

Social judgments about ethnic exclusion among Latin-American children and adolescents living in Spain

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Abstract

This study explores social judgments about ethnic exclusion from the perspective of ethnic minority children living in Spain. The study was conducted in Madrid with a sample of 72 Latin American children and adolescents between 6-17 years of age. We used a clinical semi-structured interview. Participants were presented with a picture depicting a Latin American child being excluded from a birthday party. They had to describe the exclusion situation and provide an evaluation of it (right or wrong). Also, they had to justify their judgment. Additionally, an unexpected finding was obtained: some children tended to blame the excluded child, attributing to him/her responsibility for his/her own exclusion.

Key words: social judgments, ethnic exclusion, ethnic minority children, Latin American children and adolescents, Spain.

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Introduction

Different political, economic and social conditions have been changing the demographic composition of the world and, in European countries, the results are often striking. Generally, the massive migration movements are towards the, so-called, 'developed' countries. The case of Spain is particularly striking. Over the last 10 years the number of registered immigrants in Spain has quadrupled mainly by immigrants from Latin American countries. Spain's relatively good development in different areas represents a good opportunity for some immigrant families to enhance their lives. This situation has brought some modifications in the way that social groups relate to each other. Issues such as prejudice, discrimination, and cultural stereotypes provoke conflicts in every day interactions.

Indeed, despite various social analyses having demonstrated the positive impact of immigrants in Spain, such as economic growth and the increase of the birth rate, the most recent sociological survey with adults (CIS, 2006) shows an evident increase in the percentage of participants, 19.3 % in 2005 and 40.1 % in 2006, who consider immigration as the second of the three most important problems that Spain currently faces.

However, what are the implications of leaving one's own country to live in a different one? The answer is complicated and depends on diverse factors. Among them, it is important to stress the fact that immigrants themselves need to mourn for all the things they left behind and, at the same time, they must adjust to a new life inserted in a 'new' society with economic, political, social, and psychological changes. It is well known that contemporary societies increasingly oppose the expression of discriminatory behaviours based on prejudices. Nevertheless, in spite of the development of social policies in several countries around the world, people keep holding negative stereotypes, discriminatory attitudes, and prejudices towards other social groups.

In order to focus on this matter a developmental study was carried out with Latin American children and adolescents who have been part of this recent migratory process in Spain. The general purpose of the present study was to investigate the development of their perception about social exclusion and discrimination. The specific interest was to explore the judgments and justifications on the part of Latin American children and adolescents regarding a social exclusion situation towards their own ethnic group, as well as their perceptions regarding their experiences of ethnic

discrimination in the time they have lived in Spain, the possible causes and the solutions to solve them¹.

For such a purpose, a semi-structured interview and a projective measure were designed, in the form of a picture showing a Latin American child being excluded from a birthday party. This study had two focal points. On the one hand, there were no developmental studies in Spain that deal with ethnic minority groups about ethnic exclusion on the basis of ethnic reasons. In view of the present social situation in Spain this study was of a great relevance. On the other hand, the projective measure used as a visual support to the verbal interview represents, in a way, an indirect measure that allows assessing children's judgments about intergroup relations through ambiguous yet familiar situations avoiding the difficulties implied in direct measures that assess prejudice (Aboud, 2003; Cameron, Alvarez, Ruble, & Fulgini, 2001; Margie, Killen, Sinno, & McGlothlin, 2005; McGlothlin, Killen, & Edmonds, 2005).

In order to explain the origin and nature of the processes that lead to the acquisition of beliefs and prejudiced attitudes, researchers in the area of developmental psychology have carried out diverse studies with children and adolescents mainly from two different perspectives.

On the one hand, the socio-cognitive approach developed by the Canadian Frances Aboud (1988) is possibly the one that better explains the development of intergroup attitudes in the early years (for a complete review see Aboud, 1988, 2005; Aboud & Amato, 2001; Aboud, 2005). Contrary to the traditional approaches, Aboud ascribes a more active role on the part of the infant regarding prejudice. According to her, prejudice in the early years is the result of the children's errors in processing information due to their reduced cognitive skills which induce the perception of people belonging to different ethnic groups as interchangeable individuals.

From this point of view, it is argued that young children, who are cognitively immature, show a tendency towards prejudice since they don't as yet have the capacity to process, in a simultaneous way, multiple classifications and to be aware of two or more different perspectives: they are not able to become less self-centered. During the early years, their perception of the world is basically bipolar so that they are not capable of processing at the same time the internal qualities of an individual and his/her bond to a social group. That is, they are not aware of either the similarities among individuals who belong to different groups or the differences among people within the same group. It is through their cognitive development that children can make social judgments in terms of unique interpersonal char-

acteristics rather than in terms of intergroup qualities. But even if this perspective stresses the importance of the young children's cognitive abilities, it also highlights the role of diverse social agents such as family, peers, and social environment in maintaining or reducing prejudice. According to Aboud, the biased attitude that children show to favour their own group and to neglect the others reaches its peak around the 5 and 7 years of age. It is from the latter age, along with the development of cognitive abilities, when this negative bias shows a systematic decrease that follows a developmental sequence in the form of an inverted U. Several studies that have been carried out in the last decades have provided support to these assumptions (Aboud & Doyle, 1993; Bigler & Liben, 1993; Clark, 1980; Enesco, I., Navarro, A., Gimenez, M. y Del Olmo, C., 1999; Hocevard & Dembo, 1980; Doyle, Beaudet & Aboud, 1988; Katz & Zalk, 1978; Semaj, 1980, among others).

