

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL PEDAGOGY AND HISTORY OF PEDAGOGY

GENDER EDUCATION AND YOUTH PREPARATION FOR FAMILY LIFE PROBLEM: CROSSING POINTS

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Abstract. *The article is devoted to youth preparation for family life issue and the necessity in gender approach application for this issue in the domestic scientific discourse. The relevance of the problem in gender aspect is highlighted from the perspective of the working group of Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine development of “Strategy of Gender Equality in Education”. Based on references to the publications of educators and psychologists, it was concluded that scientists consider the problem of youth preparation for family life, mainly from the point of psychological readiness of young men and women to fulfill marital obligations. In the pedagogical aspect, scientists focus on creating pedagogical conditions and using the system of educational influences on the formation of youth readiness to start a family.*

The analysis of the views presented in the scientific discourse on the youth preparation for family life issue gave us grounds to find a few contradictions between the psychological and pedagogical consideration of the problem and the modern life realities. Traditional notions of the family are in significant transformation state. The approaches proposed by psychological and pedagogical thought are aimed to preserve traditional notions of the family which do not stand the test of time. In the system of youth preparation for family life, the authors identified a few gender issues: education according to traditional role behavior models, the effect of hidden curriculum in education, pressure on girls about marriage, the system of requirements for the role and "place" of women in the family according to her status (daughter, wife, daughter-in-law, mother), etc.

It is suggested that science should be more flexible on this issue and should propose models and approaches that ensure the sustainable development of the State (including in demographic terms) while guaranteeing fundamental rights and freedoms, including the right to free development and self-realization without discriminatory restrictions.

Keywords: *gender approach, youth preparation for family life, family responsibilities, gender stereotypes.*

JEL Classification: I24, I29

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Introduction. The new conditions of social life and the restructuring of Ukraine based on democratic principles of existence make it necessary to introduce European basic principles of stable coexistence into the national educational system. Among the basic principles we include gender equality and non-discrimination principle, which is extremely relevant in the field of education today. In “Gender Equality. Myths, facts and state policy” developed by the EU-UNDP Project on Parliamentary Reform in cooperation with the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary on Gender Policy 2020, it is noted that Ukraine is gradually increasing its ranking in the Global Gender Gap Index (The Global Gender Gap Index) for the following indicators: economic

participation and career opportunities, education, health, political empowerment [5, p. 19]. Therefore, education is considered as an effective mechanism for ensuring gender equality by instilling a conscious attitude towards gender inequality, including family sphere in society (rising generation).

The above-mentioned publication provides an example of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine mark withdrawal due to the following negative expert opinion: the textbook for the Family Values curriculum contains a significant number of provisions contradicting the principles of science, humanism, secular education in Ukraine (Article 6 of the Law of Ukraine) are discriminatory or may lead to discriminatory practices contrary to national law and international law, namely: Articles 2, 6, 16, 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 5 of the Convention against Discrimination in Education, Article 5 and paragraph "c" of Article 10 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and Others "[5, p. 43]. This fact, in our opinion, proves the direct connection between youth preparation for family life problem and gender parity problems.

At the same time, we note the relevance of youth preparation for family life issue, that according to modern scholars, is relevant for a number of reasons: the age of people getting married is becoming younger, insufficient economic and social protection of couples, and a general weakening of moral standards in society, non-traditional forms of marriage (A. Vasilenko, G. Rezniciuk), the transformation of the modern family as a social institution is accompanied by alarming signs of its disorganization – an increase in divorces number, family and domestic conflicts and decline of birth, weak educational potential, etc. (M. Goncharuk).

Literature Review. Modern scholars (V. Astakhov, I. Bekh, M. Honcharuk, A. Gritchyna, S. Maksymenko, V. Semichenko, etc.) consider the issue of youth preparation for family life mainly from the point of psychological readiness of young men and women to fulfill marital obligations. In the pedagogical aspect, scholars (A. Barbinova, O. Vasylenko, V. Kravets, D. Lutsyn, V. Makarov, I. Machuska, G. Reznichuk, O. Khromova) focus on creating pedagogical conditions and using the system of educational influences on the formation young people readiness to start a family. Gender research in education is represented by a significant number of domestic scientists' works (T. Golovanova, S. Grishak, T. Doronina, A. Kirilyuk, O. Lutsenko, N. Prykhodkina, etc.), appealing to those works convince scholars to establish the origins, theoretical principles, tendencies, and development prospects of gender education concept. Therefore, the issues of youth preparation for family life are considered in passing, mainly as an illustration of certain negative manifestations of gender stereotypes about the appointment of men and women.

Aims. To identify the crossing points of gender content in education with the youth preparation for family life issue based on the analysis of national scientific and pedagogical publications of the beginning of the 21st century.

Methods. The research was based on comparative method, analytical study method and theoretical generalization of existing scientific concepts method. The gender approach in the work has become a key.

