

Fundamentos teórico-metodológicos de la educación de la sexualidad en adolescentes y jóvenes

Reviewing the theoretical-methodological foundations of education regarding the adolescents' sexuality

Roberto Hui-Giro**Mariluz Yero-Ochoa**

Universidad de Guantánamo, Cuba

Correo(s) electrónico(s):hui@cug.co.cumariluz@cug.co.cu

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Resumen: Se realiza el análisis de diferentes concepciones acerca de la educación de la sexualidad, y se destaca el rol de la escuela y el proceso docente educativo en la formación de esta esfera de la personalidad. La recopilación de estos referentes permiten una mejor comprensión del fenómeno de la sexualidad, y proporciona un material de apoyo a la labor del docente en este tema.

Palabras clave: Educación de la sexualidad; Proceso docente educativo; Educación de la personalidad; Sexualidad humana

Abstract: The analysis of different conceptions about the education of sexuality is carried out, and the role of the school and the educational teaching process in the formation of this sphere of personality is highlighted. The compilation of these references allows a better understanding of the phenomenon of sexuality, and provides a material to support the work of the teacher in this topic.

Keywords: Sexuality education; Educational teaching process; Personality education; Human sexuality

Introduction

The education of the personality constitutes a complex social phenomenon that guarantees the appropriation by the human being of the fruits of cultural life, and is enabled to live in a certain period in a consistent manner.

In this sense, the National Education System in Cuba (NES), through educational improvement, has strengthened study plans and programs aimed at training young generations in correspondence with the objectives of our society. The educational teaching process is an appropriate framework to satisfy the needs of learning, and develop feelings and emotions based on reason and intuition in correspondence with the motivational sphere and psychological peculiarities of this human living space in which evolutionarily shows a

considerable distancing between two basic processes of development: psychological maturation, and biological, as a conditioning for the initiation of intimate sexual activity with a deficient exercise of the sexual response that conditions an adequate integration of sexuality in the relationships that are manifested.

For the successful performance of the various facets of life it is essential to prepare young people for love and conscious sexuality, and in this the school, and educators play a decisive role along with the rest of the socializing factors.

Adolescent sexuality education is only achieved through a process that trains knowledge, norms, values, attitudes, behaviors, whose work begins with the sensitization of the educators themselves with the internalization of the need to prepare them effectively to face more and more independent this transcendental stage of life.

In spite of the undeniable advances that have been made in this area of the formation of adolescents and young people, insufficient knowledge, prejudices, taboos, and stereotypes are evident that impede a full development in this sense. The aim of this paper is to analyze different conceptions about the education of sexuality, and the role of the school and the educational process in the formation of this sphere of personality.

Development

Sexuality as a manifestation of personality

From the most ancient antiquity to the present, the universal theme of love and sex has enjoyed the predilection of great poets, plastic artists, writers and philosophers. Ovid, Homer, Plato, Michelangelo, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Balzac, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Martí and many others reflected in their works various aspects related to this facet of human activity.

The methodological problematic presented in the research of sexuality is by no means alien to that confronted by psychology as a science, a question that contemporary Marxist specialists are actively engaged in resolving. With this in mind, the need to depart from the

personality category as a fundamental theoretical-methodological principle for the study of the human being is considered.

According to Rubinstein, quoted by Castellanos 1995: "All psychic processes (...) run in the personality and each one of them depends on its real development, and concludes that... all the psychology of the human being is psychology of the personality "(p 19).

Similarly, Sigmund Freud, founder of the psychoanalytic school, who played, as the psychologist Bozhovich admits, "an exceptionally important role (...) in the construction of the psychological theory of personality" (p. 27) tried to be recognized the position and importance occupied by sexuality in the personality, a matter that had previously been totally ignored or minimized. However, his theoretical conceptual system hyperbolized to such an extent the influence of the sexual personality, which fell into a "curious pansexualism that turns the whole life of man into a single powerful or covert manifestation of the sexual" (Castellanos, 1995, p 27).

We take the ideas of Vygotsky (1979) on the development of the human psyche in the process of personality formation. In him, as in no other psychologist of the twentieth century, we find in the philosophical, sociological and psychological a consistent position. He was ahead of his time when he presented his theses, current today, related to the social essence of man, the reconceptualization of the internalization process, the role of human consciousness, the zone of proximal or potential development, the role of education, the communication and activity, among others.

Starting from these conceptions, we must approach personality as the highest expression of the psychic life of man that is formed and developed in the process of objectivity as an individual reflection of the historical-concrete relationships in which each person lives and acts.

