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## EDUCATION IN MORAL VALUES FOR INTERCULTURAL COEXISTENCE

### EDUCACIÓN EN VALORES MORALES PARA LA CONVIVENCIA INTERCULTURAL

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#### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the formation in values as a factor that affects the intercultural coexistence of children and adolescents. In this sense, a bibliographical review type research with a qualitative approach was developed. The methodological strategy was systematized through analytical-synthetic and hermeneutical methods; as well as the content analysis technique. One of the main findings is the formation of moral values from basic education what is fundamental for the integral development of the personality of children and adolescents. There is a kind of symbiosis between intercultural education and education in values. It contributes to the interculturality, a way of life. The intercultural education taxes to the education in values, the respectful dialogue of knowledge, the harmonic relations and the riches of the other cultures; context in which the intercultural educator is the mediator of educational actions and spaces to develop these values and establish intercultural relations.

#### Keywords:

Moral value, education in values, interculturality

#### RESUMEN

El propósito de este trabajo es analizar la formación en valores como un factor que afecta la convivencia intercultural de niños y adolescentes. En este sentido, se desarrolló una investigación de tipo de revisión bibliográfica con un enfoque cualitativo. La estrategia metodológica fue sistematizada a través de métodos analítico-sintéticos y hermenéuticos; Así como la técnica de análisis de contenido. Uno de los principales hallazgos es la formación de valores morales a partir de la educación básica, lo que es fundamental para el desarrollo integral de la personalidad de los niños y adolescentes. Existe una especie de simbiosis entre educación intercultural y educación en valores. Contribuye a la interculturalidad, un modo de vida. La educación intercultural grava la educación en valores, el diálogo respectivo del conocimiento, las relaciones armónicas y las riquezas de las otras culturas. Contexto en el que el educador intercultural es el mediador de acciones y espacios educativos para desarrollar estos valores y establecer relaciones interculturales.

#### Palabras clave:

Valor moral, educación en valores, interculturalidad.

## INTRODUCTION

Each society is in charge of determining the value system that it considers pertinent and necessary to train its citizens and thus meet their needs; establishes the duties that each citizen has with the group that integrates and the system of rules that regulate the behavior and coexistence of its members.

The school is responsible for the formation, development and transmission of these values as an educational institution responsible for the social order of the integral education of the young generations of citizens. It has the responsibility to guide this formative process, which begins with the determination of moral values as *“a first step to develop the capacity for self-reflection, self-assessment and self-determination”*. (Legrá, 2018)

It is in these spaces intentionally organized for education that the knowledge, skills and values demanded by society are specified. Through education as a cultural process, social groups reproduce their culture, and as part of it the values that characterize them, to guarantee their continuity, social order and the preservation of their customs, traditions and ways of life.

Undoubtedly, this process becomes complex and at the same time inexcusable for those multicultural and plurinational societies, where people of different races and cultures coexist, with different customs, religions and ideologies (Durán, 2015); as it is in Ecuador, a reality recognized by the State in 2008, through the Constitution of the Republic, when expressing: “Ecuador is a constitutional State of rights and social justice, democratic, sovereign, independent, unitary, intercultural, plurinational and lay”. (Ecuador. Asamblea Nacional, 2016)

But this recognition of the multicultural condition of the country is not enough; public policies that favor inclusive and intercultural practices are needed to build on a solid foundation a new society, influenced by the relations of equity and equality between the different ethnic groups that make it up, in all its manifestations: cultural, religious, economic, politics, among others (García, 2018).

According to Parra (2014), nations with these heterogeneous characteristics must establish policies that allow the integration, cohesion and socialization of all their citizens, from a positive perspective of diversity as a premise for harmonious and peaceful survival.

From this angle of analysis, public policies should be oriented towards the generation of strategies that promote a change in social structures where human beings are recognized as the fundamental, improvable, transcendent and propelling element of the necessary transformations,

whatever the type of ethnic, cultural and ideological differences; for García, Duran & Parra (2017), through education and the promotion of values, it is possible to achieve this cohesion and unity among all the peoples and nations that integrate society for the sake of the citizen coexistence.

