



OPINION OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF PEDAGOGY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SEXUAL EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL

OPINIÃO DE ESTUDANTES DE PEDAGOGIA SOBRE A IMPORTÂNCIA DA ORIENTAÇÃO SEXUAL NA ESCOLA

LA OPINIÓN DE LOS ESTUDIANTES DE PEDAGOGÍA CON RESPECTO A LA IMPORTANCIA DE ENSEÑAR EDUCACIÓN SEXUAL EN LA ESCUELA

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ABSTRACT

Objective: identify the opinion of students of pedagogy course on sexual orientation at school. **Method:** descriptive study, quantitative, consisting of 107 undergraduate student at Pedagogy at a university in northwest Paraná. The inclusions criteria in the survey were: to be an undergraduation student at Pedagogy and to agree to voluntarily participate at the study and as exclusions criteria were: the absence in the classroom during the questionnaire application and refusal at participate in the survey. For data collection, after appreciation by Ethics Committee in Research of Universidade Paranaense - UNIPAR, under protocol nº 19706/2011 and CAAE nº 0380.0.375.000-10, by signing the Free and Informed Consent Form(FICF), a questionnaire composed of two parts was used: the first consisted on academic socio-demographic data; the second considered the views of scholars on sexual orientation at school. The data were organized and shown in absolute and relative frequency, tabulated at Microsoft Excel[®] spreadsheet version 2010 and analyzed with support of relevant literature. **Results:** from analysis of data it could be observed that the participants agree that sexual orientation in schools is important for children and young people and, therefore, should be mandatory in school domains. They understand that the discussions on the subject does not encourage early sexual behavior and not just attribute to family and biology teachers the responsibility to bring up the topic. They argue that sexual orientation in schools corresponds to a effective instrument in preventing STDs and in reducing abortion, and disagree that the information provided by the media could to replace the school in the construction of sexuality of their students. **Conclusion:** it can be conclude that the school is considered the propitious space for discussions about sexuality in its many facets. **Descriptors:** sexuality; sexual behavior; teaching.

RESUMO

Objetivo: identificar a opinião de estudantes do curso de pedagogia sobre a orientação sexual na escola. **Método:** estudo descritivo e de natureza quantitativa, constituído por 107 estudantes de pedagogia de uma universidade no noroeste do Paraná-PR. Foram critérios de inclusão para este estudo, ser estudante regularmente matriculado no curso e aceitar em participar voluntariamente do estudo; e como critério de exclusão, não estar presente na sala de aula durante a aplicação do questionário, o qual foi constituído de duas partes: a primeira tratava dos dados sociodemográficos do estudante; a segunda abordava a opinião dos estudantes sobre a orientação sexual escolar. Para isso, o projeto de pesquisa foi apreciado pelo Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa da Universidade Paranaense/UNIPAR, sob protocolo nº 19706/2011 e CAAE nº 0380.0.375.000-10, e mediante assinatura do Termo de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido. Em seguida, os dados foram organizados e apresentados em frequência absoluta e relativa, tabulados com a planilha do programa Microsoft Excel[®] versão 2010 e analisados com suporte da literatura. **Resultados:** os participantes concordaram que a orientação sexual nas escolas era importante para crianças e jovens e que, portanto, deveria ser obrigatória. Compreenderam que as discussões sobre o tema não estimulavam sobre o comportamento sexual precoce e não atribuíram apenas à família e aos professores de biologia a responsabilidade de dialogar sobre a temática. Consideraram que a orientação sexual nas escolas correspondia a um instrumento eficaz na prevenção de doenças sexualmente transmissíveis e na redução do aborto provocado, além de discordarem que as informações disponibilizadas pelas mídias pudessem substituir a escola na construção do exercício da sexualidade responsável e calcada em escolhas mais acertadas dos alunos. **Conclusão:** a escola foi considerada o local propício para as discussões sobre sexualidade nas mais variadas facetas. **Descritores:** sexualidade; comportamento sexual; ensino.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: identificar la opinión de los estudiantes del curso de graduación en pedagogía sobre la orientación sexual escolar. **Método:** estudio descriptivo y de naturaleza cuantitativa, constituido por 107 académicos de pedagogía de una universidad en el noroeste del Estado de Paraná. Los criterios de inclusión eran, ser estudiante regular matriculado en el curso, estar de acuerdo en participar voluntariamente del estudio y como criterios de la exclusión, no estar presente en el aula mientras se aplicaba el cuestionario. Para colecta de datos, después de apreciación por el Comité de Ética en Investigación de la Universidad Paranaense - UNIPAR bajo el protocolo 19706/2011 y CAAE 0380.0.375.000-10, y mediante firma del Acuerdo de Consentimiento Libre y Esclarecido, se utilizó un cuestionario constituido de dos partes: la primera trataba sobre los datos socio-demográficos del académico; la segunda abordaba la opinión de los académicos sobre la orientación sexual escolar. Los datos fueron organizados y presentados en la frecuencia absoluta y relativa, con el programa de hoja de cálculo Microsoft Excel[®] versión 2010 y se analizaron con el apoyo de la bibliografía pertinente. **Resultados:** a partir del análisis de los datos se observó que los participantes concuerdan que la orientación sexual en las escuelas es importante para niños y jóvenes y que, por lo tanto, debe ser obligatoria en el espacio escolar. Ellos comprenden que las discusiones sobre el tema no estimulan el comportamiento sexual precoz y no atribuyen apenas a la familia y a los profesores de biología la responsabilidad de abordar la temática. Consideran que la orientación sexual en las escuelas corresponde a un instrumento eficaz en la prevención de ETS (Enfermedades Transmitidas Sexualmente) y en la reducción del aborto provocado, además de no concordar con que las informaciones hechas disponibles por los medios puedan sustituir a la escuela en la construcción de la sexualidad de sus alumnos. **Conclusión:** se concluye que la escuela es considerada el local propicio para las discusiones sobre sexualidad en sus más variadas facetas. **Descriptor:** sexualidad; comportamiento sexual; enseñanza.