I agree with the conception on sexuality of Monroy de Velasco (1998):

Sexuality is considered a biopsychosocial phenomenon that is part of the growth and personality of the human being. It is the manifestation of biological sex in the relationship behavior of the individual with others of the same or different

sex. Expressions of sexuality go far beyond genital responses and are subject, constantly, to changes as a consequence of experience and learning. (p 83)

If sexuality is understood in this sense, the definition of Artiles (1998) is also assumed when it emphasizes that it is:

(...) it encompasses all of our bodily being, with the biological and sociocultural characteristics that allow us to understand the world and live it through our being, as men or women. It is a part of our personality and identity, that is, the psychological aspect of this, and is one of the human needs expressed through the body, is a basic element of masculinity, self-image, self-awareness and development personal, stimulates the need to establish personal relationships with others. (p.14)

We are in favor of the sexuality that enhances the flowering of a healthy and self-realized personality, and contributes to the quality of life of people of both sexes, of the family, and of society.

Beyond marital and premarital relationships, the norms of sexuality will regulate the behavior between genders, generations, and vital ages, positions of power and subordination, social classes and ethnic groups. That is why sexuality permeates and nuances the most diverse spheres, is part of the personal and of common, so it is impossible to understand or study it regardless of social interrelations.

This complex and rich vital manifestation is expressed in all our existential dimensions: the individual, the couple, the family, and society through the process of socialization, and having as a driving force the educational process. The analysis of the dimensions and qualities of human sexuality give us proof of the need to consider, above all property, its authentic character, and therefore free in its process of construction and expression, which forces us to educate and guide it in the deepest respect of their individuality, as well expressed in different definitions of Rebastillo (1989) and González (1989)

On the basis of these assumptions and in contrast to the traditional ways of conceiving and educating sexuality through pre-conceived unilaterally sexist formulas, and alien to the

needs and potential of the individual in particular, I understand a sexuality approach and its education that articulate, in essence, freedom with responsibility, that promotes in unison personal and social growth, and where the psychological components of sexuality play a fundamental role.

Psychological components of sexuality

In examining the evolution of relations between the sexes, it is essential to establish their antecedents by going back to the period of hominization, called by Engels the influence of humankind, where indiscriminate sexual behavior is characteristic, so that each woman equally belonged to all men, and every man to all women. That is why in all patriarchal societies has historically been erected a depersonalized and discriminatory sexist education of sexuality that denies each human being choose the particular paths and their own limits to live their sexuality in coherence with needs, potential and aspirations.

In this sense, the research of recent years show inequalities in issues that could be resolved, if equity acted as a principle in the formation of values that are universal. Despite the transformations, there are still prejudices, taboos, ignorance, patterns of double bourgeois morality and, besides, lagged of the class society, since there is no other sphere of the human life where these elements persist with so much strength.

Studies on gender have gained acceptance for decades, but from the 1990s onwards, influences from the governmental level became noticeable. In the one made by Guerrero (1990) in his work *Culture, Ideology and Society*, it was corroborated that both females and males are satisfied with their genders, but there are still prejudices that place women at a disadvantage compared to men. There are still barriers that interpose to break the rigid patterns of power-forces, and submission-discrimination established by the patriarchal society and rooted in the conscience of people after centuries of conditioning in this sense. Hence, the so-called psychological components of sexuality can be introduced with greater precision and concretion, allowing clarification of concepts in this regard.

Every human being is born with a sex that, according to the conception of Castellanos (1995), is the set of physiological anatomical attributes (chromosomal, genetic, gonadal,

hormonal, genital, cerebral, etc.) that make it a biologically sexed being from the very moment of its creation. However, only in the process of socialization, in the course of life, becomes a psychologically sexed person, with a unique individuality, which makes it, in the light of itself and others, a female or male personality.

Precisely, based on the aforementioned biological premises (which make up what we call sex as such), and under the educational action of the family, school and society, in the course of the ontogenetic development of personality, are built in the core of sexuality, the gender identity (awareness and feeling of being a man, woman, feminine, masculine or ambivalent), the role of gender (way in which the diverse feminine and masculine roles established by each are interpreted, assumed and performed culture, otherwise it is a social construct and is closely linked to the identity to be its external manifestation, has a dialectical character, stable and changing elements depending on the experiences lived) and sexual orientation (direction that acquires the desire or impulse sexuality towards the other sex, the self or both), which make it a hetero, homo or bisexual individual respectively.

These psychological components of sexuality have an individual expression and in turn are expressed as a social whole, more or less homogeneous through the related behavior of most individuals of the same sex. In this sense, in light of the most recent literature in the field of gender, some considerations are made. (Castellanos, 1985 and González, 1989)

Grosso modo, according to González (1997), gender is defined as the network of beliefs, personality traits, attitudes, feelings, values, behaviors and activities that differentiate women from men, as a result of a historical process of social construction.

In this sense, several authors have focused on the difference between sex and gender (Oakley, 1972, Rubin, 1976, Bleichmar, 1975, Izquierdo, 1985) and although there are different definitions, a constant observed in terms of gender is that this refers to a sociocultural construction, while sex refers to characteristics derived from biology (anatomical, physiological, hormonal and chromosomal issues).

It seems that the first one to approach this field of study was Staller (1968), in his book *Sex and Gender*. Subsequently, Bleichmar (1975) refers to gender as the category where all the

psychological, social and cultural aspects of femininity, masculinity are grouped, reserving sex for biological, anatomical composition and to designate sexual intercourse in itself.

