COGNITIVE ACTIVISM: THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND IMPLEMENTATION PERSPECTIVES IN PRESCHOOL AGE

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Abstract: *The article aims to analyze the phenomenon of cognitive activism as an essential dimension of personality development in preschool-aged children. The work is not exhaustive; rather, it seeks to highlight those aspects of major interest that define the specific process of forming cognitive activism during the early stages of human development. The essence of the scientific approach is defined through the notion of activism/cognitive activism, interpreted from both philosophical and psycho-pedagogical perspectives, as an approach updated in relation to contemporary social transformations and the educational demands of the developing generation. The theoretical exploration of the concept of cognitive activism provides the possibility of outlining analytical directions that integrate the essential characteristics of older preschool age. Based on a synthesis of existing research, the main factors of cognitive activism, as well as its stages of formation—which describe the gradual development of cognitive manifestations in children—are examined. At the same time, the article emphasizes that the theoretical grounding of the concept of cognitive activism can provide valuable reference points for understanding and fostering active cognitive behavior in preschool-aged children.*

Keywords: *activism; cognitive activism; activity; cognitive need; self-regulation; independence; curiosity; interest zone of proximal development.*

The relevance and importance of the addressed issue

Contemporary society increasingly demands the formation of autonomous and creative personalities capable of self-actualization through active inquiry into reality and the development of original strategies for action. The dynamics of socio-cultural and scientific transformations—both globally and nationally, including within the

Republic of Moldova—require a reevaluation of the role that research competencies play in the integral development of the individual.
From this perspective, cognitive activism emerges as a complex educational construct with essential formative value, aimed at integrating current educational requirements into a flexible system adapted to modern social and epistemological dynamics. Within preschool education, this construct gains particular importance as it supports processes of self-development and personal initiative. Investigative activities adapted to children's age-specific characteristics serve as privileged tools for stimulating epistemic curiosity and active cognitive engagement.
Thus, the formation of cognitive activism aligns organically with the goals of early education and corresponds with the *Learning and Development Standards for Children from Birth to Seven Years*, which emphasize experimentation, observation, and the formulation of generalizations in the process of discovering the world (Ministerul Educației, Culturii și Cercetării al Republicii Moldova [MECC], 2019).
On this basis, the importance of a theoretical and applied approach centered on developing cognitive activism in older preschool children becomes evident, serving as a key reference point for designing and implementing effective educational interventions. The complexity of this challenge calls for a well-founded and relevant response. Consequently, the proposed research direction aims to identify and capitalize on new opportunities to strengthen the educational system, emphasizing the formation of autonomous and creative personalities. Analyzing the dimensions of cognitive activism also facilitates a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which preschool children develop epistemic curiosity, cognitive initiative, and self-regulation within learning situations.

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Conceptual delimitations: General characteristics of cognitive activism

Before outlining some theoretical benchmarks that support the process of developing cognitive activism in children aged 6–7, it is necessary to analyze the conceptual genesis of the notion of "cognitive activism." This involves examining the semantic content of the terms that compose it—"activism" and "cognitive"—as well as clarifying the semantic and functional relationships among related concepts, such as "activity" and "cognitive interest."

In general terms, the notion of "activism" denotes a broad scientific concept encompassing a variety of phenomena: from the energetic activism of inanimate nature and the vital functions of simple organisms to complex forms of movement and transformation of matter. Specialized literature offers multiple definitions of activism and highlights the diversity of its manifestations, including social, physical, intellectual, and communicative dimensions.

The term *activism* derives from the Latin "activus"—meaning "active"—and represents "the essential quality of a living organism, manifested through the intentional alteration of the state of the organism and of the elements of the environment with which it

interacts, determined by the organism's needs" (*Etymonline Etymological Dictionary*, n.d.). In the *Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language (DEX)*, activism is defined as a moral attitude that emphasizes the needs of life and action more than theoretical principles.

