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SHORT COMMUNICATION

Social-emotional education: review of proposals on the role of emotions in guiding actions towards well-being

La educación socioemocional: revisión de propuestas del papel de las emociones para orientar las acciones hacia el bienestar

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ABSTRACT

Throughout the experience and professional in teaching to provide skills and abilities in the clinical and health area, cognitive models have opened a series of reference points on the scope of models related to emotions and their role in people's wellbeing.

Based on Caro (1997), the points to be developed in the cognitive models have currently generated proposals oriented to the clinical area as well as to health promotion.

In recent years, emotions have been incorporated as a fundamental axis for their teaching aimed at reorienting the quality of life in human development.

The present proposal is based on a reflection on the fundamental notions about emotions and the way in which grounded approaches of actions are proposed for the valuation of cognitive and social factors that represent an axis on which the direction of change in their role in human development is oriented.

Concurrently, I will describe the proposals to be considered in a broad construction framework in which the learning, transformation and adjustment of emotions to human development is expressed in a psychological-cultural-social continuum.

Keywords: emotions, social-emotional education, wellbeing.

RESUMEN

A lo largo de la experiencia y profesional en la enseñanza para proveer de habilidades y destrezas en el área clínica y de la salud, los modelos cognitivos han abierto una serie de puntos de referencia sobre los alcances de los modelos relacionados con las emociones y su papel en el bienestar de las personas.

Con base a lo expresado por Caro (1997), los puntos a desarrollar en los modelos cognoscitivos han

generado actualmente propuestas orientadas en el área de clínica como en la promoción de la salud. En los últimos años las emociones son incorporadas como un eje fundamental para su enseñanza dirigida a reorientar la calidad de vida en el desarrollo humano.

La presente propuesta parte de una reflexión sobre las nociones fundamentales sobre las emociones y la manera en que se proponen aproximaciones fundamentadas de acciones para la valoración de factores cognoscitivos y sociales que representan un eje sobre el cual se orienta la dirección de cambio en su papel en el desarrollo humano.

De manera concurrente, describiré las propuestas a considerar en un marco de construcción amplio en el cual se expresa el aprendizaje, transformación y ajuste de las emociones al desarrollo humano en un continuo psicológico-cultural-social.

Palabras clave: emociones, educación socioemocional, bienestar.

Emotion is a subject shared by different disciplines, and there is currently an interest in focusing on its role in human development in general and in therapeutic and health processes in particular.

Emotion has a history that spans from classical Greek culture, with Aristotle and continues with essential figures in philosophy whose ideas on the subject are a fundamental basis for approaching its study.

This paper reflects on the importance of emotion in therapeutic activity and its impact on health processes.

What is an emotion?

According to Calhoun and Salomón (1989), the theories proposed by Aristotle and James consider two sets of components: one based on biology, which assumes that emotion is based on the physiological reactions accompanying a sensory process. James expressed this when he stated, "We must ask if the emotional process in the emotional center in the sensory or motor center is a peculiar process, or if it resembles the ordinary perceptual processes of which those centers are already recognized as the focus."

James' proposal links the physiological part with perception, which he posits as a thesis in which he states that "bodily change" follows directly from the perception of the existing fact and that our feeling of those changes as they occur is the emotion" (p. 143). In "this case, the physiological aspect is fundamental. In constructing emotion, sensation functions as a mediator to compose emotion. Calhoun and Solomon (1989) state that they doubt this position for two reasons:

1. Because they consider it a reduction of emotion to the perception of bodily change and
2. for them, emotions are felt and experienced continuously and not only in specific occurrences.

A causal analysis is suggested to offer a solution. This was raised with other proposals before what James stated (with authors such as Descartes, Hume, and Spinoza to point out the most relevant ones). In a particular way, the authors value the way Aristotle approaches the concept of emotion by postulating it as: "A more or less" intelligent way of conceiving a particular situation, dominated by a desire." In this proposal, there are links [relationships] with psychological processes; intelligence and desire are processes in which emotion is constructed; in current terms, there are contexts where the continuum of the process of feeling locates a range of emotions that participate in human development.

EMOTION: CHARACTERISTICS TO BE CONSIDERED

Combining the two positions, according to the authors cited, we have a frame of reference that opens up vast possibilities for addressing the implications of the question: What is an emotion? When considering the whole, both physical and conceptual [Mental].

This leads us to examine emotion as a complex process. By this, I mean the interaction between the physiological, cognitive, and social, including cultural aspects.