Closely related to the socio-cognitive perspective, there are some other proposals such as the levels of development in children's understanding of the ethnicity model proposed by Quintana (1994, 1998). This model, based on Selman's (1980) theory of social perspective-taking ability, describes four stages that go from level 0) the integration of affective and perceptual understanding of ethnicity, level 1) literal understanding of ethnicity, level 2) social perspective of ethnicity, and level 3) ethnic-group consciousness and ethnic identity (1998, p. 29).

In contrast, some approaches closer to social psychology as the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, 1982), and Self-Categorization Theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) affirm that such bias is the result of affective and motivational factors related to social differentiation processes. They emphasize the importance of intergroup processes on the development of discrimination and prejudice (Benett, Barret, Karakozov, Kipiani, Lyons, Pavlenko & Riazanova, 2004; Nesdale, 2001, 2004; Nesdale & Fresser, 2001; Rutland, 1999, 2004; Verkuyten, 2001, 2005).

On the basis of Social Identity Theory, Nesdale (2001, 2004) developed his Social Identity Development theory that accentuates the importance of social identification and social context on the intergroup processes. Furthermore, this model distinguishes between bias for one's in-group (preference), and derogation for the out-groups (prejudice). According to this view, young children are unaware of ethnic differences among people. Later on, they start to become aware of ethnic categories (around 4-5 years of age) and show certain tendency to favour their own group. The

transition from this phase to that of ethnic prejudice, characterized by explicit expressions of negative attitudes towards the out-groups, is only possible when children are capable of identifying with the social groups which is around 6-7 years of age. However, it is possible that prejudice arises earlier if the social context instigates it. That is the case when a social group pronounces rules that express prejudice against another one (Pfeifer, Ruble, Bachean, Alvarez, Cameron, & Fullgini, 2007, p. 497).

Minority groups, ethnic identification and attitudes, and discrimination

According to numerous studies, the status that an ethnic group has in society is a very important variable in the socialization process. That is, belonging to the majority or minority groups determines people's beliefs, feelings, and attitudes towards the in- group and the out-groups.

The study of intergroup attitudes on the part of minority children has become of great interest for many decades. Diverse studies that have been conducted through years have shown that early in life, minority group children express significant differences in their ethnic attitudes and identification depending on the status of their in-group (Asher & Allen, 1969; Brand, Ruiz & Padilla, 1974; Cantor, 1972; Clark, Hocesvar & Dembo, 1980; Clark & Clark, 1947, Gomez, 2005; Jahoda, Thompson, & Bhatt, 1972; Milner, 1973; Vaughan, 1987; Porter, 1971). Thus, as indicated by some studies ethnic minority children perceive more negatively their in-group and attribute more positive adjectives to the majority group. Furthermore, while majority children at age 5 identify adequately with their in-group, it takes 2 or 3 more years to minority children to complete such identification process.

However, these findings, as stated by Lo Coco, Inguglia, & Pace (2005), can neither be generalized nor analyzed without taking into account the particular social and political factors that characterize the country of origin as well as the social and psychological relationships among majority and minority groups as the result of diverse social changes (p. 243). For that matter, it is not surprising that according to the results obtained for the last 15 years, 4-to 7-year old minority children show a more evident preference toward the peers of the in-group, while it is not until the age of 8 to 10 years

when they show a preference for both majority group and their own ethnic group peers (Aboud, 1987; Lo Coco, Pace, & Zapulla, 2000, 2002; Verkuyten, 1991, 1992; Verkuyten, Masson, & Effers, 1995).

What are the consequences when minority children and adolescents realize the differences between their own group and the majority group? Are they able to “become aware” of the disadvantages implied in their ethnic membership in relation to the majority group? Are they aware that they can face situations such as exclusion and discrimination?

Despite the study of social exclusion and discrimination with minority group an important component is of social group interaction, which has just recently received a good deal of attention from developmental psychologists.

In a recent paper, Christia Spears Brown & Rebecca Bigler (2005) indicate the importance of social discrimination and propose a developmental model of children’s perceptions of discriminations in which they declare that cognitive development (classification skills, social comparisons, moral reasoning), situational contexts (target of discrimination, knowledge of evaluator, relevance to stereotype, availability of a comparison, social support) and individual differences (social group membership, knowledge of discrimination, group attitudes, group identity, role of socialization) affect children’s perceptions of discrimination. This proposal, as the authors adduce, attempts to motivate the development of studies in this field so that it can be empirically assessed (p. 550).

Among the few developmental studies are those conducted in the 1970’s with African American kids from desegregated schools who claimed teasing as ethnic exclusion (Rosenberg, 1979). On the other hand, newly integrated children from the same ethnic group perceived discrimination from both their classmates and their peers (Patchen, 1982; Schofiel, 1980).

Nowadays, some researchers have found out that exclusion based on group membership seems to be the most recognizable form of exclusion. Thus, they have found that young children consider that excluding someone from an activity because of his/her ethnic group or gender is unfair (Theimer, Killen & Stangor, 2001). Later on, in elementary school most children are aware of ethnic discrimination and relate it to the unequal distribution of goods and social exclusion. However, some children avoid judging as negative the discriminatory behaviour of the perpetrator arguing that the victim was in part responsible. (Verkuyten, Kinket, & Van der Weilen, 1997). Towards the preadolescent years, minority group children

were found to (basically African Americans and Mexican Americans) have had experiences of verbal offences, racial slurs, exclusion from certain activities, and, in some cases, physical injuries (Simon, Murry, McLoyd, Lin, Kutrona, & Conger, 2002; Quintana, 1998). On the same line, research with preadolescents and adolescents has shown that they consider discrimination as a frequent experience in diverse scenarios such as public services and educational settings (Brown, 2006; Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Ronsenbloom & Way, 2004; Ruck & Wortley, 2002; Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003).