From a theoretical perspective, activism has a general scientific character, encompassing a wide range of phenomena—from the energetic activism of inanimate nature and the life activism of simple organisms to the highest forms of motion of matter. In scientific works, several definitions and descriptions of activism can be found, referring to various dimensions (social, physical, intellectual, communicative, etc.). Furthermore, the concept of activism is used in psychology and related sciences to denote three different phenomena:

1. A specific activity of an individual. In Romance and Anglo-Germanic languages, where for the two Russian terms "activism" and "activity" there exists only one equivalent (e.g., in English—activity).
2. A state opposed to passivity, which does not necessarily imply real activity but may instead suggest readiness for action—a state akin to alertness or wakefulness.
3. A state of initiative, as opposed to reactivity: in this case, it indicates that the subject acts on their own initiative, driven by internal conviction, and not reactively, like a machine without awareness (Lisina, 1997, pp. 227–259).

Therefore, activism can be understood as activity, readiness for activity, and initiative. Although these dimensions have distinct characteristics, they also complement each other and form a common core, defined as the internal dynamism of the active being. The unifying element among these forms is the presence and mobilization of energy, manifested through various modes of engagement and involvement.

In psychology, the term activism is often used without further qualification, being associated with the central energetic potential that sustains action-oriented behaviors. In this context, expressions such as *intellectual energy* are synonymous with the concept of activism, emphasizing the internal force that drives initiative and cognitive engagement (Spearman, 1970, p. 96).

From a biological perspective, activism is linked to the behavior of living systems. Numerous physiological studies have demonstrated the existence of biological activism across all forms of life and have highlighted essential differences between its manifestations in animals and humans. The presence of biological activism in living systems has been confirmed by multiple studies in physiology, which revealed clear

distinctions between animal and human activism. In animals, reflexes are reduced to immediate reactions to environmental changes, whereas in humans, reflexes acquire an evolutionary character, transforming into cognitive curiosity—an impulse that generates science and constantly directs the individual toward the exploration of the surrounding world (Pavlov, 1949, pp. 78–79).

Moreover, activism represents a fundamental and universal trait of organisms and living systems, manifested through their ability to react, explore, and actively adapt to their environment. This manifestation goes beyond mere environmental reactivity and involves a complex capacity for regulation, exploration, and continuous adjustment, allowing the individual to interact actively and effectively with the world around them. In this sense, activism can be understood as an integrated form of biological initiative, which underlies adaptive behaviors and, in humans, extends to cognitive and social forms of engagement (Bernstein, 1990, p. 86).

Studies conducted by Panksepp and Biven (2012) demonstrate that curiosity, initiative, and active involvement are supported by complex neural mechanisms, revealing the correlation between the organism's biological functions and its capacity to exhibit forms of cognitive activism. Thus, the biological approach provides a solid explanatory framework for understanding activism as an integrated phenomenon connecting biology, motivation, and exploratory behavior. Consequently, this approach highlights that the organism's active manifestations originate in neurophysiological mechanisms that support adaptation, exploration, and self-regulation. This perspective argues for the understanding of activism as an integrative phenomenon of life, in which biological, cognitive, and motivational dimensions are interdependent, determining the human being's capacity for conscious involvement in the transformation of the environment.

In most Western scientific studies, the term *activism* is used synonymously with *activity*, a fact that can be explained by linguistic characteristics of languages such as English and French, where both concepts are expressed by the same lexical unit and considered synonymous (Murray, 1962, pp. 434–464). Nevertheless, there are studies that analyze subjective activism as a distinct process. For instance, in the works of K. Lewin, human activism is interpreted as a dynamic relationship between personal qualities and environmental characteristics. The environment is conceived as an "external field" for the application of human energy, without being the absolute determinant of behavior, while personality represents an "internal field" defined by a system of contradictions. Together, these form a "dynamic unity" in which behavior may be either reactive, as a

response to external stimuli, or voluntary, guided by internal needs (Lewin, 1935, p. 72).

Therefore, the correlation between "activism" and "activity" in the specialized literature reflects not only terminological differences but also theoretical nuances, as both concepts designate complementary dimensions of active human behavior.