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INTRODUCTION

The discussions on human sexuality, as well as on other related matters, have always been restricted to the school environment. However, due to the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), the growing number of teenage pregnancy and AIDS epidemic, some of the traditional approaches on sexuality have been revised in the biological context and extended to social, cultural and health promotion fields.¹

It is important to emphasize that sexual orientation in the school environment goes beyond set parameters as to what determines male or female, heterosexual or homosexual orientations; emerges as a tool to be able to extinguish prejudices and clarify about taboos that still persist in society.¹

The Brazilian National Curricular Parameters - *Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais* (PCN) legitimizes the inclusion of sexual orientation in schools as a right for students and duty for the teachers. Discuss all aspects of sexuality with children and young people give them the possibility of living healthy and conscious of their own sexuality.²

To discuss about sexual orientation in school is also included in the Project of Health and Prevention in Schools - *Projeto de Saúde e Prevenção nas Escolas* (SPE), launched by the Brazilian Ministry of Health in 2004, and whose main purpose is to encourage schools to create projects on sexuality broadly and without any kind of prejudice, aims to promote creating dialogues between teachers, students and parents, integrating them to that project and develop works with special attention to health promotion and guidance of students, for the formation of responsible and critics adults.³

Nevertheless, it is noted that sexual orientation in school is a long and complex process that requires thorough planning on the approach, allowing a space capable of providing reflections on the conceptions of every human being. The main intention is making sexuality may be experienced in the most pleasant and natural way as possible, after all, to guide the exercise of sexuality in schools is very important, as it encourages young people to discover their characteristics, as well as developing identity, self-esteem and body.⁴

For this purpose, the educator should know to compare the different approaches towards to sexuality made by the science and the media - through teaching and artistic

activities - to reflect and discuss, for example, about the aesthetic and sexual standards imposed by the media.²

One of the reasons that contribute to the sexuality is a theme silenced in schools is the fact that teachers, when were students, possibly had not adequate training on the subject or may have difficulty involving their own sexuality.⁵

Therefore, the professionals involved in educational processes must be prepared to work on this subject in the classroom, including those issues related to its willingness to accept and contextualize the values and behaviors expressed by students, even if they are contrary to their personal values, not revealing particular concepts of what is right or wrong, but using a scientific basis to assist in the formation of concepts about the sexuality of students.²

The attitude of educator before the sexuality makes a big difference and contributes to success of student in seeking for answers, through him/her work, the teacher can encourage critical and consistent thinking from the students.⁶

OBJECTIVE

- Identify the opinion of undergraduate students of pedagogy in relation to sexual orientation in school.