Aims and predictions

As it was previously mentioned, the main purpose of the present study was to investigate how 6 to 17 yr-old Latin American children and adolescents living in Spain judge a situation of ethnic exclusion of a member of their in-group. A group of Latin American participants was selected because among minority groups living in Spain, the citizens of Central and South America (Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, and Dominican Republic) are the most numerous ones. In addition, the Latin American group shares with the Spaniards a common cultural background that involves language, religion, and certain traditions.

Using a clinical semi-structured interview format, participants were presented with a picture showing a Latin American child being excluded from a birthday party. By presenting an indirect or projective measure, the intention was to find out if children and adolescents were able to spontaneously recognize the exclusion situation and if they considered it the result of membership to a minority group or to any other reason². Also, the goal was to know if they or any other person close to them had gone through a situation of exclusion or discrimination similar to the one presented in the picture during the time they had lived in Spain. In case they mentioned any of these situations they were asked to describe it and explain the possible reasons behind it. Lastly, the purpose was to explore what kind of solutions children and adolescents were able to provide in order to cease discrimination.

The general predictions, based principally on social cognitive perspective were:

- a) Most Latin American children and adolescents would be able to spontaneously recognize the situation of exclusion represented in the picture. However, there were expected developmental differences in the judgments about exclusion. For 6 to 9-year old participants, social exclusion would be more related to personal causes than to ethnic ones. Nevertheless, from 10 years on, group membership would be claimed as the main reason of exclusion
- b) Based on the cultural proximity between Latin America and Spain, it was predicted that the social conditions were more favourable to this group in comparison to other minority groups (Maghrebis, sub-Saharan, and Asians). As for that, it was expected that Latin American children and adolescents would not feel themselves excessively excluded or discriminated on the part of the Spanish majority group. Notwithstanding with the explicit explanation provided by the interviewer that the situation of exclusion was motivated by ethnic membership, developmental differences were expected in this respect after recognizing the situation of exclusion. Even if a slight increase in the arguments that referred to ethnicity was expected on the 6-9 year old participants, it would not be until the preadolescent stage that these would be mentioned by the majority of participants.
- c) According to some other findings in the social knowledge field, developmental differences were expected on the type of solutions to eradicate discrimination. On their part, young children would provide solutions from a more individualistic perspective while older children would express more social proposals.

Method

Participants

Participants were 72 students (an equal number of female and male) belonging to ethnic minority groups of Latin-American background, mainly from Ecuador (51.4%), Colombia (15.3%), and the Dominican Republic (12.5%). The mean (and SD) number of months they had been living in Spain was 44.97 (22.68). Our sample was drawn from public Primary and Secondary Schools in Madrid. Families of the children belonged to middle to-working SES. The sample was divided into three age groups: 6 to

9 (n=24), 10 to 13 (n=25), and 14 to 17 (n=23). The mean (and SD) ages of each age group were 92.17 (13.9), 141.08 (12.75), and 187.96 (12.9), respectively. All students were informed that the interviews were confidential, voluntary and anonymous. In order to include the participants in our study, parental permission forms were signed.

Measures

A semi-structured interview was administrated to all the participants. Additionally, a drawing (210 x 297 mm) representing a situation that described a specific social exclusion situation of a Latino American child (an invitation to a birthday party) was used as visual prompt.

Initially, the objective was to explore children and adolescents' spontaneous evaluations and judgments about ethnic exclusion. For that matter, they were presented with the drawing and they were asked to describe what was occurring in it.



Figure 1. Social exclusion drawing presented to girls. An identical drawing depicting boys was presented to them.

At a different point in the interview, the main goal was to look at the personal experiences of exclusion related to that of the drawing (“Have you or anyone you know gone through a situation like the one shown in the picture? How was it?”), possible causes (“What happened? Why do you think people do such a thing?”), as well as their proposed solutions to avoid this kind of exclusion.

Procedure

Two female Latin American research assistants interviewed all the children and adolescents who participated in the study. The interview was conducted in a quiet room within the school context. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed into verbal protocols. Each interview was analyzed and discussed by three members of the research team in order to determine categories of analysis in a ‘bottom-up’ fashion. The same researchers who conducted the interviews scored the data according to these categories using SPSSPC + statistical software. The examples presented here show a letter M in the case of boys and a letter F in the case of girls, followed by the years and months of age.

Results

The predictions were tested conducting repeated measures ANOVAs. Post-hoc comparisons were performed using Tukey’s HSD. Follow-up t-tests were used to analyze the interactions effects.

Evaluations and judgments about exclusion

As it was expected, 100% of the sample recognized in a spontaneous way the situation of exclusion depicted in the picture. However, as it was also assumed, despite the fact that the ethnic traits of the boy or girl in the picture were the most mentioned causes (51.4% of the total sample), not all the participants mentioned them as the only cause of exclusion. For example, there were found some judgments that referred “interpersonal con-

flicts" (37.1%), "absence of interpersonal relations" (32.7%), and a "negative attitude" towards the boy or girl subject of exclusion. (27.9 %). For a description see Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptions of judgments about exclusion.

