COMPONENTS OF MORAL EDUCATION AS INTEGRAL PARTS IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS: FREEDOM, MEANINGS, CONSCIOUSNESS, IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT: Components of Moral Education as Integral Parts in the Educational Process: Freedom, Meanings, Consciousness, Implications.

The essence of moral education consists in creating a suitable framework for the internalization of moral components in the child's moral personality, in the elaboration and stabilization of the moral profile on this basis in accordance with the requirements of modern society. The fundamental goal of moral education is the formation of man as a moral subject, who can think and act according to the requirements and demands of social morality, the ideal of society, the values, norms and rules that this society claims at a given moment.

The moral component of education is a fundamental one, because moral education contributes to the formation and development of conscience, of moral conduct, helping to form later social-moral behavior.

Keywords: *moral education, family, faith, school, group of friends, religion.*

The specificity of moral education is determined, on the one hand, "by the particularities of morality, as a social phenomenon", which give it its content, and on the other hand, "by the socio-psychological conditions that are involved in their realization". The foundations of the child's personality are laid from early childhood, when some more stable traits of temperament and character are outlined. The concept used is that of moral behavior.

According to the DEX, morality is the set of norms of coexistence, of people's behavior towards each other and towards the collective, and the violation of which is not sanctioned by law, but by public opinion.[1]

The coexistence of a society is possible only by virtue of the "common good". Thus, the criterion by virtue of which the norms of coexistence are selected or adopted is this "common good".

Thus, moral behavior is that behavior that corresponds to these norms of coexistence and behavior of people towards each other in a society, based on the idea of "common good". Thus, to behave morally is to act in accordance with the good accepted by the majority.

The specificity of moral education is determined, on the one hand, by the particularities of morality viewed as a social phenomenon, which determine its content, and, on the other hand, by the socio-psychological conditions that are involved in its realization.

Moral education therefore represents that dimension of education that has as its fundamental objective the formation of man as a subject who thinks, feels and acts in accordance with the moral values of society.

Morality represents an essential dimension of human existence, of the manifestation of the individual in the social plane. Seen from the aspect of the action in which man's relations with himself, with his peers and with society are embodied, morality appears to us as an indispensable component of education.

Social morality has an objective character and constitutes the ontological basis of moral education. Its specificity derives from the existing relationship between subjective acts and behavioral acts (behavioral acts are exteriorizations, objectifications of subjective acts), from the particularities of morality and from the psychosocial conditions necessary for the formation and manifestation of moral behavior.

Moral education ensures the moral development of the human personality, the formation of morality, through the gradual internalization of the components of social morality. A quick look in the philosophy dictionary shows us that morality marks "a theory of man's relations with the world and with himself"[2] , which highlights the active role of human con-

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1   *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române (Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language)*, București, Editura Enciclopedic,1998, p. 652.
2   Didier Julia, *Dictionnaire de la philosophie*, Editions Larousse · Année, 1995, p 177.

sciousness in the development of society, as well as in the formation and development of personality.

Social psychology approaches morality as one of the forms of manifestation of social consciousness, as a reflection of social existence at a theoretical and practical level. Moral behavior has established itself as one of the mechanisms that have made the most significant contribution to the constitution of the patrimony of values of a community. Moral development is the result of a particularly complex process, in which the external determinations of social morality are filtered, supplemented by internal, subjective requirements. This process takes place, in an organized and controlled social framework, through formal education and non-formal education.

Moral education essentially aims at the formation of moral consciousness, moral conduct, attitudes and character traits.

Moral education uses a complex methodology, from which the educator selects the most appropriate methods for the objective pursued, the psychological particularities of age and individual.

The formation of conscience and moral conduct is a complex and long-lasting process, in which a multitude of restructurings of the components of the human personality and character, as its relational-value side, are involved.

The main factors that help the child in achieving his own education are the school and the family. To these is added the community. For a good collaboration between these three factors, effective communication is needed on their part. According to the classification criterion of the extent to which the factors listed above exert a certain organized, systematic, psycho-pedagogically based influence, we find among factors with indirect educational action, such as the family, the group of friends of each one, the mass media, the church and directly educational factors, the school or other institutions that are specialized in the development of human personality. The influence of parents on the spiritual and moral structure of children is maintained throughout their lives.

The family controls and conditions communication with the other components of society, especially with the school. In the family there are two well-defined types of relationships:
-   vertically, those between generations (parents-children, grandparents-children or grandparents-parents);

- horizontally, i.e. between members of the same generation (between spouses, between siblings, etc.).

