

Well-being pedagogy and quality of life

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ABSTRACT

This paper looks at today's pedagogy as a discipline focused on education, learning and forming, not only in childhood and adolescence but also in adulthood and in old age. It addresses various aspects of life, school and extra-curricular activities, formal and informal, always in search of new educational content as well as long-life learning, education for democratic coexistence, intercultural education, etc. It can be considered as the science, which on one hand is attentive to the individual, his rights and his growth, and on the other hand it is considered as the science which is attentive to the individual's relationships with others. The educational project, in fact, regardless of the fields of application, carries in itself the well-being and quality of life of the person, taking care of the formation but also of their education, by maintaining the health and development not only physical but also, and above all, psycho-social. These considerations have significantly contributed to the expansion of the space of educational intervention, and have even occupied previously unadulterated territories by traditional pedagogical knowledge. A good education aims to provide learning experiences that will positively influence student behavior and their lives, and promote communication with others around them. Pedagogy thus, is not just a field of human life, but it must be a multi-plan formative project of man, in order to intertwine the diversity of human component dimensions. Pedagogy has a duty to build a person who is capable of gaining cultural, civic and ethno-social values.

Keywords: pedagogy, education, formation, well-being, quality of life.

Introduction

Today's pedagogy behaves like a science that has as a target the formation of men and women in their complexity, treating different periods of life in different countries where they are born, grown, where they live, express and realize themselves. This means that exists different pedagogy, one for each area where people operate, create relationships and live (Capparucci). Pedagogy today is very complex, as well as today's society. If once the target was studying the child and the preparation of the teachers, and also the major reforms carried out in the education system, today it has extended the aim of treatment at different ages of life, not only in childhood and adolescence but also in adulthood and in old age, it addresses various aspects of life, school and extra-curricular activities, formal and informal, always in search of new educational content as well as long-life learning, education for democratic coexistence, intercultural education, education toward peace... All fields of education have expanded to include a variety of subjects and contexts (Lozupone, 2009).

Nowadays the formation is the epicenter of pedagogical debates as a main and problematic chain, it has undergone reflection and critical analysis, to be updated and elaborated in view of the new cultural conceptions in which is situated.

Pedagogy as a discipline focused on education, learning and forming, orients towards individual dimension of the subject (the cure for oneself and the maximum development of creativity and individual autonomy), and social (attention towards others, knowledge of the world, above all practicing duties as a citizen). It can be considered as the science, which on one hand is attentive to the individual, his rights and his growth, and on the other hand it is considered as the science which is attentive to the individual's relationships with others.

In this sense, the reflection is neither made on the model of a 'pedagogy of the individual', which is considered as a science focused primarily on the individual, nor exclusively made on a model of 'social pedagogy', which is positioned towards extra-individual contexts. It is mainly to focus the reflection on pedagogy relations, able to handle the individual and the context of his life (Orefice & Sarracino, 2004).

The formation, is stated and restated accurately, is probably the key category of our time. Certainly the formation encompasses many meanings, social, professional, political, etc. but above all, today more than ever, has a personal meaning: to give sense and life to an autonomous self that knows himself and wants to give meaning to its vital journey and process. A subject that transforms into an individual and becomes a person. This all leads the subject to commit in order to form oneself. Curing oneself, critical and modern category, totally current and cultivated in this actuality, is presented as an authentic educational paradigm. The cure for oneself becomes a central tool in pedagogy. What does it mean to educate if you do not care and do not take care of a entity, a group, a social institution consisting of individuals? Caring means to be projected, in defense, through understanding and design, with determination, through the donation act, together with empathy and understanding. Taking care means taking on the burden of growing up, which is conducted in the independence of the subject or subjects that are being educated, but that should be addressed and respected in their path, they should be understood in their

independent direction (in relation to their character and/or willingness), must be evaluated on their way although it is almost always a zig-zag. In pedagogy cure goes from the specific to the general and is fixed just on the occasional passion, individual, and specific, unique, that any subject or group will represent and will submit to the education, seeking always *ad hoc* treatment.