Issue	Categories	Description
Judgments	Ethnicity	Refers to all those answers in which the cause of exclusion was attributed to physical or ethnic traits, appearance, national origin, and cultural characteristics (i.e. because she is a foreigner, from another country, from another culture, because she is kind of brownish)
	Absence of interpersonal relations	These answers justify exclusion due to the absence of any relationship between the birthday child and the boy/girl being excluded (because he had never seen him before, because he is an immigrant, I suppose he doesn't know him).
	Interpersonal conflicts	Here, exclusion is attributed to conflicts or a poor relationship between the characters depicted on the picture. In this category the existing relationship is usually seen as a negative one. That is, some attitudes of teasing and mocking as well as conflicts of interests are described (i.e. they don't get along very well; they have fought and hit each other).
	Negative attitudes towards the excluded	The excluded boy/ girl is held responsible for his/ her own exclusion due to his /her personal characteristics or previous actions (i.e. because he ate the other kid's candies, because he bothered the other kid first, because he likes to be a mean kid)

Additionally, as it was predicted some significant differences were found related to age (for the percentages of participants for each age group ascribed to each category see Figure 2).

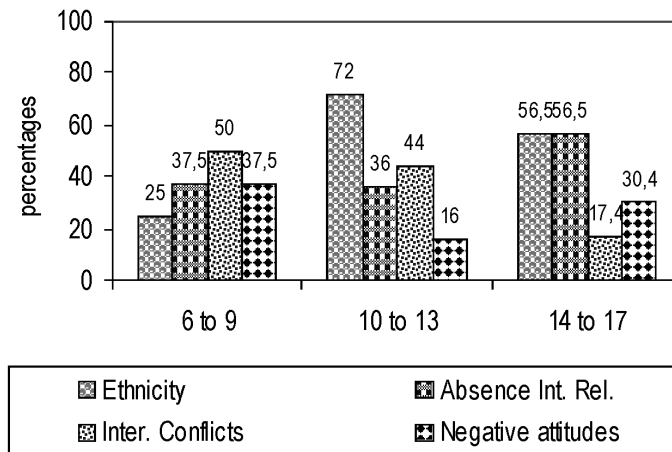


Figure 2. Age group related differences in judgements about exclusion.

The ANOVA 3 (Age groups: 6 to 9, 10 to 13, 14 to 17) X 4 (Judgments: “ethnic”, “absence of relations”, “conflict”, “negative attitudes to the excluded”) analysis detected an effect for age group in “ethnic” judgments $F(2, 69)=6.34, p < .003$, and “interpersonal conflict” $F(2, 69)=3.14, p < .049$ judgments. The DHS Tukey post hoc analyses revealed a difference between 6 to 9 age group ($M=.25, SD=.44$) and 10 to 13 age group ($M=.72, SD=.45$), $p < .002$ in the former, and a difference between 6 to 9 age group ($M=.50, SD=.51$) and 14 to 17 age group ($M=.17, SD=.38$), $p < .054$ in the latter. In other words, while “ethnic” arguments increase in the 6-9 and 10-13 years groups, those that refer “interpersonal conflicts” decrease constantly with age.

In the next section we can see some examples.

Ethnic Judgments

M 8;11 “(The kid) distributes birthday party invitations to the Spaniards only and not to the Ecuadorians. For example this child (the excluded one) could be Ecuadorian, Bolivian, or American. No matter where he’s from, he doesn’t get an invitation”.

F 13;0 “she doesn’t get a card...maybe because of her skin colour or because she’s from another country, from another, another race, because

she is not from here...she is different, she belongs to another culture or speaks different..."

Interpersonal Conflicts

F 6;3 [...] "...because they hate each other"

F 8;10 [...] "...seems like they don't get along very well because this kid has an angry face[...] Maybe they fought before or something"

M 14;2 [...] "...maybe she doesn't like them or something like that"

Although there are no statistically significant developmental differences in the remaining justifications, there are some interesting changes. For instance, we observed that arguments that refer to "absence of interpersonal relations" (M 7; 1 He never met him before. He doesn't give him one because he doesn't know him; M 16; 3 because she doesn't know her, because they're not friends, they don't go to the same class or school) tend to increase progressively with age. On the other hand, those judgments that adduce a "negative attitude towards the excluded kid" decrease between the 6-9 and 10-13 year old groups, and increase again in the group of 14-17 year olds.

F 6;3 [...] "...it is her fault because she destroyed the other kid's sand castle first"

M 14;4 [...] "...because he excludes himself, sometimes there are people who like to talk a lot and when they see him so quiet, he doesn't laugh or anything...it's like you don't feel like talking to him or something, approach him or ask him about anything, if he's always so serious and doesn't get closer or anything, he's goes by himself and all that..."

F 16;4 [...] "...because she likes to be alone"

Personal/others experiences of exclusion and nature of exclusion

Contrary to our expectations, results revealed that practically all Latin American children and adolescents expressed that they or someone they knew had gone through a situation of exclusion similar to that represented on the picture since their arrival to Spain (see Fig. 3).

Table 2. Descriptions of personal/others experiences of exclusion and nature of exclusion.

Issue	Categories	Description
	Personal/others experiences of exclusion	Responses that refers suffering or observing experiences of ethnic exclusion in Spain (identifying themselves with the situation on the picture).
Nature of exclusion	Verbal and/or physical aggression	Responses that refer having gone through situations of exclusion in the form of verbal or physical aggressions (i.e. they threw bottles to us because we are foreigners, go back to your country damn nigger, go back to your country)
	Social exclusion	This is the case of arguments that refer both implicit and explicit situations of exclusion or rejection towards the own ethnic group (i.e. they didn't want to be with him because he's from Ecuador, I don't have any friends...because I'm from Ecuador)

After analyzing their responses to determine the nature of the exclusion they had suffered, results revealed two kinds of tendencies. On the one hand, exclusion of a “social” nature was mentioned by 61.1% of the total sample, and, on the other hand, that exclusion related to “physical or verbal aggression” that was mentioned by 39.9% of the participants.

