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***La orientación educativa a las familias como premisa  
necesaria en la Educación Técnica y Profesional***  
***Educational orientation to families as a necessary premise  
in technical and vocational education***

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**Resumen:** El presente trabajo aborda importantes consideraciones sobre la categoría filosófica familia. Se ofrecen acciones de orientación educativa a las familias utilizando técnicas que dinamizan y estimulan el conocimiento de estas para que estén en condiciones de asumir y cumplir su función educativa, con el propósito de lograr adecuados modos de actuación en los adolescentes para enfrentarse al mundo laboral y transformar la realidad educativa de la Educación Técnica y Profesional.

**Palabras claves:** Orientación educativa; Papel de la familia; Educador social; Educación Técnica y Profesional

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**Abstract:** This paper addresses important considerations on the philosophical category family. Educational orientation actions are offered to families, using techniques that dynamize and stimulate their knowledge so that they be able to assume and fulfill their educational function, with the fundamental purpose of achieving appropriate modes of action in adolescents when confronting the working world and transforming the educational reality of technical and professional education.

**Keywords:** Educational orientation; Family role; Social educator; Technical and professional education

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## **Introduction**

Preparation for employment has been a permanent concern of thinkers of all times such as Felix Varela (1788 -1853), José de la Luz y Caballero (1800 - 1882) and our greatest successor José Martí (1853 -1895) who, when referring to education, said: "Since man comes to live, education must prepare him for life. In school we have to learn the management of the forces with which life has to fight". (Martí, 2001, p.123)

These ideas of Martí on the integral and labor formation of the new generations have full validity in our days, and are the base of the socialist education reaffirmed in the principle of the Cuban pedagogy of study-work, for all. In this regard, Castro Ruz (1976), emphasized that: "the objective of education is to prepare the individual for social life which is inextricably linked to work, to the activity that human being has to perform throughout his life".

In the context of the Cuban Polytechnic School, it is frequently suggested that a worker with a high technical qualification, immersed in the problems of his community and the country, must act as an agent of change. This reveals the purpose of the new Polytechnic School model that has among its priorities job training as the center of educational work, and that acquires its maximum expression in the insertion of students in the workplace. To achieve this purpose, a correct educational orientation of families is required as the fundamental cell of society, bearing in mind that the average age of students ranges from 14 to 18 years old, and their guiding activity is professional training.

The pedagogical practice has shown that the main difficulty for families to face certain situations of risk that occur in the context of performance of the student of Technical and Vocational Education is the lack of preparation, motivation and interest in this type of activity, which impedes to develop a correct communication between the family and the student. Due to this, students are observed with inadequate modes of action; apathy in the fulfillment of their activities, in the care of social property and the environment; and in the fulfillment of their main duties. The educational orientation to families, therefore, is still far below the transformations of Technical and Vocational Education, so it is essential to create mechanisms that influence the family to play their role with school children.

The education of values such as hard work, responsibility, honesty, respect for the rights of others; the ability to communicate, save, create, innovate, persevere, undertake; and the development of feelings of love for work, and skills to find quick and optimal solutions to problems are key aspects. Attending to these aspects, educational guidance actions are offered to families using techniques that stimulate and incentivate the knowledge about it so that they become able to assume and fulfill their educational function, with the fundamental

purpose of achieving adequate ways of acting in adolescents to face the labor world and transform the educational reality of Technical and Professional Education.

## **Development**

In the study of the family converge conceptions of different scientific disciplines among which are Sociology, Psychology and Anthropology. Each of them conceptualizes this term based on its research objective, so that different criteria or approaches are included under the same concept.

Federico Engels in his work *The origin of the family, private property and the state* (1891) affirms that "the oldest and most primitive form of the family is marriage" (page 25), and show that this is a historical category, therefore it changes in accordance with social transformations, in which context it is necessary to study and understand it.

Researchers from the Department of Sociology at the University of Havana (cited by Blanco, 2001) define the family as "the small or primary social group in which a system of interaction between the people that make it up is configured, in which individuals have their first social experiences, to which they are linked intensively and for a long time "(p.107).

The family must be understood as a unique and unrepeatably particular psychological unit, bearer of a system of codes, patterns of interaction and educational styles for the education and development of its members, with psychological characteristics that differentiate it from other groups such as:

- It is a community of people that act objectively as a subject of the activity, whose relationship is based not under the same roof but on several homes.
- The personal contacts promoted by the emotional identification, the great attraction and emotional unity generated among its members that stimulates the community of interests, objectives and the unity of action.
- When people cannot count on or enjoy this type of bond they suffer, their feelings are anguished or distorted and this can affect their values. The psychological content of the activity is very personal.

- The emotional tone predominates in communication and emotional identification, which responds firstly to the intimate needs of the couple and to the bonds of paternity and filiation of this group with high degrees of empathy and cohesion.