The cure in pedagogy is presented as a cure for the formation, positioned at a higher and complex level and thin/ambiguous in relation with education. The cure as formation is the cure of a subject. It is established within the process of its formation, as its human formation. The cure is embodied in the dialogue that is and should be open (mutual) between two "actors", so the cure as formation produces equality and parity. The cure as formation cares to create self-formation conditions, constant search of its identity, the equilibrium structure, to identify, the trace of which should be durable as it is marked by anxiety, opening, searching for oneself. The cure today is a multi-meaningful category. It is a fact that the treatment and the cure, today more than ever before, are being investigated in connection with the structure and meaning, with a deep theoretical tool: epistemological and phenomenological. This is happening particularly in pedagogy, which is the knowledge for the cure and it fixes to the cure one of its basic categories (with education and training, with self, deliberate interference and the purpose of its processes in general, etc.). It is theoretical and practical. At the theoretical framework the education and formation require the cure: we educate by supervising, by urging, by "feeding", and by orienting and they all are actions that are regulated by the cure, by leading for improvement, although education is more direct and formation requires freedom of the subject and positions the subject in its self-building. This is where it stems the duty to fix the weight, the meaning, and the dynamics of the pedagogical cure, in the empirically-reflective way.

Forms of the cure for oneself constitute culture and culture certainly is faced in school more than anywhere else. Is faced in the school of knowledge, dialectics of culture, and its research, of all the knowledge pertaining to the individual, both as kind and individual, as an individual that re-activates its universalization. In the school of motivation, of "constructive" knowledge, of curricula and of formation (principles intertwined among them), it certainly happens the meeting with the cure for oneself. Although it should be more explicit and programmed. It should be part of the curriculum and above all of its didactics: a communication of the knowledge that regards to the subject and whenever it is possible it makes the knowledge to speak to the subject, to make it sensible to the value of the culture. That is, the humanization of the world produced by the kind through culture. Culture can and should be conveyed to school, therefore, as a cure for itself. The school has the right tools to do this and has the ability to reach all subjects. It should do it in childhood and in adolescence. Taking care of oneself is the best task of our existence, of our growth in time, and of being a conscious actor of a life project (Cambi, 2010).

The educational project, in fact, regardless of the fields of application, carries in itself the well-being and quality of life of the person, taking care of the formation but also of their education, by maintaining the health and development not only physical but also, and above all, psycho-social. These considerations have significantly contributed to the expansion of the space of educational intervention, and have even occupied previously unadulterated territories by traditional pedagogical knowledge.

Well-being is determined by a combination of factors that require the global treatment of the subject. Individual health is the fruit of balance between the many subjective dimensions in interactive relationships with the surrounding environment. Well-being is characterized, therefore, as a state with many components, many directions and many dimensions. It is more complex because it is the union of biological, psychic, social and operative components of the human personality. It is multi-directional as it changes vertically, in different cycles of life, and horizontally, in different places of life. It is multi-dimensional because its perception is transformed both synchronously and at the same time as a particular episode lived at a particular moment in the life of the individual, even diagonally, when the tension for good-feeling returns to a longer time interval. The most common perspective in which well-being pedagogy is implemented is that which considers the relationship of cure and assistance as not a rather cautious procedure, but as special communication processes which tend to develop the autonomy of the persons involved through empowerment cognitive actions, or activating a relationship that helps the person develop skills to gain strength and power in establishing his/her own well-being (Capparucci).

In the field of pedagogy, the cure is about cultivating the existential potentials of persons, based on the effective conditions (personal, cultural, social) in which they live in. As it is known the cure, as a structure of existence, always happens: not only when subjects are found in difficulty and weak conditions, but during their existence, because always, as a human being, we are dealing with the task of "changing form". The cure seems to be deeply related to the formation and education: it is a collection of experiences (environment, persons, gestures, instances) through which we achieve a way of being, a form of ours, starting from situations which, since birth, have nurtured, kept, forced us to be in a way that later we can learn to know ourselves and to know the world, so to choose, to ask "who" we may be. In a sense, the cure is always educational, authentic or not: in the sense that however its presence produces negative or positive effects that greatly affect our existence (Palmieri).