Social judgments about ethnic exclusion

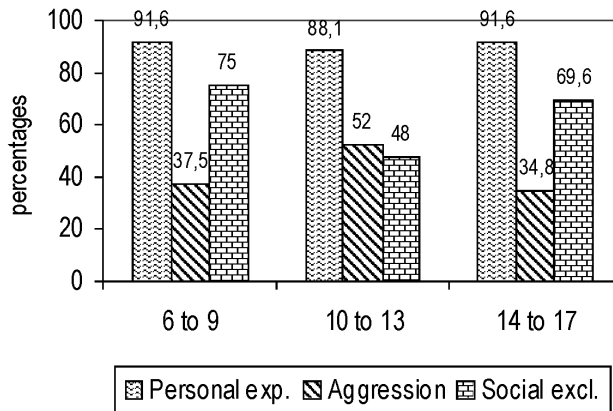


Figure 3. Age group related differences in personal and others experiences and nature of exclusion.

Despite the fact that there were no statistically significant developmental differences in any of the arguments, it is interesting to examine some examples provided by boys and girls of diverse ages.

“Social” Exclusion

F 8;5 “...they do that because they don’t want me to have friends...because I’m from Ecuador...Yes, I think they’re jealous of my handwriting because I always get good grades”

M 10;5 “They didn’t want to be with him, they didn’t even want to play or talk to him, they didn’t even want to be with him...He was from Ecuador”

F 13;0 “When I got here, the other kids didn’t want to talk to me or anything...they said I was black”

“Physical or verbal” Exclusion

F 8;7 “...last year... they were saying bad words about me and my friend...and later on they hit my friend on the leg...they messed with me first and then with my friend...They called us whores...son of a b...”

F 12;5 “...they say get out of my country or get out of here or who knows what, go back to your country, you have invaded us or something like that, then I try to stay cool but the brat goes on, and on, and on say-

ing worse things each time and I don't like that...What can I say? This is not really her country and she doesn't have to say that, nobody owns the country, maybe the king owns it, but nobody owns the whole world so you can't say that this is your country, I try to reason with her but then she starts yelling at me".

Table 3. Descriptions of causes of exclusion.

Issue	Categories	Description
Causes	Ethnicity	Exclusion is attributed to ethnic reasons. It is generally related to negative stereotypes that the majority group holds towards Latin Americans and their status of foreigners (i.e. since I'm from another country, I could start a fight in their house, because it is very hard for elder people to accept foreigners).
	Personal and cultural differentiations	Exclusion is originated by personal and cultural differences between majority and minority groups but not based on ethnic reasons, but on appearance, dress style, and behaviour (i.e. ...because we have or own way different to theirs...in the way we speak, the music, religion, in the way we dress)
	No interaction or conflict	It refers to the absence of interaction between the kids (being the new kid, be in different classes, don't know each other) and/or conflicts and disputes related to their age (they always chose those that they already know).

Causes of exclusion

It is important to recall that the interest was not only to explore the concrete exclusion experiences suffered by Latin American children and adolescents as well as their nature, but moreover to know the causes of such discrimination.

Among the main causes that were stated by the children and adolescents, as an attempt to explain why they or someone they knew had been excluded (see Table 3), was mainly the ethnicity of the person subject to exclusion (68.3%). In addition, we also observed responses that indicated

“personal and cultural differences” as the main cause of exclusion (52.9%) and causes attributed to “absence of relationship or the pre-existence of a conflict” among the characters depicted in the drawing (30.7%).

To test our predictions regarding developmental differences we conducted 3 (Age groups: 6 to 9, 10 to 13, 14 to 17) X 3 (Causes: “ethnicity”, “personal and cultural differences”, “no contact or conflict”) ANOVAs with repeated measures. The analysis detected an effect for age group in “ethnicity” $F(2, 69)=8.02, p<.001$, and “cultural and personal differences” $F(2, 69)=4.91, p<.01$. The DHS Tukey post hoc analyses in “ethnicity” causes showed developmental differences between 6 to 9 age group ($M = .42, SD=.50$) and 10 to 13 age group ($M=.72, SD=.45$), $p<.041$, and a difference between 6 to 9 age group ($M = .42, SD=.50$) and 14 to 17 age group ($M = .91, SD=.28$), $p<.001$. This revealed that the arguments related to ethnicity that explain exclusion tend to increase with age.

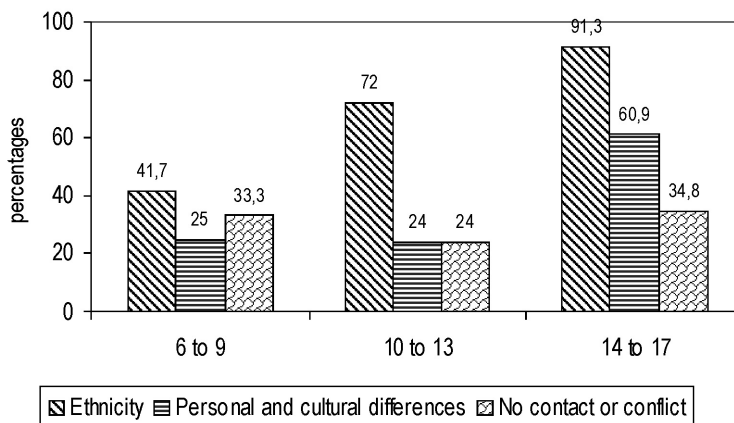


Figure 4. Age group related differences in causes of exclusion.