A contemporary way of approaching emotions is to assess them in a complex environment; their function is to regulate and develop survival behaviors, thoughts, and attitudes from an evolutionary and social perspective of adjustment to contexts to build well-being.

We are in a constant state of reconstruction, which, in some way, is part of what we experienced during the pandemic and the "normalization" we are currently experiencing.

We live in unexpected circumstances that we face daily from perspectives ranging from common sense to the use of information as a reference for survival and change in the quality of life.

In this unexpected event, the changes in the perception of contemporary daily life in which there is overflow and rapid change, the attention to the aspects to be taken into account for construction of quality of life, the memory that guides the activities to build resilient skills and the language that allows the development of communication messages to develop thoughts that constitute actions for a framework of care and quality of life.

As noted above, one way of approaching the explanation of causality in the construction of emotion is that: "it can be as 'simple as the designation of the incident that 'triggered' it,' or it can' be as complex as and as detailed as the entire causal history of a specific emotion in a particular person" (Calhoun and "Salomon, 1989: 36).

During human development, the construction of emotional states is generated in the complexity mentioned above; based on what is described by Magento and Magento (2010), emotions:

1. They are acquired through maturation; they are evolutionary: the human being acquires a variation of different emotional states that provide an evolutionary richness in two senses: a) There are characteristic emotions at certain ages and b) The way of experiencing and expressing them varies according to age (in early childhood, they are abrupt, sudden and fleeting, and as we grow older they are moderate, stable and convenient).
2. They involve learning, and they are learned in the family and social environment. Verbal labels identify these spaces.
3. They arise as a response to a stimulus; this can be sensory, produced by an event, a conflict, or a person, to point out the most relevant.

4. They are internal experiences with different intensities; they happen inside the person and may or may not be communicated.

5. They are contagious; as learned, the emotion can be transferred (propagated).

This complexity is constituted in a web in which the individual develops a well-being or disturbance that affects them at different levels. The role of emotion is fundamental. Nussbaum (2001), based on Epicurean philosophy, postulates the function of valuation in the emotional states of external events since these are regularly beyond personal control. The approach to coping and its relationship with emotional states is still fundamental; coping is: "A psychological" l process set in motion when unwanted or stressful changes occur in the environment or when the consequences of these events are not desirable. The principal preparation for the action of the emotional response of fear is the facilitation of escape or avoidance responses to dangerous situations" Fernández and" Palmero, 1999: 12-13. It is here where the contribution of psychology acquires a multidisciplinary dimension, supporting, with its theoretical and applied tools, the approach to teaching those affected to regulate emotional states, as well as making it possible to study them in the dynamics of construction and evolution at this moment in time, where the role of emotion is a linchpin for individual and human development.

THE ROLE OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

Avía and Vázquez (2018) point out the following characteristics of emotions:

- Positive emotions ... arise when we perceive that plans are going according to plan. Things are going well. What gives meaning to negative emotions is being able to recover the interrupted objective, to restore the state of desirable things; in the case of positive emotions, to continue with what has been done up to that point, to prolong it and enjoy its fullness (p.76).

The emissions [of the] indicate states of the world to which one must respond. Since all emissions react to something, they are, in a first sense, adaptive (p.76).

Social and emotional education had a space and purpose even before the pandemic. At that time, it promoted skills that would allow the identification of basic emotions, what they meant and possible alternatives for their regulation.

TABLE 1. Five basic emotions, contexts in which they occur and behaviors that give rise to them (Coatley and Johnson-Laird, 1987).

EMOTION	STATUS OF THE MAIN PLANS	TRANSITION
EUPHORIC		
HAPPINESS	The objectives are being achieved	continue the plan with the necessary modifications
DYSPHORIC		
SADNESS	Failure of the main plan or loss of a goal in progress	Do nothing to look for an alternative plan

ANXIETY	Threat to self-presentation	Stop, alert to the environment, escape
ANGER	Frustration of a plan in progress	Try to attack again
DISGUST	Violation of a gustatory goal	Rejection of the withdrawn substance

In this summary, the situations of the main plans are presented, which correspond to a first approximation of the meanings of thought (cognitive) that comprise the physiological and behavioral sensation of basic emotions. In the transition, there is a first general approximation of an assessment of these emotions.

SOCIO-EMOTIONAL EDUCATION

Socio-emotional education programs were promoted even before the pandemic, linking the importance of knowing the role of emotions in human development and the possibilities they have when understood as a complex adaptive mechanism for survival, coexistence, adjustment, and improving interactions.