Results. Over the past few decades, Ukrainian society has made some progress towards achieving gender equality, overcoming differences in the social roles, positions, rights and responsibilities of men and women. Promoting the development of education without gender warped judgment and integrating gender awareness and sensitivity into the education system has been one of the main objectives of the Program of Equal Opportunities and Women's Rights in Ukraine (UNDP). This component is implemented in accordance with the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” and taking into account the objectives of “State Program for Gender Equality in Ukrainian society until 2010” focusing on best practices and experiences of the European Union (member states and candidate states).

However, despite the availability of legislation, accumulated experience, and intensive development of scientific community interest in gender issues, today we can state a certain inhibition of gender issue in education, as in our opinion evidenced by actual freezing of “Strategy for Gender Equality in Education” (the Strategy). This is an extremely interesting and useful document, which today has its own history of formation, promotion, and inhibition. Since the authors of the publication were directly involved in the creation of the Strategy, let us summarize some facts that were partially set out in our comments to the publication of the Strategy in the publication "Gender Paradigm of Educational Space" (2016, №3/4).

The Strategy owes its appearance to the joint and fruitful work of the All-Ukrainian Network of Gender Education Centers with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in the person of the First Deputy Minister of Education – I. Sovsun. At that time, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine demonstrated an understanding of the problem-solving urgency and intensified the work of the educational community by creating an appropriate working group, with changes in the composition of the group – order №1007 from 06.10.2015). The development of a strategy to promote gender equality and counteract discrimination in education were identified as priorities for the group. Leading domestic and gender specialists were involved in the work in this direction at its various stages, who formed the original team of authors [10].

The subsequent development of the Strategy was extremely difficult. After its transfer to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the Strategy was repeatedly adjusted, corrected, and approved. Unfortunately, in the process of further Strategy promotion, its inhibition became more and more evident. A significant breakthrough in the discussion and further legitimization of the Strategy was made thanks to S. Wojciechowska, Ukrainian MP, co-chair of the MFO “Equal Opportunities”, Chairman of the Working Group on Gender Education within the Public Council on Gender Issues. The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine got interest in the Strategy again and posted the proposed project for public discussion on the relevant page of the Ministry website (<https://cutt.ly/2mrk1i>).

However, despite assurances about the Strategy adoption by the Minister of Education L. Hrynevych and approval, according to the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine I. Klympush-Tsintsadze [3]

another version of the Strategy by the Government Committee on Social Policy and Humanitarian Development in 2018, no progress was made at the end of 2020. It should be noticed that in early 2021 in the media with reference to the Facebook page of the acting Ukrainian President's wife O. Zelenska appeared information on the development and approval of the Strategy for Gender Equality in Education until 2030 [4]. Probably, with such support, the Strategy will be implemented, it encourages us to specify one of the brakes in its implementation – the assertion that the gender approach destroys the institution of marriage and family.

According to the monograph of S. Nychyporenko "Youth Policy in Ukraine" (Kyiv, 2011), the crisis of the family institution in the late 70's of the twentieth century is caused by the prevalence of sociological theories that promoted equality between the sexes, the popularity of gender and feminist views [8, p. 97]. In fact, in this monograph we find another interesting conclusion that "a woman's focus on getting an education or reaching a certain level in her career will increase the age of marriage, and even more so, the age of the first child. Promotion of educated and businesswomen model among young women also leads to the abandonment of traditional marriage, affects such demographic indicators throughout society as declining birth rates and marriage, increasing the birth rate and age of marriage, changing expectations about the number of children" [8, p. 14]. It is obvious that according to this logic: only women are fully responsible for the demographic crisis in the country; the state should be interested in uneducated women who just give a birth and stick to a traditional marriage anyway. But such an approach is unacceptable in a modern democratic, developed society, where the state is obligated to create a system of social protection and guarantees that would motivate women and men to start a family, have children, develop, and raise them as worthy citizens of their homeland.

Referring to publications on youth preparation for family life issue demonstrates not only the problem relevance. The generalization of the scientists' views let us claim that the problem is studied primarily as the internal readiness of the individual to fulfill certain obligations, and those obligations, as a rule, have a clear gender regulation. According to G. Reznichuk and O. Vasylenko, readiness for marriage consists of the following aspects: certain moral complex formation: the readiness of the individual to take on a new system of responsibilities for a partner, future children, it is primarily the roles division inside a couple; readiness for interpersonal communication and cooperation, a family is a small group, for its normal functioning it is necessary to coordinate the rhythms of couple life; willingness to sacrifice for the sake of a partner, which implies the ability to engage in appropriate activities based on altruism (selflessness); the presence of qualities associated with penetration into the inner world of man (empathic complex); high aesthetic culture of individual feelings and behavior; ability to resolve conflicts in a constructive way, the ability to self-regulate own psyche and behavior [9, p. 150].

In fact, at first sight, there are no gender features in the above-mentioned aspects, but the comparison of the quoted fragment (desirable) with the requirements of everyday life (reality), convinces that all these components are explicated mainly

to a girl/woman. Because the division of responsibilities, coherence, empathy, culture of behavior and ability to resolve conflicts – in the traditional culture (which is dominant in Ukraine) are exclusively women's responsibilities and characteristics of a “real woman”. As, in fact, the traits (kindness, sensitivity, patience, caring), education/development of which the above scholars consider a necessary condition for the moral youth preparation for family life.