Cuban authors such as Castro (1999), Arés (2002), Núñez (2003), have dimensioned the psychological aspects of the different functions. However, being consistent with the idea that everything is educated in the family, there is still no systematized analysis of the relationship between family functions and their impact on the education of the student of Technical and Vocational Education.

There are deficiencies in the role the family must play in the education of their children as they grow, because they are not always able to satisfy their material and spiritual needs. In this regard Arés (1998) states that "not all parents are sufficiently prepared for the education of their children, some do not go to ask for help, despite living the family difficult situation and the most terrible thing is that sometimes they are not aware of being mishandled" (p 42). In this way the educational action of families can be limited by mismanagement and neglect of their function, and by not knowing the psychological characteristics of the ages through which their children pass by misinterpreting some ways of being or changes that may occur.

The school has the responsibility of helping families to upgrade their psycho-pedagogical preparation, in which the guiding role of the teacher as a social educator is important to lead the process of educational guidance. There are prestigious authors at the national level who have ventured into the subject, among them Castro (1999) (2005), Blanco (2001), Martín (2002); Arés (2002 and 2004), Núñez (2003), Addine and García (2004); Daudinot (2007), Del Pino (2007), who offer ways and orientations to perfect the work in conjunction with the school, and recognize the teacher as a trained agent to successfully face family education.

However, these researchs are not sufficient to reveal the importance of educational guidance to families for the achievement of adequate ways of performance of the student of Technical and Vocational Education in the current context. The educational orientation in the current context is a process programmed and directed. This is not only done through

communication with the student and stimulating their self-determination, role and responsibility with their decisions and behaviors, but also through the influence of the family. It should be aimed at helping the adolescent to overcome the difficulties that he presents in his learning, and its focus is on helping him to increase his performance and to be educated with adequate modes of action. In its link with the world of work, it must be aimed at preparing professionals capable of constantly learn to deal with change, and with enough flexibility to function in society.

Through family counseling, concepts, information and examples are offered to parents to discover and use more functional forms of relationships among family members, improve coexistence at home and achieve a way of life that meets the social standards established.

In the pedagogical and psychological literature we can find multiple definitions of guiding that are systematized by researchers of recognized prestige at national and international level. The authors of this work assume the one provided by Del Pino and Recarey (2007): "guidance is the relationship of help established by a professional with a claimant and aims to prepare man to face and solve the multiple situations in which life puts him" (p.59).

As it is evident, it is important to guide the student from the school institution since it contributes to the integral education of the personality, and allows the development and personal growth of the adolescents. An efficient educational orientation should prepare parents for their self-development, in such a way that they act as self-educating and self-regulating agents in the performance of their children's educative function.

Practice has shown that the way of interacting with the families of students of Technical and Vocational Education has not always been the most effective, evidenced in the modes of action. In the preparation of families the facilitator of the activity must become a social educator.

In order to be successful in his work, the facilitator must meet certain requirements:

- Mature: with common sense, psychologically adult.
- Close: with ability to have empathy with others.
- Observer: know what happens in the group at all times.

- Ability to know when it is convenient to speak and when it is convenient to be silent: it must be clear that he is not there as an expert, but as the coordinator of communication in the group.
- Flexible: always be willing to search for alternative solutions.
- Patient, organized, understanding.

In addition, the activity must comply with the following functions:

- Communicative: it consists of valuing and helping people, knowing how to listen and facilitating communication.
- Didactic: selecting materials, techniques and methods appropriate to the topic to be addressed, guiding the sessions, energizing group work.
- Feedback: be able to return to the group, with prudence and respect, the impressions that have caused what has been the subject of discussion, and help self-assess to information.
- Self-educator: it is necessary to have knowledge about the topics and the appropriate methodology so that it contributes to the appropriation by the audience.

### **Proposal of workshops for the orientation of families**

**Workshop 1.-** The family in the historical-social context. Functions of the family, its incidence in the formative process of adolescents. Legal documents that regulate work with the family.

#### **Objectives:**

- Explore the level of information of the participants about the functions of the family.
- Report on the family issue and the legal documents that regulate work with the family.

#### **Methodological guidelines:**

Introduce the topic to be discussed. Apply a small test "Determining the family APGAR" that aims to internalize how are subjective relations with their children. Its indicators are: adaptation, relationship, development, affection and coexistence. The Indicators are

explained: Always, Almost always, or Almost never, and they must choose with an **x** only one answer. If the answer is **always** the mark is two points; if it is **almost always**, one point; and **almost never** receives zero points; We worked with the following scale:

- from 8 to 10 points. Highly functional family
- from 4 to 7 points. Moderately functional family.
- from 0 to 3 points. Severely dysfunctional family.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Almost always</b>	<b>Almost never</b>
I am satisfied because I can help my child when he needs it			
I am satisfied with the way my son tells me his things and consults his problems with me			
I am satisfied with how my child acted and I communicate with my son about his aspirations and future life project			
I am satisfied with how I express affection, understanding, love, pain or anger to my children.			
I am satisfied with the time I dedicate to my children, and the guidelines I give them			

Then the new topic is submitted to the debate using the participative technique: find the answer. To apply this technique you can use questions such as:

1. What is the family?
2. Do we fulfill the functions of the family correctly according to the Constitution?
3. How do you deal with the set of tasks presented to the family in the context of work practice?