Rodríguez, Chernicoff, Jiménez, Labra, and Baalovich (2020) offer an approach to socio-emotional education that considers the following aspects:

- Socio-emotional learning (SEL) is defined as the process of acquiring skills that enable people to recognize and manage their emotions, establish and maintain constructive relationships based on empathy, understanding, and collaboration, as well as make responsible decisions and persevere to achieve goals (Ellias et al., 1977; Weissberg, Durlack, Domitrovich and Gullotta, 2015). P.2.
- Socio-emotional competencies help us understand and regulate our emotions and interact constructively with others. In this way, socio-emotional competencies are precisely those that enable us to solve everyday problems with responsibility, flexibility, and creativity (Weissberg, Durlack, Domitrovich, and Gullotta, 2015; Tuirán & Villaseñor, 2016). (p.7)

The inclusion of activities to manage the learning of emotional skills is becoming increasingly urgent, both for the reconstruction we are experiencing in the post-pandemic period and in ordinary activities that are increasingly intense and affect health in a way that is concurrent with stress, anxiety, and depressive states. In addition to generating moments of well-being, in both cases, well-being and the imbalances that disrupt ordinary life, the role of both assessments as a principle for developing emotional regulation actions is necessary. Its importance is the incorporation as part of life, and it is in the school environment space for its incorporation since, as the authors mentioned above point out:

Schools are not places where students only acquire academic skills; they also learn to recover from adversity, feel more connected to the people around them, and aim higher in their aspirations for the future. It is a space for acquiring tools to enable them to have a meaningful life and contribute to personal well-being and society.

Socio-emotional education has been emphasized more since the pandemic. It is seen as a part of change, not only to face and rebuild human development that tends towards coexistence, not only in the school environment but in everyday life.

CLOSING; REFLECTIONS FOR ACTION

Current historical circumstances, where events considered catastrophic in relationships, offer points of reference for reflection that, with current information tools, allow us to develop actions that we are experiencing in a process that involves a step towards involving ourselves in complex psychological processes of constant transformation. The dynamic leads us to consider continuous uncertainty, which promotes our actions to live a new reality that, although built daily, adaptation develops relevant habits. This is why the situation in the educational environment, as Gergen (2015) puts it, quoting Holzman, “is just as important for students to learn to develop and sustain emotionally significant relationships as those that are practically effective” (p. 373).

The proposal of socio-emotional programs has been recurrent; it has not been easy. Their incorporation, in addition to promoting an attitude of awareness towards aspects that imply changes in the perception and importance of the role of emotions in the construction of well-being, requires taking the reference shared by Rodríguez, Chernicoff, Jiménez, Labra, and Baalovich (2020).

When we talk about educating for well-being, we are not imagining a world of hedonism where everyone is constantly smiling, but rather a world where individuals are committed to themselves and others; at the same time, they experience the deep satisfaction of contributing to the benefit of others and acting ethically. According to Hanna Arendt, it can be said that “the ultimate goal of human actions is eudaimonia, that is, happiness in the sense of living well, which is the longing of every human being; all acts are different means to achieve it (p.28).

Following the authors above and about the objective that is generally and daily referred to as educating to be happy and that implies in a particular way an emotion, joy, they point out that we can rather speak of eudaimonic well-being, also called psychological well-being, which is related to the following six aspects or dimensions:

- A sense of purpose and direction in life.
- A life by personal convictions.
- The extent to which talent and potential are used.

- The ability to handle situations in life.
- The depth of bonds with other significant people.
- The knowledge and acceptance of oneself (Ryff, 2013 -p.28-).

I will conclude this proposal with the ideas of Lazarus and Lazarus (2000), who, in some way, propose a vision for considering both emotions and their evaluation, and they state it as follows:

An emotion is a personal work related to the destiny of our beliefs about ourselves and the world in which we live. An assessment of the personal meaning or significance of what is happening in that confrontation arises. The plot differs from emotion to emotion; each has its own story. p196 [1:p.195].

With these elements, the general guidelines can be considered to be investigated both in the specialized bibliography aimed at non-professionals as well as professionals in both health and education; taking them, adapting them, training appropriately, and evaluating them will provide ideas to be transformed into axes and indexes of their impact not only in the implementation, but also in the concrete actions towards behaviors, thoughts, and actions that benefit well-being for development.

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