In this regard, in the last decades in Ecuador educational public policies have been implemented aimed at this purpose. In this context, the Organic Law of Intercultural Education (LOEI) is promulgated in 2011; that among its principles declares education in values: “Education must be based on the transmission and practice of values that promote personal freedom, democracy, respect for rights, responsibility, solidarity, tolerance, respect for gender, generational, ethnic, social, by gender identity, condition of migration and religious belief, equity, equality and justice and the elimination of all forms of discrimination”. (Ecuador. Asamblea Nacional, 2011).

It institutes the necessary values for coexistence in the multicultural space of the country and the establishment of intercultural relations among its members, as freedom, democracy, and respect for diversity, responsibility, solidarity, tolerance, equity, equality and justice.

However, despite these provisions, it is common to observe some manifestations of discrimination based on race or sociocultural origin among peers in educational centers; what motivates the present work with the objective of analyzing the formation in values as a factor that affects the intercultural coexistence of children and adolescents of school age.

The study carried out responds to a type of literature review with a qualitative approach. The methodological strategy was systematized through the scientific methods of analytical-synthetic research that allowed the decomposition of the object of study, the formation of values, in their constituent elements and then integrate them through synthesis, until reaching results and conclusions.

In addition, the hermeneutic method was used to interpret and compare the texts. The application of the content analysis technique facilitated searching, selecting and reviewing the bibliographical materials on the subject, with the support of the Information and Communication Technologies resources.

The bibliographic review was addressed through the following aspects:

- Epistemic approach around the concept of moral value.
- Training in moral values of basic education students.

- Relationship between values education and intercultural education.
- Role of the intercultural educator in the formation of moral values.

## DEVELOPMENT

Education in values contemplates the behavior and feelings of the individual living in society, in all its dimensions and with nature. It starts in the family, continues in the school and in the social context.

It is in the family where the infant apprehends and learns the first customs, habits and modes of behavior, work that must continue the school as an educational institution that plans, organizes, directs and develops the teaching, extra-instructor activities and extra-curricular processes, as well as coordinates the actions of the non-school educational teaching process with the rest of the social, religious, cultural, political and family institutions, among others, that together contribute to the systemic formation of the moral values desired by society.

But, what can we understand by moral values?

First, begin with the approach to this concept by considering the term value; this is a polysemic word, used in various spheres of human activity; It has different meanings, including moral values, also known as ethical, or human. According to Rivas (2014), *“they humanize us because they improve our condition as people and perfect our human nature”* (p.35). Then, these values are relative to the essence of the human being, are the set of factors and beliefs necessary for coexistence in harmony, to which the entire community aspires to improve and perfect.

The definition of value, according to Legrá (2018), *“it is an ethical and moral scale that the individual possesses when acting; It is closely related to the education that everyone has received since childhood. It helps us to discern the good from the bad and consequently, will set the values of each one of us”*.

Thus we see that values are acquired and are in correspondence with the education received; the moral conduct of the individual will be the result of what is or is not a value for him.

For Mendoza (2014), values are *“conditions of the human being that allow forming a culture of peace when practiced collectively and the priority is the integral development of each person, this implies attitudes and behaviors that reject violent acts that generate instability in coexistence”* (p.60)

In this statement a new element is appreciated, the plural dimension is considered, when establishing the practice

of these in collectivity as a way of promoting harmonious coexistence among people, as a basis for intercultural relations.

All people have values that consciously or unconsciously guide their behavior and life project. These values have to do with cultural aspects and personal experiences, so that each individual forms his own system of values on which he perceives the surrounding world (Ethel, García & Parra, 2018); seen in this way the values represent a way of life, are related to the behavior and positioning adopted on the various situations presented in everyday life, manifested through feelings, actions and behaviors. So then, moral values can be understood as the way of being and behaving the individual or social group.

These values are the qualities that typify a subject or society, are customs, culture, religion, traditions, ideas or conceptions, which acquire a certain social significance so that they constitute value; they express the positive social significance of a phenomenon and direct the behavior of human beings.

From this analysis, it is deduced that the moral values to be developed in the new generations for intercultural relations will be determined by the significance for the individual and the community represents an adequate behavior within the ethics that governs the reality of the society they live.

It is then up to the democratic societies through the State to implement the educational system that will have the task of forming and promoting the moral values they need to build a coexistence based on ethical principles.