Conversely, DHS Tukey post hoc analyses in “cultural and personal differences” revealed a difference between 6 to 9 age group ($M = .25, SD=.44$) and 14 to 17 age group ($M = .61, SD=.49$), $p<.025$, and a difference between 10 to 13 age group ($M = .24, SD=.43$) and 14 to 17 age group ($M = .61, SD=.49$), $p<.019$.

Ethnicity

M 12;11 "...because they don't like so many immigrants"

F 12;4 "[...] because there are a lot of people who just came here to steal or sell drugs, and because of them we all have to pay the same price, that's why some people think we are all the same just because we come from the same place."

Personal and cultural differentiations

M 8;9 "[...] she doesn't like my face...weird...weird means ugly, a bit ugly. I think my face is a little ugly."

M 15;7 "because the way we are is different from theirs...the way we speak, they speak in a different way...In the kind of music they listen to".

Table 4. Descriptions of solutions to exclusion.

Issue	Categories	Description
Solutions	Out-group individual actions	These responses allude the active participation of the majority group so a positive change towards the minority group will take place (i.e. the Spaniards should try to change the way they act with the foreigners; they should be more tolerant)
	In-group individual actions	It refers specific actions on the part of the minority group so the majority group would change its stereotypes and negative prejudices towards the former (i.e. we shouldn't say bad words so they can forgive us...try to understand them)
	Social actions	Includes community interventions in social change processes based on principles of equality (i.e. the school should include a course of equality, put like a sign to remind us that we are all equal, educate for equality).

Solutions to exclusion

The type of actions mentioned by Latin American children in order to solve exclusion situations followed diverse directions. Some declared the

need for involving the majority group (48.2%), those that refer to their own group mobilization (37.7%), and those that refer the intervention of the community (14.1%) (see Table 4).

The ANOVA 3 (Age groups: 6 to 9, 10 to 13, 14 to 17) X 3 (Solutions: "out-group individual actions", "in-group individual actions", "social actions") analysis detected an effect for age group in "out-group individual actions" $F(2, 69)=5.14, p<.008$, and "in-group individual actions" $F(2, 69)=4.18, p<.019$. The DHS Tukey post hoc analyses in "out-group individual actions" solutions exposed developmental differences between 6 to 9 age group ($M=.29, SD=.46$) and 10 to 13 age group ($M=.72, SD=.45$), $p<.007$.

The DHS Tukey post hoc analyses in "in-group individual actions" revealed developmental differences between 6 to 9 age group ($M=.58, SD=.50$) and 10 to 13 age group ($M=.20, SD=.40$), $p<.015$.

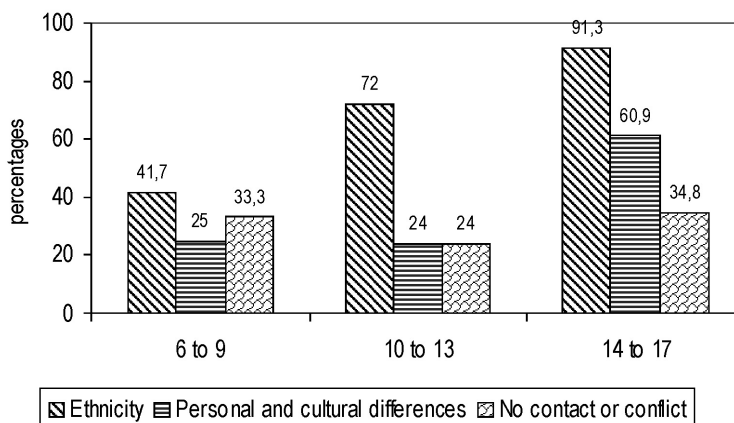


Figure 5. Age group related differences in solutions towards exclusion.

Out-group individual actions

F 10;7 "the parents of the Spanish kids who do such a thing (to exclude) should tell them that your country of origin is not important, what really matters is the way you are and not the place where you come from"

In-group individual actions

F 8;10 “ (We should) help the Spanish kids, bring them little presents so they can wish to be your friends”

F 17;0 “Foreigners should be more open, they should not stay with their own group or gang only; honestly, there are more and more gangs of foreigners each time”.

Social Actions

M 16;5 “ (They) should educate children while they are still little, because if they are educated in a way that can understand that we all are equal....that everyone, regardless of their origin or their skin colour is equal...in other words, if everyone was able to change its (electronic) chip, there will be no racism or anything like that.”

Discussion

The general purpose of the present study was to examine the development of minority children and adolescents’ judgments and justifications about social exclusion and discrimination.

As it was previously mentioned, developmental studies related to social exclusion and discrimination with minority groups are very limited. For that matter, the present study offers a very significant alternative since to the present moment there was no research in Spain associated to these aspects and, particularly, oriented in studying children and adolescents of Latin American background. As we initially stated, Spain, far from being considered as a culturally interethnic country like some other European nations (i.e. France, Holland, and United Kingdom, among others), has just in the last 15 years begun to host immigrants from all around the world. This situation has provoked the growth of the foreign population from 2.28% in the year 2000 to near 10% nowadays. In addition, the Latin American population represents the largest minority group among those that have settled in Spain. Therefore, this study has a very important relevance.

In addition to the interest in studying Latin American people living in Spain, the type of measure used in this study, the semi-structured inter-

view format as well as the drawing used, have proven to be reliable tools that have allowed us to explore aspects related to ethnic exclusion which are closer to the Latin American children's social reality. These topics are being deeply debated among notable researchers at the present moment. (Aboud, 2003; Cameron, Alvarez, Ruble, & Fulgini, 2001; Margie, Killen, Sinno, & McGlothlin, 2005; McGlothlin, Killen, & Edmonds, 2005, among others).