Parents usually provide the behavioral models that will be acquired by the children, of course, at first through imitation. Educational influences are, from this point of view, an immediate expression of the relationships that are established in the family and of some cultural models that they offer. Earning the parents' trust is about the same as putting money in an account. We can only withdraw as much money as we have deposited along the way. If we exceed the bank account, we are penalized, and if the problem is repeated, our bank account is closed.

Parents will generally grant freedom only if they are sure that their son/daughter has desirable behavior and is responsible enough. It is natural for parents to exercise some authority over their children's actions.

The group of friends has an important role in the psychomoral development of the child not only through the prism of the opportunity to establish interpersonal relationships "between equals" and to assume moral behaviors in the absence of hierarchical, authoritarian imposition of rules of conduct, but also through the frequent conflict situations that he has to face as a simple individual or as a member of a team.

This freedom to choose the options of action and to put them into practice, freedom offered by the social context of the group of friends plays a major role in the consolidation, internalization and autonomy of the values and moral norms transmitted by the parents or by the school as an institution.

Through the development of the capacity for self-control, prudence and the sense of responsibility, the various situations that the child's surroundings generate offer him, on the one hand, the opportunity to experimentally validate the rules of conduct proposed or imposed by parents, school or other educational factors , and on the other hand, these situations constitute the support of important reflections and subsequent analyses. Do our friends show a spirit of sacrifice?

Modern means of communication are also an important factor in moral development. Education, as a social phenomenon, has at all times, naturally, shown an increased sensitivity and receptivity to the advances of modern technology. Nowadays, thanks to contemporary technological progress, the many modern means of mass communication (the Internet, television, radio, press, mobile telephony, etc.) are imposed at a dizzying

speed in the everyday life of the individual. It is noted the existence of some effects that, directly or indirectly, can have negative influences on the development of the human personality.

According to research carried out in Western countries, children spend more time in front of the computer and television than in the company of their parents, playing with friends or going to school.

However, school is the most important factor in moral development. In the context of the other factors that follow the development of morality, the school is considered to be the main factor of the complex action of training the child in accordance with the requirements and values of society.

This fact is due to several aspects, among which we mention:
- the school has qualified teaching staff, specialized in child education;
- the educational activity is carried out based on the observance of certain principles and a precise psycho-pedagogical methodology, elements that make possible the optimal development of the instructive-formative action and the assurance of a systematic, progressive character of the moral formation of man.

The main tasks of the school in terms of the moral development of the child's personality are the formation of conscience and the formation of moral conduct. These two general objectives generate numerous specific objectives, belonging to the cognitive, affective, motivational and behavioral domains, conscience and conduct representing the basic constitutive elements of morality.

The school, as an institution, is obliged to carry out effective educational actions for the formation and development of children's conscience and moral conduct. Educational actions must be based on correct and clear psycho-pedagogical principles, directed towards the achievement and objectification of specific didactic strategies and methods.

Literature familiarizes children with society's institutions and its norms. Everyday life is dominated by rules, norms, changes. The family, the kindergarten, the school, the church urge and compel responsibility, permanent compliance according to certain standards. Sometimes they exert stronger pressure, seem threatening, constrain, corset, confine.

Literature helps them to clarify their attitude towards these situations, offering possible answers: acceptance, revolt, resignation, indifference. The struggle of the heroes of children's books with life itself is some-

what similar to theirs. Some literary works depict the generous nature of society or, on the contrary, its impartiality.

Literature represents an inexhaustible source of direct experience of reality. Through the literary work, the child ventures into long-gone worlds, takes part in secular battles, courageously explores unfathomable depths, travels to unknown eras and universes, dreams of a king, pharaoh, cosmonaut, diver, aviator, is present in places and cities that you may never see, experience the adventures of pirates or sailors on board ships, climb mountain peaks or explore a mine, visit the interior of a castle.

The possibility of indirectly knowing another universe, than the one he knows, is practically infinite. Literature contributes to the development of imagination and creative thinking. These components are realized through the multiple perspectives and ways of looking at or conceiving the surrounding world.

Conclusions

Along with family and school, it is very important to select and cultivate relationships with cultural-educational institutions for a harmonious formation[3], based on valuable principles and norms.

This fact can be determined by the awareness of the important formative potential that, by its nature, religion[4] in general should cultivate, a potential that can be excellently exploited in the direction of awareness, formation and consolidation of the morality of the human being.[5]

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4   Ioan-Gheorghe Rotaru, "Libertatea religioasă – temelie a demnității umane", în Daniela Ioana Bordeianu, Erika Androne, Nelu Burcea, *Manual pentru liderul Departamentului de Libertate religioasă*, Casa de editură "Viață și Sănătate", București, 2013, pp. 210-215.
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