlying education public policies.

The research experiences sought to be promoted in this thematic section are expected to reflect this diversity in any of the mentioned contexts and their people, but at the same time, not limited only to these. Likewise, it is expected to highlight experiences of educational assessment that advance new approaches to address educational assessment from socio-culturally relevant perspectives. The aforementioned, considering that international precedents (Chouinard & Cram, 2020; Cousins, 2020; Mertens, 2018) demonstrate that teachers and researchers concerned with the ongoing development of more contextually relevant assessment point towards the development of: 1) more collaborative assessments that incorporate socio-cultural and linguistic dimensions of students (Chouinard et al., 2020); 2) expansion of axiological, ontological, epistemological, and methodological dimensions specific to the definition

of an assessment approach with territorial, cultural, political, social, and linguistic relevance (Chouinard & Cram, 2020); 3) assessments concerned with human rights in children and youth from marginalized groups, with disabilities (Mertens et al., 2007), and indigenous (Chilisa, 2020; Cross et al., 2000; Cram & Mertens, 2016).

For decades, culturally sensitive approaches and transformative assessment have been emerging as clear examples of the aforementioned. Essentially, they share the struggle to reverse the injustices caused by the political-economic structure with marginalized or minority groups and the invisibilization of their contexts. In this sense, in education, it translates into an assessment within the framework of social justice and human rights that questions the power structure of the educational system and proposes transformative pathways for teaching actions and assessment practices (criteria, procedures, methods), especially with indigenous students, students with disabilities, immigrants, among others, known as individuals from minority groups (Cram & Mertens, 2016).

Along a similar argumentative line, from the dialogical perspective of education, an assessment has been shaping that questions traditional practices and constructs, from a polyphony of voices, an open assessment of as many meanings, practices, and dynamics as people participate in such construction. Thus, assessment is not exhausted in a single meaning but in a multiplicity of them. Being assessment a community construction, nourished by a diversity of knowledge, life experiences, stories, allowing for a novel understanding of how to assess and what to assess (Ferrada et al., 2023).

Topics of interest in this special issue include, but are not limited to:

- Educational assessment in indigenous contexts
- Educational assessment with students with disabilities
- Educational assessment with immigrant students
- Educational assessment in rural contexts
- Local knowledge and practices in educational assessment
- Formative assessment: shifting from the traditional concept of "formative" to a comprehensive one
- Methods, dynamics, strategies of assessment for diverse contexts

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