### Training in moral values of basic education students from interculturality.

As we pointed out earlier, value is born, acquired and developed from the family, its promotion continues in all areas and throughout the life of the individual; the formation and promotion of ethical values is an attainable and necessary goal to achieve a way of life, where respect, equality and equity prevail.

Values are taught and learned, are transmitted through interpersonal relationships; through positive actions aimed at the search for solutions to the problems of the community and personal fulfillment; by observing and appreciating the attitudes and ways of thinking of others and by critically reflecting the models to be imitated.

But, this conception is not limited to the relationship between people, it also covers the interaction between the different social groups and institutions that make up the

community; It could be said that values are the result of the collective construction of all citizens and social actors.

In this context, educational institutions play an important role in achieving the moral values necessary to train their students, with a greater significance in the students of basic education, as children and adolescents are individuals in full personality training. *“That is why it is important that training starts from the first years of school education to transform the value structure”*. (Mendoza, 2014)

For this reason, the education in values from the school scenarios of basic education is fundamental for the integral development of children and adolescents; and thus achieve human beings with solid ethical principles; that’s why the teacher should know the particularities of the students and implement strategies that involve all members of the educational community, which significantly affect the ethical, socio-affective and intellectual development of the students (Ethel, García & Parra, 2018).

Training in values, although initially the family is responsible for achieving this role in children, the school, a place where multiple cultures converge, is the place conducive to train values in learners. The intercultural education in Ecuador is expressed in the Organic Law of Intercultural Bilingual Education is the product of the struggle against discrimination and violation of the human rights of ethnic minorities in the country. This educational policy was imposed with the purpose of eliminating the factors of exclusion, rejection and granting all individuals equal opportunities.

Espinoza (2016), states that one of the challenges of educational institutions today is to have the conservation of this cultural diversity, which can be emphasized in intercultural education, therefore, this type of education cannot be seen as a simple program or as an education that should be addressed to people from different contexts, but should be seen as an approach to learn to live in harmony and improve to achieve social change, according to the demand nowadays.

Therefore, interculturality should be seen as an opportunity for coexistence, integration, and inclusion of ethnic groups, different groups, in which the ideas, beliefs, traditions and languages of different cultures are respected. To visualize a committed society, is to pretend to live in harmony, for this an amendment is urgently required where people can enjoy the same rights and opportunities without being discriminated against.

Without a doubt, the formation of values based on intercultural coexistence, the teacher plays an important role in this process, since it is the person who instructs the

student in a positive way and instills the necessary values for a peaceful coexistence and respect for cultural diversity, as mentioned by Gutiérrez (2012), the author also mentions that the teacher must learn new attitudes, methodological strategies, in order to promote a moral and positive environment where the student is offered the opportunity to participate, work with their peers, coexist, include and integrate so that it is seen as that opportunity for cultural and educational acquisition.

The interculturality in the Ecuadorian school, is a habitual social fact, it is the meaning to the whole of the integration of representatives of different cultural groups, that endowed by the different habits manage to share with the other classmates, their values, as well as behaviors, what makes that, in turn, product of that interaction, is in a constant process of transformation to obtain positive or negative changes, as the case may be (Villalta, 2016).

It is affirmed that Intercultural Education, finally seeks to enable educational institutions to work collaboratively, which allows to put into practice equity within the academic context, so that in this way there is no rejection and discrimination of ethnic groups (Mendoza, 2014), which implies later having a commitment for the responsibility that this entails, because it is sought that the rights of children and adolescents are respected.

#### Relationship between education in values and intercultural education

Intercultural coexistence is possible through a constant and systemic work of solid values formation; that’s why intercultural education is anchored to education in values; this is evident in the LOEI when it is stated that its purposes are: *“the inculcation of respect and the permanent practice of human rights, democracy, participation, justice, equality and non-discrimination, equity, solidarity, nonviolence, fundamental liberties and civic values”*. (Ecuador. Asamblea Nacional, 2011)

So, we cannot think of a true and conscious intercultural relationship without the presence of moral values, which as we have already mentioned, are fostered and developed in the educational process that takes place in the school. In spite of the discriminatory manifestations among peers and as a result of them, in a general sense in school institutions there is a tendency to face cultural diversity through educational practices through projects and strategies aimed at improving coexistence among students and establishing bonds of respect and collaboration between teacher-students; what can be seen as a positive exercise for its projection to the rest of the social sphere.