Overall, the findings support the general predictions. As the results have demonstrated, the first prediction was confirmed. All the participants have been capable of spontaneously recognizing the exclusion situation depicted in the picture. These results justify those researchers who have demonstrated how young minority group children are competent in differentiating their ethnic attitudes (Asher & Allen, 1969; Brand, Ruiz & Padilla, 1974; Cantor, 1972; Clark, Hocevar & Dembo, 1980; Clark & Clark, 1947, Gomez, 2005; Jahoda, Thompson, & Bhatt, 1972; Milner, 1973; Vaughan, 1987; Porter, 1971). Furthermore, as it was claimed, there were developmental differences in children and adolescents' arguments to justify the exclusion depicted in the drawing. It was observed how in the 6-9-year old group just a few participants indicated physical traits or country of origin of the person being excluded as the main reason for such exclusion. At this stage, the judgments are focused around interpersonal situations. That is, dual situations that don't have anything to do with the origin of the person subject of exclusion. For example, according to this perspective, exclusion is either the result of the absence of interpersonal relations (they're not friends because they don't know each other) or the result of a interpersonal conflict between the characters (he didn't give him an invitation because he hates him, he doesn't like him). Some very interesting types of judgments, not only because of their content but also from a developmental perspective, were those that we have called "negative attitudes toward the excluded". With respect to these judgments Latin American children tend to blame the excluded child for his own exclusion. That is, the excluded must have done something wrong that justifies why he is not being invited to the party. For instance, in the case of this group of age (6-9 year olds) children used arguments such as [She is not being invited because] "she eats all the candies", [...] "she is poor", "she is dumb and ugly". Some children even made up a story saying something like "She is going to give her an invitation", or "...she really wants to invite her, but she doesn't have any invitations left, she doesn't have invitations anymore". These responses coincide with those found in some other studies such as

Helm's (1995) and Phinney's (1990) in which it seems that children are passively developing stereotypes as well as negative thoughts and attitudes towards their own minority group. Thus, for example, they try to justify racist events in such a way that ethnic factors are not involved or that discriminatory attitudes are the result of simple misunderstandings. On the other hand, negative attitudes towards the excluded on the part of Latin American preadolescents and adolescents is reasonably different to those revealed by young children because they imply, to certain extent, self-exclusion behaviours (he doesn't want to belong, he is by himself, he doesn't talk to anyone...it's like you don't want to talk to him). These kind of answers could be seen as negative attitudes towards the own group or, as Verkuyten et al. (1997) indicate, it could be that the respondents omit the exclusion situation by blaming the excluded himself (p. 109).

As it was argued, the findings of the present study demonstrated that from 10 years of age and on, most Latin American children and adolescents judge the exclusion situation more as the result of an inter-ethnic circumstance than a personal one. Indeed, 72% of preadolescents from the 10-13year old group argues ethnic motives as the reason for exclusion (her skin colour is different, he is from another country, maybe he is from Ecuador, etc.). The adolescents group mentioned in the same proportion (56.5%) the category "ethnicity" and the one related with the "absence of interpersonal relations". Contrary to younger participants, when adolescents argue the absence of interpersonal relations, they clearly express that they don't have any relationship because they belong to different ethnic groups. For that reason, ethnic justifications are present in this form of answers also (because he is an immigrant, I guess [he rejects him] because he doesn't know him and [he] comes from a different country). The nature of this kind of responses on the part of adolescents is interesting because illustrate the tendency of Latin American adolescents to put distance between themselves and the majority group. Quintana (1988) describes this in his model as level 3 as an ethnic-group consciousness which is a second form of cognitive development. According to Quintana, this takes place during the adolescent years and involves the ability to assume a group perspective (Selman, 1980). That is, adolescents tend to delimitate in-group/out-group relationship due to their capacity to assume a group perspective. Therefore, the group is perceived as a social whole with a very strong bonding that usually results in the assumption of group rules as the effect of peer pressure. Consequently, adolescents tend to exaggerate the amount of consistency and affinities within groups and exag-

gerate the level of difference between in-group and out-group members (Quintana, 1998, p. 40).

The second prediction claimed that Latin American children and adolescents would not feel themselves excessively discriminated on the part of the Spanish group. The results obtained were contrary to our expectations. It's been surprising the fact that virtually all Latin American children and adolescents mentioned that either they or someone they knew had been victims of exclusion and/or discrimination during the time they had lived in Spain. This finding is extremely interesting because, as Brown and Bigler (2005) have recently indicated, there are no developmental studies that explore how and when children perceive themselves and the others as targets of discrimination (p. 533). As was previously mentioned, because of the cultural proximity between Spaniards and Latin Americans, we did not expect such a high level of exclusion and discrimination experience. Also, a significant number of participants referred to having suffered some kind of physical or verbal aggression (41.4%), in addition to more subtle or hidden ways of discrimination (they put me down, they don't talk to me) (61.1%). The discrimination contexts mentioned by the participants are various (at school, in the street, in the neighbourhood, etc.). For their part, the "aggressors" always belonged to the out-group, from adults to their peers. Similar results have been reported by some authors (Simon, Murry, McLoyd, Lin, Kutrona, & Conger, 2002; Quintana, 1998). Moreover, in a recent research with Spanish and Latin American children (Enesco, Navarro, Paradela, & Guerrero, 2005) about stereotypes and beliefs about different ethnic groups living in Spain, we found, as expected, that Latin American children attributed a highly positive perception of Spaniards and a rather negative perception of their in-group. But we did not expect Spanish children to attribute a rather negative perception to the Latin Americans (after the Gypsies).