METHOD

This research was developed in descriptive character and quantitative nature. The target population consisted of 147 students of the pedagogy course at a university in the State of Parana/PR - Brazil; the calculated sample was 107 students. Thus, we used the simple random sampling process to select the subjects who participated in the research. The data collection was performed from April 1 to May 30, 2011.

The inclusion criteria in the research were: being a student regularly enrolled in the course (pedagogy) and agree to participate voluntarily of the study, and as exclusion criteria, not be present in the classroom during the administration of the questionnaire or not agreement on the participation in the research.

The data were collected after assessment of the research project by the Ethics Committee in Research from Universidade Paranaense - *Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa da Universidade Paranaense* (UNIPAR), according to the CAAE nº 0380.0.375.000-10, receiving

favorable opinion to its publication under Protocol nº 19706/2011, and by signing the Free and Informed Consent Form (FICF), respecting the ethical principles of Resolution 196/96 of Brazilian National Health Council.⁷

The data collection occurred in class time of students with prior authorization from coordination of the course with the concurrence of the Director of the Campus. Initially, students were informed about objectives of the study, their voluntary participation, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity of responses.

Then, it was applied the questionnaire divided into two parts: the first was the socio-demographic data of the student, and the second addressed issues of sexual orientation, tool adapted from the *Questionário de Avaliação de Atitudes face à Educação Sexual* (QAAPES).⁸

The data were organized and presented in absolute and relative frequency, tabulated with the spreadsheet Microsoft Excel spreadsheet ® version 2010 and analyzed with support of relevant literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The participants of this study were 107 undergraduate students of Pedagogy, 96.3% were female and 3.7% male. It was verified that the age ranged between 18 and 40 years and 45.8% were in the first year, 32.7% in the second, and 21.5% were in forth year. In school year 2011 there were not students of third year in the course, more than 85% of students were single and 78.5% admitted to Catholicism as religious beliefs.

When asked about the importance of sexual education for children and youth, 60 (56.0%) agreed; 40 (37.3%) strongly agree; 6 (5.6%) neither agreed nor disagreed, and only one (0.9%) disagreed.

The sexuality is part of the school context and should be seen as ontological dimension, essentially human, whose experiences and meanings are determined in its entirety.⁹ So, talk about sexuality is referring to feelings, emotions and affects that are fundamental in the development and in life.¹⁰

The school is an appropriate place for the full development of children and youth, as it helps to understand the maze of information aimed at the formation of knowledge, including on gender issues, creating space for discussion on the theme of sexuality.¹¹

The educational work about sexual orientation contributes to extend the concepts of

sexuality, which, in most cases, is related only to sex. So, it will possible to create a positive outlook on sexuality. Thus, it favors to students the development of clear communication in interpersonal relationships, the elaboration of proper values from critical thinking, understanding of their own behaviors and behaviors from other people. So, they can take responsible decisions. Moreover, if the person is engaged in an open dialogue about sexuality from childhood, it will be able to have conscious attitudes, contributing to the preservation of him/her own well-being in the experience of sexuality, free from fears and distresses.¹¹

Guiding to aim the perspective of exercise of responsible sexuality is to provide reliable information, discuss, question and promote information and redefinition of values displayed by the society during the life of every child or young person. It implies mediation of essential knowledge, considering the needs and possibilities of the students as subjects of ongoing process, which is the search for new vision of their experiences, concepts and attitudes.⁶

Asked if the sexual orientation in schools encouraged early sexual behavior, 49 (45.7%) disagreed; 17 (15.8%) totally disagreed; 29 (27.1%) neither agreed nor disagreed; 11 (10.2%) agreed, and only one (0.9%) totally agreed.

The early exercise of sexuality does not allow the child to experience it in their playful experiences, which are the foundation for the development of creativity and relationships. In childhood, a child eroticized, primarily influenced by the television channels, will focus his/her affection for sexuality and, later, in adolescence, may act rashly and even deviant or sickly with sexual issues, generating losses that may accompany him/her for the rest of life.¹²

The important role of school as guidance for issues involving sexuality is undeniable, since it influences the integrity of the formation of children and young people.¹³ The early sexual initiation among adolescents raises concerns, because in most cases occur without any care due to lack of knowledge about the conception process, STDs and contraceptive methods.¹¹

However, in a study performed with almost five thousand young people in three Brazilian cities - capitals, (Porto Alegre, Rio de Janeiro and Salvador), it was observed that sexual initiation of adolescents occurs a little later, around an average of 16.7 years, among men who have had an extension of schooling.