We cannot forget that the classrooms and the educational centers are small communities where the existing relationships in the sociocultural contexts are reproduced, it is a question of reverting the process and that the positive intercultural relations that are established between the members of the educational community influence and determine the behavior of the rest of society.

But, we must be realistic, this effort is arduous and must begin with the transformations of the school; that it must go from the implementation of strategies centered within the institutional walls, focused on the prevention and correction of errors, to other more encompassing ones, that overflow those limits, in which the social future of intercultural coexistence is sought.

It is to enhance the cognitive, procedural and attitudinal qualities of the members of the educational community to cultivate the habit of extending the principles of interdependence and complementarity of the educational model based on values, to put these in function of broader and heterogeneous social circles outside of formal educational centers (Aristóteles, 2014).

On the other hand, education in values is a doctrine called to educate with an axiological vision of the world and of the human being; endowing the apprentice with a humanitarian and solidary conscience (Noboa, 2018), which allows understanding the spiritual dimension of the other, basis for the establishment of harmonious coexistence and a culture of peace (Mendoza, 2014), which undoubtedly makes possible the dialogue of knowledge and intercultural relations (Krainer, Aguirre, Guerra & Meise, 2017).

In addition, it is important to emphasize that between intercultural education and education in values there is a kind of symbiosis; the values developed in our students contribute to interculturality a way of life, while intercultural education taxes education in values, by enabling respectful dialogue between different cultures, harmonious relations with others, apprehend the riches of the other cultures and value ours.

The formation of values from the school setting is fundamental in the integral development of children. Thus, the school assumes a preponderant role in front of society; however, teachers have limited time and knowledge to attend and guide values to their students. In this sense, Jacanamejoy (2010), considers the struggle that indigenous peoples have to move forward, is the impetus of intercultural law in the framework of the diversified rights of these, is the macro-politics of globalization and fundamental rights, who grouped in different contexts, claim the vindication of those rights.

Thus, the policy of intercultural education is a good tool and strategy for the world to move towards the restoration of educational coexistence between students and teachers, counting with the intercultural educational right.

Likewise, the different international organizations state that education is a fundamental element for citizens, through this support intercultural education is taken into account. In addition, education is established as the main basis for the development of the human being and interaction with others; taking into consideration the acceptance, integration, inclusion of different cultures in the same context.

Through education to the people, the progress of society is achieved; for which, it is relevant to consider education in interculturality, since it highlights the need to form a contextual cultural anthropological perspective, in which recognition, integration and equality of conditions are framed, in a context of cultural diversity to overcome exclusion, discrimination and segregation as social problems. This is what García mentioned (2015), that's why he considers intercultural education as a right of all citizens, avoiding discrimination.

The characteristics of intercultural education are inclusion and integration, also, Cabrera & Gallardo (2013), define intercultural diversity, as an educational value, composed of a set of characteristics that make people and different groups in correspondence with physical, genetic, cultural and personal factors that each one possesses.

In this same order, one of the characteristics refers to the coexistence and relationship as mentioned, Cabrera & Gallardo (2013), "*intercultural education should focus on the delimitation and formation of attitudes and universally desirable values and agreed to allow respectful coexistence, mutual acceptance, solidarity and human communication*". Taking as reference the equality of conditions, peaceful coexistence, harmony that allows us to relate together, at the same time mentioning educational systems to promote interculturality and respect.

#### School coexistence in an intercultural setting for the formation of values

Regarding intercultural coexistence, according to studies carried out by Espinoza (2016), he mentions that among the influential factors that affect teachers in a negative way for the normal development of their academic activities in the teaching-learning process, is the excess activities entrusted to be fulfilled by them, in addition, the exaggerated load of content to be developed in the classroom, the little exercise using transversality as a methodological resource when applying the curriculum; likewise, the scarce organization of trainings in the educational establishments

leading to enhance the capacities of teachers in this area, to benefit the process of training children under their responsibility.

Undoubtedly, the causes mentioned by the author have a direct influence on the occurrence of the aforementioned irregularity, if, in addition, the lack of harmony and respect among colleagues is considered, especially with those coming from other sectors of the country. For this reason, it is considered that it is the trigger in demotivation in the classroom, little fellowship and formation of subgroups within the group, because of that, it is understood that training in values has a considerable influence on harmonious coexistence.