We can not have an effective development of the entire planet without taking care of the citizens of the future. Child protection and care is an absolute priority and it depends on adults who should be responsible for the future of younger generations. The development of a society depends on the ability we have to provide to the new generation the right "equipment" to handle the reality. The role of childhood seems, therefore, in every country and cultural context to be the key element for the development of a community. Being a child it means to involve oneself with its own specifics within an indirect planning characterized by tradition and innovation. In this sense, child development takes place in close relationships with the adult world. This implies the need to reflect on the undoubted role played by adults - even though in areas of different socio-cultural characters- on children's development opportunities, on their personal and social destinies, leading unconsciously to potential future and shaping their formation path (Iavarone, 2009).

Sensitive pedagogy should equip students with the right tools to expand their knowledge within the limits of self and into inter-subjective forms - e.g. it should enable co-operation between peers, which supports the exchange of affectivity. A community that works democratically and cooperating learning are evidence to the key role that pedagogy plays in sensitivity education.

Dialogue is a pedagogical tool by which the development of inter-subjective sensitivity reaches its full potential. Dialogue pedagogy ensures that someone grows into relationships with others and understanding others. This is a process that allows students to establish relationships while spontaneously enabling them to understand others. Dialogue pedagogy is an access opportunity, where subjects reasonably approach the situations of others. It's a confirmation option where two friends solve a problem. It is also a place of "different lifestyles" where "different entities" are challenged through inter-subjective mediation. In our meetings, our bodies physically, vocally and verbally meet and this is a meeting that puts an affective exchange while spontaneously providing an opportunity for cognitive and metacognitive growth. Sensitive pedagogy can support sensitivity development at a much higher rate if embraced by school culture. This requires supervisors, teachers, and students to radically change their concept of school - to create a different vision of it. This necessarily requires the abandonment of large environments, undefined tools, in favor of small educational environments that allow inter-subjective exchanges within the school structure as a whole and within each classroom. The previously defined hierarchical relationships, intrusion control and quantitative assessment should be re-conceived in order to support a pedagogical system that is in line with the reality and development needs of the children and adolescents. This is the conclusion that educators should seek. By contrast, we will accept the risk of being poor caregivers for children and society (Schertz, 2006).

Pedagogy thus does not focus solely on one field of human life, but should expand its vision into a multi-plan formative project of man, in order to intertwine the diversity of human component dimensions. Pedagogy has a duty to build a person who is capable of gaining cultural values (ability to think with his own head), civic value (to be conscious of his rights as a citizen), and ethno-social value (the task of building an active democracy). In this way, education and training theories should be the ideal environment for designing an educational life: open to different and future-oriented opportunities. The regulatory criterion of forming new generations is the critical thinking reflecting on the variety of thoughts that man raises for oneself (Haydon, Mancil, & Loan, 2009) .

Many times it has been mentioned that health and well-being comes as a result of the interaction of the biological, psychological and social system of humans. Moreover, we are confident that health and well-being are more than a lack of an illness or stress, as positive feelings pose more than a lack of negative feelings. Positive emotions, if noticed with attention, are seen to improve health, well-being and psychological state. Preventing or alleviating problematic negative feelings does not mean to cultivate positive feelings. Positive feelings influence the growth of personal resources of the individual, starting from physical, intellectual and social resources. Well-being affects the focus of people on the objectives they have undertaken, the deepening of thinking, and the generation of a wide range of ideas and actions within the areas where they are focused. The bond between well-being and the growth of human resources suggests that well-being plays an important role in development since early childhood. Well-being can influence beyond making people feel good or enhance their life experiences. It has the potential to expand the common way of thinking of people and build their physical, intellectual and social resources. These processes help people overcome the stresses of the moment more easily and make them more flexible against future problems. Positive emotions can be cultivated in people to achieve a

better well-being and health. Positive emotions when properly cultivated prevent, treat and create coping strategies, particularly effective, for future problems. This makes pedagogy today not only seen as science that deals with the education of children, but also the formation of man in his complexity, in different places where he was born, grows and lives (Fredrickson, 2000).