Among the less educated, the average age is 15.8 years. Among women, the variable on schooling acts even more significantly than among men. According to this research, women who stopped their studies before completing elementary school began their sexual life at around 16.3 years, while those that continued with their studies only to had sex at around 18.6 years. The research also cited other parameters, in addition to schooling, that influence the age of sexual initiation, such as family income, parents' religion, family history, religious mobility, age at first job or first date.¹⁴ It is consolidated, however, the fact that, among youths who received sexual orientation, there was a delay of sexual initiation.¹⁵

The sexual orientation, when performed properly, through programs, projects and continuous educational actions does not encourage early sexual behavior, but prepare children and youth for life.¹⁶

As regards the issue of the exercise of sexuality be learned throughout life and not in school, 34 (31.7%) responded that they disagreed; 34 (31.7%) neither agreed nor disagreed; 27 (25.2%) agreed; 08 (7.4%) totally disagreed, and 04 (3.7%) strongly agreed.

These data showed that respondents recognize, in their most part, the importance of school space for the formation of the sexuality of children and young people, although it is possible to observe also that a significant portion of students have doubts and even agree that the school does not hold the quality of knowledge related to sexuality and does not replace the experience accumulated over the life.

The sex education is distinct from sexual orientation as it relates to the informal learning that we receive about sexuality throughout life, that is to say, the notions of morality, gender, their sexual probabilities, finally, all the concepts and conventions used by the family and society in general, to "plague" the individual from birth to death. In contrast, the sexual orientation is related to the knowledge generated in the school, which is systematic and formal.¹³

Family and friends can not be ignored when it comes to sexuality, but, it must be considered that they do not promote sexual orientation that encourages the reflection on ideas and attitudes, which leads young people to seek the support of schools and health units as means to dispel doubts, anxieties and guilt, learning, therefore, to develop, live and feel their sexuality amply.¹⁷ Since sexuality is

formed throughout life, influenced by history, family, society, media, religion, and individual feelings. Thus, it has the characteristic of being unique for each subject.

Hence, the sexual orientation should take into account the biological, psychological and socio-cultural parameters, which often does not occur, as parents and educators, when addressing the subject, do so with the biological approach, they do not providing all the necessary information to development of children and youth, such as affectivity, interpersonal relationships and pleasure.¹³

The school's mission should be understood in terms of complementing the work of parents in the ambit of sexual orientation. This is collaboration of the school institution, which have like mission to add information to the education imparted in the home, promoting partnerships between school and family. It is necessary to seek appropriate technical of approaching to stimulate students' interest, using pedagogical practices that interact with the construction of knowledge and critical thinking for behavior changes, providing exposure of ideas, concepts and experiences without fear of any judgment.¹⁸

As regard the issue if only biology teachers possessed the responsibility of sexual orientation, 36 (33.6%) students totally disagreed, 51 (47.6%) disagreed; 10 (9.3%) neither agreed nor disagreed; 08 (7.4%) agreed, and only 2 (1.8%) strongly agreed.

The sexual orientation is one responsibility of professionals in education and health in its overall context, should be developed prevention actions and health promotion strategies aimed at increasing the knowledge of children and young people about the concepts of sexuality, diversity and sexual health, the respect by yourself and others, affection, finally, all the points that comprise the universe of sexuality.⁴

The school is dynamic and covers matters of various orders, which often directly or indirectly, are contained without any planning and, after it, remain generating conflicts without receive more attention, except in extreme cases. However, among educators there is interest in resolving such conflicts, but, there are no physical, pedagogical or even psychological structures, to argue this theme.¹³

The exhibition on sexuality in the school has to take place in community, not shifting also the individual aspect that characterizes the approach of the professional educator

with researches and works prepared in accordance with the possibilities of acting, together with a group of students, with the objective to bring positive ideas in relation to sexual orientation. Thus, the teacher has the ability to listen and understand students, with questions that will arise in the course of teaching, for a better understanding of the discussions proposed.¹⁹