As the formation of youth healthy lifestyle skills, the availability of sufficient psychological and pedagogical, legal, economic, medical knowledge of personality development, the formation of gender and role identification, communication skills, personal problems correction, spiritual education, creating own image; knowledge of medical and social problems of alcoholism, drug addiction, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, family planning and reproductive health of youth, pregnancy prevention, healthy children birth, family traditions development, etc. – considers the readiness of youth for family life A. Barbinova [2, p. 403]. This definition, especially in terms of health, in our opinion, implicitly states that it is primarily girls/women who should “prepare” for family life, because the responsibility for the health of the family is mainly transferred on them.

In understanding the preparation of high school students for family life, A. Gritchyna emphasizes the importance of mastering the norms, rules of conduct and attitudes in accordance with cultural ideas about the role, position and purpose of gender in society [7, p. 393]. Such norms based on a gender-role approach only strengthen the system of persistent gender stereotypes do not correspond to modernity and limit the development and self-realization of the individual by the gender factor.

The above definitions of understanding the essence and tasks of youth preparation for family life by modern domestic scientists, in our opinion, do not consider the changes taking place today, as far as trends in personal development without gender boundaries and borders, affirming the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination as basic in the harmonious existence of all members of society. Therefore, in the system of youth preparation for family life we note the presence of some few gender issues: education according to traditional role behavior models, the effect of a hidden curriculum in education, pressure on girls about marriage, the system of requirements for the role and “place” of women inside the family in accordance with status (daughter, wife, daughter-in-law, mother), etc.

Educating of girls and boys from early age according to the role models teach to perform certain family functions “guardian of the family hearth”: cleaning, cooking, childcare and more. Completely innocent children's games (“daughters-mothers”) acquire an extremely specific role, but do not have “male” counterparts. There are no games that would teach boys to perform similar functions in adult life. So, they become not only helpless in the family circle. From early age, they are instilled with the idea of the secondary nature of domestic work, that should be performed exclusively by women. This is how the idea of “female” and “male” work is formed. The boy’s entertainment does not have such a functional limitation, games with equipment, various designers accustom them to work related to production, but in no way with the family.

The family also gives careful consideration to the moral children's upbringing, which mainly includes sexual upbringing. With some caution we can note that sex education is not the subject of special family care. Everything related to sex education in the domestic system is limited to morality issues, intimate nature issues, which can and should be considered in sex education are still "carried" beyond it, are called sexual education issues. Considerable resistance unfolds in traditional societies. And the Association of Sexologists and Sex Therapists of Ukraine opposes the children's sexual education in the form it is conducted today [1].

At school age, both boys and girls are taught equally. However, here again we can find so-called "hidden curriculum effect" well described in the scientific literature. Therefore, we will only outline those aspects of its action that, in our opinion, directly affect the formation of youth ideas about the family and functional (social) responsibilities of girls/women and boys/men. The hidden curriculum, in our definition, reflects the traditional notion of men and women role in family life, their responsibilities for raising children and ensuring family well-being. The transmission of traditional ideas takes place mainly through the content of subjects and the nature of communication between teachers and youth. Communication with teachers proves their commitment to youth success, believing that it is important for girls to get married and for boys to find a good job. Girls continue to be instilled with the idea of being destined to be a good housewife (girls prefer to get married and be at home successfully), and boys are taught to be a master who provides the family and take full responsibility for the family property. And that is even though modern development of society offers different models of successful realization of individual in different spheres of life, and at the state level there is also a widespread opinion about equal to the comprehensive individual development.

Another aspect is the social pressure on girls from the immediate environment and the general opinion about the age when it is worth getting married and starting a family. Young people are gradually gaining a view of family as a duty to environment. Romantic phenomena about relations between a girl and a boy are dispelled by the statement that marriage is necessary, at least to avoid "neighbors" condemnation. The partner presence, absence, their number, and frequency of change are strictly controlled by the environment and assessed in different ways.

Discussion. The above, in our opinion, is a demonstration of significant contradictions in understanding the readiness of youth for family life by scientists and the real problems young people face creating a family. Scientific-theoretical psychological-pedagogical thought is aimed at finding effective mechanisms that should strengthen the idea of the traditional nature of marriage and family. And young people feel constant pressure from the family, society on family responsibilities, so, in our opinion, and try to avoid responsibility. Because young people do not feel any support from the state and society. We believe that gender approach application in youth preparation for family life should alleviate today's problems changing the duty of choice sacrifice by partnership based on equality and mutual respect.

Conclusions. The youth preparation for family life issue and the necessity for gender-based approach application has become a major issue in modern Ukraine. Traditional notions of the family are in significant transformation state. The approaches proposed by psychological and pedagogical thought are aimed to preserve traditional notions of the family which do not stand the test of time. We assume that science should be more flexible in this matter and offer such models and approaches that would ensure sustainable State development (including demographic terms) while ensuring fundamental rights and freedoms, including the right to free development and self-realization without discriminatory restrictions.

Author contributions. The authors contributed equally.

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