As it was supposed, ethnic judgments were the most mentioned ones since during the interview explicitly present was the argument that the exclusion situation depicted on the picture was motivated by ethnic reasons. However, as we also hypothesized, these types of arguments were scarcely present in the 6-9 group of age, even if a small increase in their appearance was observed. In fact, despite the fact that in different moments of the interview it was obvious that the presence of exclusion was due to ethnic reasons, children from the 6-9 year old group showed certain amount of resistance to consider the exclusion situation as being the result of a conflict between ethnically different and subordinated groups.

They kept attributing the exclusion situation to interpersonal relationships of a dichotomy character. On the other hand, pre and adolescents made clearly explicit that their own experiences of discrimination were generally encouraged by their membership in a minority group different from the majority one. Besides the fact that the preadolescent years mark the beginning of ethnic awareness, as pointed out by Quintana (1998), it is from these years onward when an evident knowledge of the stereotypes towards the own group appears, ([The others] think that we are thieves, that we are mean, drug dealers). It is here where they start to use terms such as “racist”, “immigrant”, “foreigner”. In addition to ethnic membership, cultural and personal differences are also mentioned as causes of their own discrimination experiences (because we speak different...the music we listen to is different). Overall, these findings are in accordance to those of the socio-cognitive perspective because both demonstrate that it is not until preadolescence when children, due to their enhanced cognitive abilities, are capable of making social judgments in terms of intergroup attributes (Aboud, 1988). Furthermore, our results support previous research which has found that children belonging to minority groups perceive discrimination more than those of majority groups (Romero & Roberts, 1998; Ruck & Wortley, 2002; Verkuyten & Thies, 2001, among others).

The third prediction proposed was related to the developmental trends in connection to the solutions given by the Latin American children and adolescents about ethnic exclusion. The findings supported this assumption. As it was demonstrated, children from the 6-9 age group provided solutions that were focused on individual actions but generally on the part of the minority group members (we shouldn't say bad words, we should understand them [the Spaniards]). Once again, the idea of blaming or imputing the excluded for his/her exclusion, that was previously mentioned, reappears. In this sense, the solution to be accepted or welcomed depends on the excluded himself/herself. However, as children grow up, the responsibility to solve the discrimination problem is attributed to the out-group. Explicitly expressed is the urgent need to fight racist behaviours or to increase tolerance particularly during the teenage years. At the same time, the out-group efforts would be enhanced by specific actions on the part of the diverse social sectors represented in the community.

In summary, the general findings of the present study are in agreement with the socio-cognitive approach (Aboud, 1988, 2002, 2005; Quintana, 1998). For example, this research has demonstrated that younger children are still not aware of the differences among ethnic groups, they don't see

inter-group conflicts, so that, their solutions are, as well as their judgments and causes, individualized. From this perspective relationships are built among people and not among groups. For their part, pre adolescents and adolescents seemed to have developed the capacity understand the ethnic discrimination as a result of conflicts among groups as well as the capacity to use social comparison information in their judgments. However, we cannot limit the development of social judgments about social exclusion and discrimination for ethnic reasons to cognitive factors only. It is obvious that, as some researchers have recently stated (Aboud, 2005, Brown & Bigler, 2005; Pillen & McKown, 2005), some other factors such as affective or contextual ones cannot be left out of any attempt to explain how social judgments develop. In regards to social context, some studies that have been developed on the basis of social identity developmental theory (Nesdale, 2001, 2004), are contributing with interesting data that is helping us to better understand intergroup relations between majority and minority groups.

Future studies will have to deepen on the connections among the factors previously mentioned. In this sense, the present social circumstances in Spain provide the proper conditions for such studies.

Lastly, it has been mentioned that a clear impact of massive migrations, and because of that a greater ethnic diversity in some societies, is that there are schools which are not free of intergroup tensions and conflicts on the part of minority and majority group members. It is not in vain that policy makers are increasingly interested in promoting socio-educational policies that help combat prejudiced and discriminatory behaviours and, at the same time, can foster the acquisition of skills related to social justice and tolerance. Thus, for instance, just recently, the Council of Europe by means of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance has published a General Policy Recommendation on combating racism and racial discrimination in and through school education (2007). In the case of Spain, the Act of Education (LOE 2/2006) sets among its principal objectives for compulsory primary and secondary education, the need to prepare students for an active role in citizenship and the respect for Human Rights, emphasizing the development of competences such as accepting cultural differences and conflict resolution, among others.

Integrating research, theory, and practice on inter-group relation is an increasing concern that has of late been expressed by some authors (Cameron & Rutland, 2006; Killen, McKnow, 2005; Nagda, Tropp, Paluck, 2006; Tropp & Bianchi, 2006, among others). Collaborative work between

scholarly and applied approaches should allow us to promote social inclusion as a mean to better understand and reduce inter-group prejudice.

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Endnotes

1. This study is part of some other research projects that have been presented previously to obtain the diploma of research sufficiency skills as the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. Such projects were carried out by Lila Gómez (2005) and Sheila Troncoso (2006) and directed by the former. Data was recruited in 2003 and 2004. The measures used were created by Lila Gómez.

2. After the spontaneous recognition of the exclusion situation shown on the picture, a story about an imaginary birthday party was told to the participants. This story explicitly described a situation where a kid was being left out a dirthday party for ethnic reasons. After this, we kept deeply exploring the participans' judgments and justifications provided. If a child didn't mention an argument based on ethnic reason, the interviewer explicitly provided a suggesion on thin line.

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