Both the society and the school community have the responsibility to ensure successful interventions towards well-being, providing the necessary support for schools to fulfill their educational goals. The school prepares students to achieve their maximum potential in order to contribute to the common good and achieve their personal goals in life, enabling them to reach their creative, intellectual and social potential. It prepares them to succeed in life and to make an active contribution to the community they belong to. The school has the opportunity to create the right conditions where many structures can offer their contribution to the well-being of children. The school should welcome outside assistance by playing an easy role in joining social components where students find themselves while focusing on their institutional mission (Hoyle, Samek, & Valois, 2008)

Instead of traditional knowledge, good education aims to provide learning experiences that will positively influence student behavior and their lives, and promote communication with others around them. The well-being approach focus on the attention to the health and empowerment of students. This approach provides them with the right path and enables them to take decisions on their health and improve their quality of life (Kosonon, Haapala, Kuurala, & Mielonen, 2009).

Promoting positive mental health, e.g. through the experiences made in the childhood through good parenting, more effective education services, better managed jobs, effective care for the elderly and good education can serve to increase the levels of well-being, happiness, fulfillment and satisfaction of people. So the formation of well-being is a duty that belongs to everyone and we must all engage more every day to achieve the highest levels of well-being. This initiative needs to be taken at a younger age, as this is the only way we can hope to improve emotional development and reduce the problematic behaviors observed in adolescents. Interventions made in childhood can prevent problems in adulthood. Also the social and economic burden, that health problems bring, will be eased and there will be an increase in the number of people who will enjoy better health. School involvement in promoting well-being is related to high levels of emotional and social well-being, more employment and better income, and access to health, social and community services. Efforts should be made to help schools open up and become the health center for community life. For this, schools need resources and training to help them work with students and parents (Weare, 2007).

The pedagogical well-being of students is combined with success in lessons, which in turn relates to the ability of students to participate in learning and school activities. Characteristic of the type of pedagogical interactions that promote student satisfaction, participation and empowerment are their perceptions of themselves as active learners and their experiences for a continuous and meaningful feeling. Thus, a prerequisite for promoting pedagogical well-being education is for students to perceive themselves as active participants in the school community. By contrast, lack of efficiency, sense of exclusion and inequality are characteristics that threaten the formation of pedagogical well-being. So if students feel excluded or dominated by the teacher during the teaching/learning, they will remain passive or will hold a rigid stance,

different from when they feel skilled and appreciated by the teacher. Respectively changing and reflective strategies of problems can promote students' sense of empowerment and dialogue between them and teachers. Also, the ways in which problematic situations are solved not only affect the closure of the situation but also what students learn about themselves and the image they create for themselves as pupils and members of the school community. The pedagogical well-being of students is first regulated by the quality of interaction with peers, teachers and the community at school. Numerous studies show that interaction with peers seems to play an important role in the pedagogical well-being of students. Functional relationships with peers are a source of good pleasure, while misunderstandings and quarrels among them are considered as the source of anxiety and stress.

Finally, it can be said that success, both in lessons and in the overall social achievement, seems to be a central condition in creating good pedagogic experiences of students. Pedagogical well-being perceived by students may even prevent and promote the achievement of learning goals in the school context. From this perspective, it seems that the primary context for pedagogical well-being of students not only presents challenges but also provides a positive source for generating student empowerment, openness, and continuity of lessons. The ability and the skill to use social resources of the school environment combined with the active learning process can protect students from experiencing anxiety and emotional stress. This depends on whether the interrelationship between student learning and student well-being is considered seriously as a prerequisite for the school development (Pyhältö, Soini, & Pietarinen, 2010).

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