In philosophy, activism has been interpreted as an expression of the dynamic principle of existence, defining reality's capacity for self-transformation and its ability to influence other entities. In classical German philosophy, Immanuel Kant associated activism with the autonomy of practical reason, through which the individual acts according to their own moral law (Kant, 2020, p. 46). Other philosophers expanded the notion, arguing that the Self is self-generated through action, thus granting activism an ontological dimension, where the act of being coincides with the act of acting (Rosen, 1988, pp. 140–155). In turn, G. W. F. Hegel extended the principle of activism to the sphere of the "universal spirit," conceiving reality as a dialectical process of becoming, in which contradictions are resolved through the internal movement of the idea (Hegel, 1966, p. 108).

Another perspective considers that activism is not limited to the individual's mere participation or involvement but represents the expression of the energy and effort necessary for transforming reality—whether in the social or material realm. From this viewpoint, the change and development of individuals and society occur through active involvement, which combines energetic effort with reflection upon reality. Thus, activism may be defined as an action (or set of actions) of an entity or phenomenon, driven by internal motives. It is not merely a form of movement (change, action), but rather self-movement. At the same time, activism can be correctly understood only in relation to another phenomenon of reality—passivity, whose essential characteristic is external determination. The states of activism and passivity coexist and are in a relationship of interdependence and complementarity. Hence, natural processes involve two sides: the active one (based on action) and the passive one (Engels, 1961, pp. 55–58).

From this standpoint, philosopher Jürgen Habermas expands the traditional meaning of activism, situating it within the sphere of communicative action, through which interactions among individuals become a means of rational transformation of society. In this perspective, activism implies discursive and cooperative participation of individuals in establishing social consensus based on reason, understanding, and shared responsibility. Thus, Habermas confers

upon activism an ethical and epistemological dimension, whereby human action gains meaning within the context of dialogue and collective responsibility toward social transformation (Habermas, 1981, p. 206).

Therefore, the generalization of philosophical research shows that activism represents an attitude of the personality directed toward the conscious transformation of the environment and active involvement in shaping social reality. It is a form of action in which freedom, reason, and experience manifest through deliberate intervention upon the world, serving both individual self-realization and the common good. Consequently, activism acquires ethical, dialogical, and cooperative dimensions, becoming a means of rational transformation of the social environment and an expression of the personality's creative potential.

From a psychological perspective (Maslow, Lewin, Dewey, Izard, Vygotsky, Leontiev, Rubinstein, Petrovsky, etc.), the concept of activism is often associated by researchers with activity, though the interpretation varies. For some scholars, activism coincides with activity itself; for others, it represents the result of activity; while some view it as a more complex phenomenon that transcends the meaning of activity. In this context, activism is recognized as an integrated manifestation of personality, transcending mere activity and reflecting both the individual's self-realization and their impact on the social environment. Moreover, some psychologists note that activism can serve as the source of emergence and development of activity, as well as the criterion for its evaluation.

As a result, proponents of these theoretical orientations examine activism in correlation with various forms of human activity—such as learning, emotional, intellectual, and motor activities. According to psychologist S. L. Rubinstein, activity represents one of the fundamental forms of activism, through which the individual develops and actualizes their potential in the domains of knowledge, communication, and learning.

In psychology, activity is constantly associated with action, and within its structure, needs play a central role. Thus, human activity is fundamentally driven by needs, which, in order to be satisfied, motivate action. The relationship between needs and activity is supported by A. H. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow, 1970, p. 88), as well as by numerous other motivational theories (Atkinson & Birch, 1978, p. 75). In turn, the process of satisfying a need generates specific emotions, which are rooted in the origins of interest.

The author of the Differential Emotions Theory, K. E. Izard, argues that emotions are not mere passive reactions to external stimuli but rather fundamental motivational systems that structure human behavior, influence the learning process, and contribute to personality development. Through his theory, Izard demonstrates that each basic emotion has a specific adaptive function, participating in the individual's self-regulation and social interaction. Thus, emotions are central to explaining how an individual actively engages in their experiences, influencing not only perception and action but also the formation of identity and personal motivation (Izard, 1992, pp. 561–565).

Other authors define needs as felt requirements for external elements, emphasizing the individual's relationship with and dependence on the environment. This perspective highlights the relational nature of needs and underlines that their satisfaction requires the individual's active involvement in interaction with the surrounding environment (Sitarov & Shinin, 2017, pp. 77–87).