For his part, Light (1995), says that gender stereotypes are very simplified ideas, but strongly rooted about the characteristics of men and women. Orlandine refers (1995) that the sexual stereotype represents a variety of cultural stereotype that governs the ideology and sexual customs, means mandates and prohibitions of society that determined the female and male roles of its members. We consider that stereotypes represent a rigid entity, symbolized by patterns and codes according to the historical, cultural and social context.

We come to the conclusion that the most important thing is not to educate about sex, but with the most positive values that propitiate its development and that empower its possibilities. An important factor in this regard is the educational process.

The education of sexuality in the teaching - learning process.

Pedagogy is the science whose sole object of study is the educational teaching process, which is why we consider it the center of the education science system. The educational process has a conceptual system of laws, categories and general methods that encompass the instructional and educational with a developer character, and responds to social demands to form a harmonious and multifaceted personality.

On the other hand, the educational process has a social character and develops as a system in which different tendencies and manifestations are expressed in a very interrelated way with the different external elements. Within this content is one of its configurations and reveals the selection of cultural and scientific elements, it is the educational potential that, according to Maslow (1982) is that dimension of knowledge framed and merged into another dimension of knowledge discipline or social conflict that reveals itself as the same process, as a new quality that emerges from this fusion.

Within Pedagogy as a science, aspects related to the education of sexuality take into account the harmonious relationship among each of its components and the links of the process, both those that occur in the school setting and those that encompass the family and community;

In the same way, the links, seen as stages of a unique and totalizing process, constitute significant moments in the dynamics of the class and in the explicitation of educational teaching messages.

According to current considerations, education is understood as:

A process of preparation of the human being for life, trains him in correspondence with his demands and those of his context to face the vital challenges, to grow, to be made and to become the architect of his own existence, as well as of the social transformations. This process has a permanent character, it is deployed collecting all the stages of the vital axis and with the joint participation of different social actors: the family, the school and the socium in general, for what implies, at the same time, the integration of the formal, non-formal and incidental spaces. (Artiles de León, 1998, p.16)

Sharing these criteria allows us to reflect on the ideas conceived in the Martian sense of the preparation of the human being for life: we prepare our children and young people for work, a fundamental activity of man, through which he acts creatively on the medium and transforms it; we cultivate their intelligence, teaching them to think; we develop their moral, aesthetic feelings, we form their ideopolitical convictions.

As expressed in the Theses and Resolutions of the First Congress of the Cuba Communist Party (1998): "In social relations among men and women, an adequate sexual education will be favorably promoted, starting at home and reinforcing scientifically in school. "(P.16).

Therefore, the fact of not conceiving sex education as a direction of educational work can lead to conflicts that affect not only the success of the individual sexual path, but society as a whole. In this regard Espin, president of the Cuban Women's Federation for many years, emphasized the fact that "early motherhood rates, also affect suicides - that occur to a greater extent among girls who were mothers at an early age - and in antisocial criminal manifestations, which are also more frequent in these cases "(Espín, 1986, p.22).

I consider as the true meaning of sexual education that which aims to promote positive relationships between both sexes in correspondence with the moral principles of society in

terms of equality, respect, mutual aid; and to develop attitudes, assessments, convictions and knowledge that allow each individual to accept and confront their sexuality as a vital and enriching expression of their personality.

In this sense we mean that the essential link of the teaching - educational process is the school, because in it the society places the maximum responsibility, both of the multifaceted education of the young generations and of the integration of the influences that on the developing personality they exercise the various social factors.

The pedagogical model of our social order contributes to organize and guide the process for sexual learning, whose goals encompass social demands and needs, those of the educational process itself, and individual and group demands. It is also meant that the success or failure of the goals of the process depends to a great extent on the circumstances in which the teaching-learning process occurs, where there are a multiplicity of situations that extend to all the frameworks in which adolescents learn to be men and women from the contents of the rules they learn and that determine their behavior.

We still have many limitations to carry out this educational work, because neither the parents, nor the teachers, nor the specialists of the different branches of medicine, psychology and pedagogy were prepared in the past to incorporate in their educational, guidance and therapeutic work the aspects of human sexuality. For this reason, from the 88-89 and until the 91-92 years important changes were introduced that implied a greater linkage and a systemic approach to sexual education contents in subjects such as Natural Sciences, History, Mathematics, Physical Education , Civic Education, among others. Related to this aspect, the Russian pedagogue Makarenko (1971) expressed

"(...) not a single educator has the right to act alone... where educators are not united collectively and the collective does not have a single plan of work, a uniquely defined way of approaching the child, there can not be any educational process "(p.23).

Conclusions

Therefore, from the pedagogical point of view, the new form of inclusion of contents on sexuality in the programs, allows to ensure the systematic multilateral treatment of the subject, which results in a more active and integral preparation of the students. We believe that this new conception, based on the guiding role of the educational process, does not exhaust all the possibilities of positive influence on children and young people. In extracurricular and extracurricular activities, the study of these issues and problems of the sphere of personality should be continued.

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