Nevertheless, the biological and heterosexist approach still persists in the teaching about sexuality. The sexual orientation also creates insecurity among teachers who delegate this responsibility to invited experts such as doctors or nurses.¹⁹

According to that contained in the PCNs, sexuality has as main feature a multidisciplinary character. Therefore, all disciplines include contributions in the process for development of the studies, such as biology, history, sociology, anthropology, psychology, and economics, among others. It is important to reiterate that there must be permanent and participative methodology a, through group dynamics, argumentations, use of materials that encourage discussion of social and individual values.²

When asked if the sexual orientation should be one of the mandatory areas in all schools, 16 (14.9%) students disagreed, which represents a low rejection rate as the deployment of sexual orientation in schools. In contrast, 23 (21.4%) neither agreed nor disagreed; 53 (49.5%) of respondents agreed and 15 (14%) strongly agreed.

One study performed with students from the fifth year of elementary school to third year of high school in a state school in Florianopolis(Brazilian city), that received continuing education, clarifying questions about various aspects of sexuality, describes as main results: reducing the number of teenage girls that become pregnant, the decrease in the level of aggressiveness of the students, probably for the opportunity of expression and greater participation in the learning process, the decrease in verbal repression by not using the box of secrets, since there was more freedom for open dialogue.²⁰

Develop strategies aimed at dealing with sexuality allows students the opportunity to become better prepared adults, who know defend their rights and develop their duties, even when it comes to aspects related to sexual activity. It is very important that educators seek and employ appropriate methodologies that leave students encouraged

to discuss this theme in order to achieve broader and more diverse knowledge.¹⁹

Even so, it is known that the school presents difficulties to address this theme, and even knowing the importance of teachers in the learning process, it is no surprise the fact that they are not fully prepared for this task, because they do not know how to work it because, probably, during his own schooling, also did not receive such guidance from their masters, including in the universities, in degree courses that do not have one exclusive discipline to discuss about sexuality.

However, many times, even teachers with knowledge and willingness to articulate it, they lack support or encouragement of government policy or even the school, which does not provide conditions for its realization. Therefore, in most cases, teachers repress their pupils when sexual issues arise in the classroom.

When asked if the actions of sexual orientation in schools were very effective means of preventing STDs, 53 (49.5%) agreed; 46 (42.9%) strongly agreed with the above, and 05 (4.6%) neither agreed nor disagreed. It is noteworthy that the rate of reproof was low, with 02 (1.8%) disagreed, and only one (0.9%) totally disagreed, which demonstrates that students are aware that the school, when plays its role as educator can positively influence the attitudes of children and young people about sexuality.

According to the Progress Report of Brazil 2008-2009 in relation to targets set by UNGASS - HIV / AIDS (English acronym for the Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations which has among other objectives: the promotion of sexual and reproductive health of adolescents and young; the reduction of infections of HIV / AIDS and school dropout due to early pregnancy, the greater participation of youth in the formulation and implementation of public policies for prevention of STDs; stimulating the culture of prevention in schools), 63% education institutions in 2007 worked with the theme on STD, a greater proportion than in 2005, when the percentage was around 60%. It also showed an increase in the number of schools that distributed condoms, which in 2005 were 5.7% and 7.9% in 2007.²¹

The report further indicates that the SPE is reference to the actions of prevention to STDs, in the school environment, so that there was a significant expansion with the creation of the *Programa Saúde nas Escolas* (PSE) in

2007, promoting an alliance between health institutions and schools.²¹

It is necessary consider that sexual orientation is intended to prevent STDs, since not only guarantees the quality of life, but is essential in social, economic and cultural relations that are key elements in developing the character and attitudes involving sexual health. Thus, the lack of information is characterized as the main factor in this process, leaving people more vulnerable to acquiring STDs.¹¹ However, for programs of sexual orientation have positive effects on sexual behavior of children and young people must respect their prior knowledge, and discuss on educational activities used by educators and if they are based on ethic and holism.²²

When asked if the actions undertaken in schools about sexual orientation constituted means capable of preventing the use of abortion, 1.8% (only 2 respondents) disagreed completely; 9.3% (10 participants only) disagreed; 11.2 % (12) neither agreed nor disagreed; 53.2% (57) agreed, and 24.2% (26) strongly agreed.