Drawing from the diversity of opinions concerning the perspective of activism, it is worth noting that some researchers speak of the existence of internal sources of a child's activism. Within the framework of the "external through the internal" principle developed by S. L. Rubinstein, the logic of its development becomes clearer: in the process of activity, the child acquires properties that are not predetermined solely by external influences or by innate natural characteristics. They are the result of the interaction between the child's activity and the integrated system of self-regulation it forms.

This system represents a subjective reality that possesses relative independence. It is initially shaped under the influence of objective conditions but later begins to influence those conditions, creating what Rubinstein calls a "micro-environment of development"—which marks "the beginning of the child's activism" (Lubovsky, 2014, pp. 50–67). Therefore, the culmination of human genesis lies in the transformation of the individual into a creator of new social experience and an educator of their own personality.

From another perspective, activism is regarded as an indicator of the level of cognitive and moral development of the individual, reflecting not only their conscious and active engagement in the learning process but also its correlation with intrinsic motivation and cognitive interest. Hence, interaction with the environment becomes a mechanism through which the individual explores, deepens, and internalizes knowledge, emphasizing the dynamic and formative nature of activism.

In this context, according to J. Dewey, intellectual development and the formation of autonomy are not achieved through passivity but through active involvement in concrete experiences and systematic reflection on one's own actions. Learning thus becomes a dynamic process, in which individual responsibility and critical evaluation of one's activity contribute to the strengthening of autonomous thinking and to the development of cognitive and moral competences (Dewey, 1977, p. 68).

From this statement, we can derive the idea that education oriented toward stimulating activism represents not only a means of knowledge transmission but also a powerful tool for developing self-regulation, epistemic curiosity, and cognitive initiative in the broader process of shaping the child's personality.

Based on psychological approaches, we can conclude that activism represents a complex manifestation of human activity, structured and motivated by needs and motives. The individual's activity is determined by needs, which initiate action and direct behavior toward their satisfaction. The fulfillment of needs generates specific emotions, while interest—as a positive and motivational emotion—stimulates active engagement in experiences and the development of the child's abilities, competencies, and personal identity.

Moreover, activism is not limited to the expression of an action determined by needs; it also becomes a generator of new needs and interests, thereby contributing to the individual's personal and motivational development. There is, therefore, a clear correlation between activism, need, activity, and emotional state, highlighting the fact that activism originates in an intense affective experience with a strong emotional background.

Furthermore, the motivational energy that fuels activism is not exhausted within the practical action itself but is reoriented toward the dimension of knowledge. The intense emotional experience acts as a catalyst for interest and the need for intellectual exploration, fostering the transition from emotionally motivated action to cognitive activity. In this way, cognitive interest emerges as an evolutionary expression of activism, reflecting the individual's desire to discover, understand, and explain reality.

It is noteworthy that, when addressing the issue of cognitive activism and cognitive interest, some researchers identify a strong connection between these concepts. In this regard, cognitive interest is considered the determining factor of cognitive activism, manifesting through the desire to fulfill it and through a particular emotional state that accompanies the process of knowing. As a personal characteristic, cognitive interest implies a selective orientation of the individual,

stability in cognitive activity, and an aspiration to penetrate the essence of the phenomena being studied.

In its evolution, cognitive interest progresses through four main stages: Curiosity; The desire to know; Proper cognitive interest; Theoretical interest.

Consequently, interest is shaped as a strong motivational factor in individual activity, stimulating mental processes, intensifying them, and directing activity toward satisfying the child's need for knowledge (Shchukina, 1983, pp. 46–51).

Therefore, it can be stated that interest constitutes an essential stimulating factor in the child's activity, intensifying psychic processes and giving them increased dynamism. Activity, in turn, is oriented toward satisfying cognitive needs, which, once fulfilled, lead to the internal balance of the individual.

A relevant approach in this context is provided by M. I. Lisina, who argues that cognitive activity occupies, within the general structure of activity, a position close to that of need, representing a state of readiness for cognitive involvement—a preliminary stage of actual action that both generates and guides it. Overall, the cognitive need can be understood as a dynamic unit that unites necessity, personal trait, and internal state, constituting both the source and starting point of cognitive activity. This need is in a direct relationship with cognitive activism, acting as a true triggering factor of it. Additionally, the author attributes special value to three components of activism: the activity itself, the readiness for action, and the personal initiative (Lisina, 1997, pp. 227–259).