In this same sense it is important to emphasize that, the coexistence in the educational field is conceived as a space of construction in the interpersonal relationships of a school, among students, teachers, directors, who interact in it, where mutual respect begins, the approval of the diversity in the classrooms, cooperation, solidarity and the assertive value without violence of conflicts as manifested, Muñoz, Lucero & Cornejo (2014), so, it is essential to coexist in the classroom contexts prevailing in the first place the mutual respect between colleagues and teachers.

Coexistence establishes one of the most important aspects in human relationships. The school as the first socialization space in which children form a part, a place that allows them to begin their social life and frequently experience cultural diversity. Since here the importance of the teacher to educate under a coexistence of respect, solidarity and equality, always having into account that each student has its own identity and culture.

School coexistence is one of the priorities in the education system, so it is necessary to implement adequate strategies to achieve positive results and thus live in harmony day by day, where the culture of peace is highlighted, in this way, the school plays a fundamental role in the implementation and development of education for peace according to Gutierrez & Perez (2015). This implies that school coexistence allows us to relate together in the classroom context, allowing us to acquire new and better knowledge, but above all to achieve peaceful iteration, which contributes to the formation of values.

Coexistence implies a moral order that is implicit in all the events of school life. But beyond the normative and pedagogical, coexistence, involves training to understand the point of view of the other. Guzmán (2015), states that, the student must be esteemed and respected, require respect towards oneself, in order to achieve a sufficient degree of self-esteem, and act with solidarity, tolerance and understanding towards the usual events.

Schools are a fundamental part of the teaching and learning process, but there are often inconveniences in them, especially in relation to intercultural coexistence. When these situations occur, the students involved often feel excluded, discriminated against by their students. Peers, that is, they do not feel part of the classroom, they do not feel free to be able to express themselves freely, which affects their cultural mental structure.

#### Role of the intercultural educator in the formation of moral values

Now, this education in values from the multicultural context constitutes a challenge for teachers; this intercultural educator, from the respect to the individuality of each of his students, coming from different cultures, must be able to achieve in them the development of ethical values in the achievement of the development of society as a common goal.

Starting from the knowledge of diversity, the teacher should use it positively as a tool to project flexible educational actions in correspondence with the intellectual development of the students, in order to achieve harmonious and enriching coexistence, with the contributions of each student from their cultural perspective.

But, the teacher with his actions can promote environments of true intercultural coexistence, he must distinguish between the factual level where multiculturalism is situated, with cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity, the interculturality assumed through intercultural relations, inter-ethnic, inter-linguistic and inter-religious, and the normative level present through socio-political and ethical proposals, which regulates this educational process.

In this way, the importance of the teacher in the formation and promotion of ethical values is recognized, which decisively influences the development of social skills (Duran, Parra & Márceles, 2015), demonstrated in the conviction with others in a multicultural world.

In this sense, the teacher must implement didactic-methodological strategies to encourage students to taste the values of other cultures from the recognition and appreciation of their own cultural attributes and teaching to learn through the use of inclusive practices that eradicate the school and social spaces discriminatory and exclusionary manifestations that violate the norms of intercultural relations; in order to promote a true inclusive coexistence where the students feel free and respected to be able to manifest their culture, without any type of prejudice.

## CONCLUSIONS

From a multicultural perspective, moral values are conditions of the human being that allow to form a culture of peace when they are practiced collectively having as a priority, the integral development of each person, indispensable for harmonious coexistence and the establishment of intercultural relationships.

Values are taught and learned, they are transmitted through interpersonal relationships; they also cover the interaction between the different social groups and institutions that make up the community. The education of these values from the school scenarios of basic education is fundamental for the integral development of the personality of children and adolescents.

There is a close relationship between intercultural education and education in values; the moral values developed in our students contribute to interculturality a way of life and intercultural education taxes on education in values, respectful dialogue of knowledge between different cultures, harmonious relations with others, apprehend the riches of other cultures and value ours.

The role of the intercultural educator in the formation of values is given in the implementation of didactic-methodological strategies that encourage students to taste the values of other cultures from the recognition and appreciation of their own cultural attributes; as well as teaching to learn through the use of inclusive practices.

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