According to the PCNs, the theme - abortion - should be covered in the school environment, because it is a controversial issue, which involves questions regarding: its meaning, the feelings linked to the sexual act; to problems on public health originated from the clandestine practice of this resource; the denominations in favor of women's rights over her body (the laws of Brazil only permits abortion when pregnancy results from rape or create a risk to the mother's life and in the case of anencephalic babies); the currents whose defend the rights of the fetus, and, of course, the social and religious issues surrounding the event.²

Interestingly, observe that the same society that discriminates against the use of abortion turns out to encourage this practice because, often, the reason why the woman to get this output is just the psychological pressure from the social environment in which she is inserted. According a study, single women or women that suffered: sexual violence, incest or adultery, and even those who already have children or adult sons have a number of children considered appropriate to its economic limits, are examples of women who can conceive pregnancies, in the social point of view, considered undesirable and, therefore, find in induced abortion as a means of escape from the harassment suffered, or distress in the school, family and community contexts.²³

In this context, schooling has been reported in several studies as a positive differential in relation to reproductive behavior of the population. Thus, sexual orientation in schools should be done through free panorama of sexist and homophobic concepts. Indeed, the access to such guidance is necessary, because it ensures young people the possibility of greater control and respect over their bodies and use of contraceptives, avoiding the practice of abortion and other violence acts.²⁴

When asked if it was the parents and not the school that competed sexual orientation of children and youth, 11 (10.2%) respondents disagreed completely, 41 (38.3%) disagreed; 42 (39.2%) disagreed or nor agreed; 9 (8.4%) agreed, and only 4 (3.7%) strongly agreed. It is interesting to note that (39.2%) students demonstrated not to have opinion on the question proposed, which may indicate some perplexity about the polemic exposed.

The family is the basis of human development; it is responsible for the first social interventions, and, thus, has an influence on sexuality throughout life. However, family interaction, related to sexual questions, is still limited, mainly due to embarrassment and shyness, either from children or their parents, who believe that "talking" can lead children and young to early onset of sexual activity. Another reason for the silence is related to the beliefs and customs that permeate people's imagination and influence on their behavior. Thus, the school provides a favorable environment considered ideal, since it encompasses groups of diverse cultures to share knowledge, including the knowledge oriented for the exercise of sexuality.¹¹

The difficulty of the family to act exclusively as a teacher of sexual issues relates to the fact it is not yet prepared to discuss this theme, often acting contradictory and inadequately. In many cases, even the parents are insecure about their own sexuality, so do not feel comfortable to talk with their children. Thus, the family group needs to be integrated into the process of sexual orientation, increasing their knowledge about sexuality, becoming a cooperative element of the school.⁵

One research performed in Sao Paulo, with 383 young aged 15 to 19 years, revealed that adolescents were seeking information about sex with friends, but doubts about preventing pregnancy were more often approached with parents, while the clarification of STDs were delegated to teachers and health

professionals. According to the responsible for the study, this "social-family network" must be seen as the foundation of health and education projects for young people. Such projects should be strategically adapted to the context of children and young people, including not only teachers and health professionals, but also parents and other family members.²⁵

Talking about sexuality is still taboo for fathers and mothers, since they generally do not hold knowledge or even attitude for that purpose. Therefore, the school should act, expanding the understanding of the theme beyond what is proposed by the society.¹⁰ Working with students allows reflection on what are based the relationships between human beings, and they (relations) invariably refer to sexuality. However, it must not be ignored the knowledge acquired previously by the students, including what is available in the family context. There must be synergy between school and family, creating quiet discussions and joint actions.²⁶

When participants of this study were asked about sexual orientation in schools is little required, because of all information available in magazines and television channels, 67 (62.6%) disagreed; 17 (15.8%) totally disagreed; 11 (10.2%) agreed; 11 (10.2%) neither agreed nor disagreed, and only one (0.9%) totally agreed.

It is clear that the vast majority of future educators, possibly, believe that the school still maintains its role as main educator on questions involving sexuality, but there were some of respondents that possessed doubts and even agreed with the proposed situation. This shows how much influence the media resources have on the behaviors and ways of thinking, although it is necessary to reiterate that these resources should not replace but complement, to the extent possible, the lessons offered by educational institutions that offer program for sexual orientation, providing the stimulus to critical reflection on what is presented by the media.