Starting from the general analysis of the concept of activism presented above, it becomes evident that active involvement is not confined to behavioral or moral manifestations but also encompasses the cognitive dimension, among others. From this perspective, cognitive activism can be understood as the concrete expression of conscious engagement in knowledge processes, closely linked to the individual's internal motivation, interest, and cognitive needs.

This approach allows for a detailed exploration of the mechanisms through which active exploration of information becomes an essential instrument of personal development and the formation of autonomy.

In the context of the diverse approaches to the concept of cognitive activism, some researchers—such as D. B. Bogoyavlenskaya—propose a perspective centered on intellectual activism as a personal quality, whose core components include both intellectual (general mental) and non-intellectual (motivational) factors of intellectual activity. In this sense, emphasis is placed on the qualitative characteristics and on intellectual initiative, whose essence lies in continuing thought activity

beyond the limits of a given situation, without being driven by practical needs or by external or subjective negative evaluations of one's activity.

This type of initiative is characterized by a preference for thinking activity over other types of activity and by the tendency to go beyond the assigned intellectual task. Additionally, Bogoyavlenskaya identifies three levels of intellectual initiative: (1) Passive – the acceptance of external conditions without creative engagement; (2) Heuristic – the manifestation of initiative without external stimulation, seeking original solutions and striving to overcome dissatisfaction with one's own results; (3) Creative – the ability to discover an empirical regularity that itself becomes a problem, transforming it into a new problem and exploring it actively and originally (Bogoyavlenskaya, 1983, p. 90).

According to the author, intellectual activism is structured through an interaction between intellectual and motivational factors. The intellectual factors, which form the foundation of cognitive activity, include operational abilities (methods of action) and the core of mental processes that reflect learning capacity, flexibility, and awareness of one's actions. The development of the internal plan of action unfolds across five levels: background, reproduction, manipulation, transposition, and programming. The motivational factors determine the reasons for cognitive engagement—whether through intrinsic interest, the desire for recognition, or external rewards (Bogoyavlenskaya, 1983).

Therefore, intellectual activism represents a complex personality trait, combining cognitive abilities with motivation and the individual's attitude toward mental activity. Its essence lies not only in the ability to think but also in qualitative engagement, initiative, and personal commitment to cognitive activity. Through its intellectual and motivational components, intellectual activism becomes an indicator of creativity and personal development.

Following the evolution of research in psychopedagogy, we can observe a diversity of perspectives on the concept of cognitive activism. In this study, our focus will be on those approaches that can serve as theoretical benchmarks for our own research and that hold direct relevance to the formation of cognitive activism in children aged 6–7 years.

In the framework of L. S. Vygotsky's theory, cognitive activism in preschool age is grounded in the cognitive need, which acts as the "engine" of cognitive activity and determines the child's active involvement in the process of knowing. According to the author, the development of cognitive activity does not occur linearly; it is driven

by internal contradictions between the child's need for knowledge and the amount of knowledge already possessed, as well as between the child's experience and the necessity of progressing toward more advanced forms of understanding and application. Consequently, resolving these contradictions fosters the development of autonomous thinking and the child's ability to address new problems and find innovative solutions (Vygotsky, 1996, p. 98).

At the same time, Vygotsky emphasizes the connection between cognitive activism and the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which expresses the relationship between the child's intrinsic activity and the social dimension of the learning process. From this perspective, cognitive activism finds a strong theoretical foundation in Vygotsky's concept of the ZPD—defined as the distance between the actual level of cognitive development, determined by the child's ability to act independently, and the potential level of development, achieved through cooperation with an adult or more capable peer.

In this light, cognitive activism functions as an internal, generative factor of development, while the zone of proximal development provides the external framework and social support necessary for its manifestation and consolidation (Vygotsky, 1996).

