

Social Stratification in Dubai and Its Effects on Higher Education

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Abstract : Emirati students studying at the University of the Emirates, one of three major public institutions of higher learning in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), have a wide demographic of faculty members teaching them an equally wide variety of courses. These faculty members bring with them their own cultural assumptions, methods, expectations, educational practices and use of language. The history of multiculturalism in the UAE coupled with the contemporary multiculturalism that exists in higher education Dubai create intriguing phenomena within the classroom. This study seeks to delve into students' and faculty members' perceptions of the social stratification that exist in this context. Data were collected via semi-structured interviews with both and analyzed from an interpretive perspective. Findings suggest the social stratification with is deeply-seeded in the multicultural history of the region and country are reflected in the everyday interworkings of education in modern day Dubai. The relevance of this research lies in that these findings can provide valuable insights into not only the attitudes and perceptions of these Emirati students might also be applicable to any of those student populations may exist.

Keywords : social stratification, intercultural competence, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

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