Nowadays, the mass media, especially television, have been discussing certain aspects of sexuality, but through mistaken and distorted ways, especially sexual health questions, gender roles and homosexuality, which provides incentives to curiosity and fantasies of children and young people who sometimes consume wrong information and without any critical analysis on this matter.²

An important aspect to be addressed is the question of the trivialization of the body,

proposed by the media, which in turn stimulates the transformation of the people in simple objects. The media provides precocity to children and young people, making them "little adults", and promote their transformation into "sex objects".²⁶

Novels, movies, advertising, talk shows, magazines and even the "naive" cartoons often discuss and address the sexual and gender diversity in their agendas. However, this "excessive discursiveness" of the media does not always guarantee a decrease of sexism and homophobia. On the one hand the media shows diverse ways of living sexuality, forcing educational institutions to propose revision and updating of your regular education, on the other hand also encourages the expression of conservative groups.²⁷

The whole complex process of construction of sexuality of an individual occurs throughout life, through teachings and experiences. This process is influenced by society, family, culture, and, nowadays, especially by the media in its various facets (television, advertising, internet, music, choreography). It is undeniable how significant is the interference from the media in the development of the sexuality of children and young people.²⁸

When students were asked if the responsibility of sexual orientation in schools should be delegated for all teachers, 42 (39.2%) agreed; 29 (27.1%) neither agreed nor disagreed; 18 (16.8%) disagreed; 14 (13%) strongly agreed, and 4 (3.7%) totally disagreed with the situation proposed in the questionnaire.

While most students agree that sexual orientation should be held by all teachers, the percentage of those who had doubts and disagreement was significant. This demonstrates that students know the importance of involvement of the teachers in perform activities related to sexuality regardless of the discipline that they minister, because it is a crosscutting theme. However, it is necessary to signalize to the view of considerable number of respondents who consider sexual orientation as a topic restricted to certain teachers and should only be approached in certain disciplines.

The sexuality is likely to be given in any discipline, for all educators, but it should be emphasized that these professionals need to be able to discuss issues in an ethical and respectful manner, without value judgments and prejudice or exposure of their beliefs, so that the orientation process is in fact correct,

free and not limited only to the traditional content of these biology textbooks that reduce the sexuality to anatomy, reproductive physiology and prevention of STDs.²⁹

It is the function assigned to the school to offer reflections on matters relating to sexuality, without deleting what has been handed to the student by family and society, but adding the formal and systematic knowledge that requires planning of educators. The implementation of sexual orientation in schools should be multidisciplinary, and discussed by all teachers, according to the purpose of work and the reality of school.²

It is important, in this regard, to emphasize that teachers have an interest in the theme, as they often do not feel comfortable with the discussions and impose them as mandatory may be detrimental to the success of the project.

Finally, it must be considered that the introduction of this theme in the school as well as their mainstreaming, even though having an official nature covered by the education policy of the country (Brazil) still does not occur in a legitimate and ongoing pedagogical practice, as there are groups who defend the discussions in schools and groups who are concerned about their role in the sexual orientation of students.³⁰

CONCLUSION

The performance of this study may demonstrate the students' opinions of the graduate course in pedagogy from a higher education institution about sexual orientation in schools.

Thus, it was observed before the data analysis, that the vast majority of future teachers agreed that sexual orientation in schools was important for children and young people and, therefore, should be mandatory in schools.

Furthermore, it was possible to identify that the students disagreed that the discussions about sexuality in school encouraged early sexual behavior among children and young people.

They did not attribute not only to family and biology teachers the responsibility to discuss sexuality in school, which in crosscutting nature, is likely to be given by all teachers.

They considered that sexual orientation in schools was an effective tool in preventing STDs, and to avoid abortion, and disagreed

that the information provided by media resources could - somehow - usurp the role of teaching institutions in the process of construction and orientation on sexuality of its components(students).

In view of the above mentioned, considering sexuality as an integral part of human being and taking into account that children and young people are not asexual beings, it is concluded that students interviewed considered the school as a place for discussions about sexuality in its various aspects.

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