Therefore, cognitive activism can be understood as a complex manifestation of the interaction between the need for knowledge, intrinsic motivation, and the child's capacity to mobilize cognitive resources to overcome obstacles and engage meaningfully in the process of discovery and learning.

Following the Vygotskian tradition, researcher S. Chaiklin emphasizes that the zone of proximal development does not represent a passive space of external influence, but rather a dynamic framework of cooperation, within which the child mobilizes internal cognitive resources through interaction with the educational environment. According to the author, cognitive activism functions as an internal mechanism of developmental progress, stimulated both by socially guided activity and by the child's intrinsic motivation to understand and transform reality (Chaiklin, 2003, pp. 39–64).

In Chaiklin's view, the ultimate goal of education is not merely the transmission of knowledge, but the formation of independent learning activity, through which the child becomes capable of organizing and regulating his or her own thinking processes. From this perspective, cognitive activism appears not only as a premise but also as a result of the functioning of the zone of proximal development: it is formed through guided participation but gradually evolves toward self-directed cognition. Consequently, cognitive development takes shape as a socially mediated process, externally supported by the adult but

internally driven by the child's own activity. Thus, cognitive activism represents the concrete expression of the interaction between consciousness, activity, and social mediation (Chaiklin, 2003).

Within the same framework, E. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development also addresses learning activity as an expression of the interaction between cognitive and socio-affective development. Although the author does not propose a purely cognitive theory, he attributes particular significance to the cognitive dimension, analyzing it within the context of motivation for knowledge, exploratory curiosity, and the need for competence (Ruby & Wu, 2023, pp. 93–94).

From a motivational perspective, Erikson conceptualizes psychosocial activism as the intrinsic tendency of the child to act and explore. On the other hand, processes of learning and value acquisition, as the author observes, do not develop in isolation but are influenced by the emotional and social context in which the child lives and acts. In this way, the cognitive and socio-affective dimensions are mutually conditioning and progressively intertwined (Ruby & Wu, 2023).

Based on these considerations, it should be noted that the child's need for continuous affirmation, action, and verification of results marks the beginning of cognitive autonomy. From this perspective, cognitive activism develops when the child is given the opportunity to express ideas freely and to learn from personal mistakes. Therefore, it is essential to maintain a balance between guidance and freedom, which allows the child to demonstrate initiative, curiosity, interest, and cognitive activism.

Similarly, J. Piaget's theory of cognitive development assigns a central role to the active participation of the child in the learning process. According to Piaget, cognitive development does not imply a simple accumulation of information but rather a constructive process of knowledge formation. Thus, the child does not merely receive reality passively but actively participates in his or her own learning process by investigating, exploring, and analyzing, gradually structuring an understanding of the world through action and reflection (Piaget & Inhelder, 2005, pp. 122–126).

Therefore, the theory of cognitive development highlights the importance of cognitive activism in children: learning occurs more effectively when the child is directly involved in activity, investigates objects, formulates questions, and seeks solutions. Knowledge is not passively received but is constructed by the child based on personal experience and interaction with the surrounding environment. In this way, cognitive activity stimulates curiosity, interest, and initiative, creating learning contexts that allow the child to investigate and construct personal meanings.

It is worth noting that children aged 6–7 display exploratory behavior, which represents an early expression of cognitive activism, as it reflects an internal need for active interaction with the environment. From this perspective, some researchers distinguish between play behavior, oriented toward emotional and social satisfaction, and exploratory behavior, driven by curiosity and the child's desire to discover new information about the world. As a result, exploration forms the foundation of cognitive activity, since it involves processes of observation, comparison, and verification, which contribute to the development of thinking structures and intrinsic motivation for learning. In this sense, cognitive activism is viewed not as a spontaneous reaction, but as a higher form of organization of exploratory behavior, characteristic of the preschool period (Tyler et al., 1989, p. 167).

Exploratory behavior in children serves as the basis of cognitive development, reflecting curiosity and the internal drive to understand the surrounding world. In this context, cognitive activism manifests itself through systematic exploration and investigation, based on observation, comparison, and verification—processes that support the formation of thinking and the development of autonomy in learning.