The coordinator will group small groups, each one of them will be given a card with a question mark, which they must answer. They are instructed that in a bag there are strips of paper with the information that must be selected and classified by the group. In plenary each group will select the results of their efforts, the critical debate will enrich the work.

The group can receive a card with a possible response with the interest of raising their critical reflection. To make the conclusions, the contents received will be evaluated and it is suggested to reflect at home on the following questions: what role does the family play in adolescent education? How do we treat our children, as children or as elderly people? (This question will give way to the next topic).

**Evaluation:**

"key words" will be carried out through the participatory technique. Each of the participants will be asked to express with a single word what they think about the topic that was discussed, the words will be written on the board, and a brief reflection will be made about what each word means. It can be extended to a phrase that summarizes or synthesizes.

**Workshop 2.-** Adolescence and youth as stages of life. Analysis of a teenager's letter to his father.

**Objectives:**

- Explain the psychological, biological and social changes that occur in adolescents.
- Reflect on the actions of parents through a letter from a teenager to his father.

**Methodological guidelines:**

Introduce the topic to be discussed. Reading of a letter from a teenager to his father, which appears in the book *Topics of Introduction to Pedagogical Training*, by Gilberto García Batista, (pp.30-31).

It is explained that from this the performance of each parent to their children will be analyzed, using the participatory technique: search of advice. Trios are formed, each one will devise a situation of conflict of the subject addressed, each trio poses the conflict situation and selects its counselor, who has a few minutes to think about the advice to give and then explain it to the group. The successes and errors in the recommended solution will be valued collectively. The debate on the theme will be based on the participative technique: couples and groups, with questions such as:

1. What is adolescence?

2. What treatment do we give our children during the situations they present during the period of practice?

3. Do we guide our children to fulfill their duties?

4. How to teach our children to be responsible?

The group is organized by pairs and the theme "Adolescence and youth as stages of life" is read, it appears on page 138 of the book *Introduction to Pedagogical Training*, written by a collective of authors.

For the development of the theme, the participatory technique: pairs and contribution among couples will be used, which consists of organizing the group by couple and giving a card to each one with a different question about what was read.

Couple No. 1 must answer the question and draw up a new question related to the issue and pass the card to the couple on your right.

Couple No. 2, will read the situation that appears on their card, as well as give their consideration on the question and the answer given by the previous couple, and will elaborate a new question that now corresponds to couple No. 3 to answer and successively.

In case a couple disagrees with some of the previous answers, they should take note to debate in the group.

The conclusions will be made through the following questions: adolescence, is it true that it is a difficult and critical period? What role should parents play in this stage? It is suggested to reflect at home on the following question: how do we guide children for work life? (This question will pave the way to the next topic).

### **Evaluation:**

Through the observation of the activities, the coordinator will be able to have an appreciation of how the development of the activity is going, taking into account the following indicators:

- Mood
- Participation and creativity in the dialogues that they have

- Motivation and satisfaction with the treated topic.

**Workshop 3.-** Work activity. A way for the formation of the personality of the student.

**Objectives:**

- Encourage reflection on the influence of work activity in the formation of the student's personality.
- Inform participants about the work activity performed by students in the work practice.

**Methodological guidelines:**

The coordinator encourages the debate and reflection on the new topic, relying on the participatory technique: the others have the fault.

These questions will be asked:

- 1- How to guide my son to comply with the work activity?
- 2- How to influence so that my son attends punctually to the labor practice?
- 3- How do I direct my child to dwell in a work collective?
- 4- How to instill in my son the love for work?

The group selects two assistants for the activity; one will be in charge of blowing the whistle, and the other will select a number from a bag, according to which it will be decided who will respond. The other participants are given a number. The coordinator will explain that upon hearing the whistle the participants will change their number with another partner. The person in charge of selecting the number will do so after being sure that everyone has changed their numbers. To whom it corresponds the selected number will have to answer the question, thus, the fault of which he is and no other the one that responds, it has the other.

The conclusions will be made on the basis of the reflection on the following sentence of José Martí: "The man grows with the work that comes out of his hands." It is suggested to reflect about it at home and also the following question: what role do parents with children who have difficulties in work practice play?

## **Evaluation:**

Will be done through the PNI technique (Positive-Negative-Interesting). The coordinator will write these three words on the blackboard, and the participants, taking into account the development of the activity, will express their opinions.

## **Conclusions**

The study of the families allowed to assert the need of the preparation of these in the matter of education for the strengthening of the labor practice based in the analysis of the limitations that in their theoretical and methodological conception still subsist. The workshops proposed constitute a tool for the preparation of families, and their implementation will contribute to the transformation of the modes of action of students in their context of action.

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