In the same vein, U. Șchiopu argues that the development of interests, particularly intellectual ones, is expressed through the child's vivid curiosity about the surrounding world and the constant need "to know." Consequently, the child is engaged in a continuous process of inquiry, constantly seeking to understand more, formulating questions, and searching for explanations for observed phenomena. According to the author, curiosity constitutes the core of cognitive activism, as it encourages the child to adopt an active and reflective attitude toward reality (Șchiopu & Verza, 1997, p. 130).

A similar line of reasoning can be found in research on the role of emotions, which function as a mechanism of orientation in focusing attention and, more importantly, in decision-making. According to P. Ekman, positive emotions experienced when successfully overcoming a challenge encourage intellectual engagement and support learning by generating an internal climate of cognitive activation. From this perspective, the author suggests that affective experience becomes a trigger for reflection and exploration, transforming emotion into a stimulus for thought. Thus, when speaking of emotion, we refer to the connection between thinking and cognitive activity, since, when the child uses emotional experiences to understand and act, he or she becomes more curious, more engaged, and develops cognitive activism (Ekman, 2003, pp. 52–82).

Based on the arguments presented above, beyond their conceptual diversity, they converge toward the main factors that determine cognitive activism in preschool-aged children, as shown in **Figure 1**.

No.	Factors	Characteristics
1.	**Internal (**assumes the child's individual characteristics, which condition the way cognitive activism is formed and manifested) • Needs • Intrinsic motivation • Positive emotions • Cognitive processes • Child's experience	The natural tendency to understand the world, to discover meanings and causes; the need for knowledge and understanding; the intrinsic drive to learn, explore, and investigate; affective states that support curiosity and the interest to engage in cognitive activity; the level of development of cognitive processes (attention, memory, thinking, imagination, etc.); the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired that facilitate the manifestation of interest in more complex subjects.
2.	**External** (originate from the social or educational environment, stimulating the formation of cognitive activism) • Educational environment • Strategies for organizing the educational process • Role of the teacher • Material resources • Social and cultural context	Teacher-child relationship; teaching methods; classroom atmosphere; learning through discovery; experimentation; cognitive games; guidance without dominating the child; support for curiosity, interest, and initiative; attractiveness of material resources, novelty level of content; values, cultural models, group relationships, etc.
3	**Situational** (determine cognitive interest depending on the moment, context, or environment) • Originality and	An original, surprising context sparks curiosity and interest; the connection between new content and the child's experience or personal interests;

	novelty of situations • Personal relevance • Achievements and recognition	a reciprocal connection (child–teacher) evokes feelings of joy, achievement, and satisfaction; appreciation further stimulates the child's cognitive activism.
4.	**Axiological** (related to meaning and value, defining the dimension of cognitive activism; concerning the purpose of knowledge, values, and the goal of education) • Meaning of knowledge • Educational ideals and values • Attitude toward the world and knowledge	Knowledge as a form of self-development, self-regulation, and personal achievement; the values underlying education shape the direction of cognitive interests and, consequently, the formation of cognitive activism in children; the willingness to explore, curiosity, interest, and the desire to understand the complexity of the surrounding environment.

Fig. 1. Factors of Cognitive Activism (Preschool Age)

In summary, we can highlight the following characteristics specific to the implementation of cognitive activism in the preschool age:

1. Activism as an integrative phenomenon of biological, cognitive, and motivational dimensions; it determines the child's ability to consciously engage in transforming the environment.
2. "Activism" and "Activity" – forms of manifestation of the child's active behavior.
3. Cognitive activity stimulates curiosity, interest, and initiative, enabling the child to investigate and construct personal meanings.
4. Cognitive activism – an expression of the interaction between consciousness, action, and the social environment, through which the child builds their own models of understanding the world.
5. Cognitive activism as a form of organizing exploratory behavior, through which the child manifests initiative, curiosity, and the natural tendency to discover the world.
6. Emphasis on the child's freedom to express personal ideas, explore, and learn from mistakes; the balance between adult support and the child's freedom of action is a condition for developing initiative, curiosity, and cognitive activism.

7. Exploratory/research behavior – an early expression of cognitive activism in preschool children.
8. Emphasis on emotions – the child's emotional engagement in understanding and acting.

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