

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

Study of the Future Projections of Motivation in Psychology

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Abstract:

The Future Projection is considered as an important component of the motivation and content of various psychological formations, which express the temporal perspective of the motivation of the subject. The objective of this article is to approach the study of Future Projections from the point of view of Psychology, making an analysis from its main schools and currents of thought. Terms or categories are highlighted, such as objectives, goals, projects, intentions, ideals, and aspirations, which allow shaping the purposes of the individual in the construction of their future.

Keywords: Future projection, motivation, psychology

1. Introduction

Establishing projects towards the future is one of the main qualities of the human being. The term project comes from the Latin "proiectare," which means "... the action of throwing forward", designating what the subject set or proposes to perform, articulating the past or present activity with the future, which is desired to arrive. His study has been carried out by various sciences, such as Sociology, Philosophy, Pedagogy, and Psychology. This makes the criteria issued vary, and among the most relevant terms are aspiration, decision, ideal, intention, destiny, dreams, and desires. Despite the diversity of criteria issued, these are framed in what the subject proposes to carry out, perform or execute, expressing itself in a yearning or aspiration.

When we approach this topic from a psychological position, we also perceive the variety of criteria issued by its most prestigious authors and schools to designate the future projection. Considered as an important component of the motivation and content of various psychological formations, which expresses the temporal perspective of the motivation of the subject. From here, terms or categories emerge, stories such as objectives, goals, projects, intentions, ideals and aspirations, which will mark the individual's goals of building their future.

2. Discussion

When analyzing the diversity of considerations about the future projection of the individual, different points of view are shown, both in the essence of their concepts and in the philosophical support that sustains them.

Among the authors of non-Marxist orientation, the most notable antecedents in the study of this subject correspond to Cognitive Psychology. In its first theoretical constructions, the concept of "behavioral plan" is used, succeeded by concepts such as "situational scheme," "vital theme," among others (Millar, Galanter & Pribram, 1960, cited in Rodríguez, R., M., 2010). However, this cognitivist approach obviates the motivational aspect of the behavior, conceiving the plans and goals as a computational program.

In relation to the subject, we can highlight the criteria of the authors K. Lewin (1965) and J. Nuttin (1972), who highlighted in their works the role played by human capacity in human motivation to project into the future. Lewin demonstrated in his studies the meaning acquired by the objectives and purposes that the personality is drawn since these terms are considered as energizing elements of the behavior, as well as the needs. On the other hand, Nuttin starts from the existence in man of an inner force that impels him to fight for his personal fulfillment and the constant updating of his potentialities. Through these mechanisms, the subject manages to elaborate his projects oriented towards the future, which correspond to the image of what he wants to be (ideal self) and directs his conduct in order to obtain them.

L. Domínguez (2015, p.30), states that these authors "although they confer the necessary significance to the future projection of motivation, they fail to adequately interpret the indissoluble unity between its content and dynamic aspects. By emphasizing the dynamic aspects, they undervalue the importance of the content of the future projection, of the level of conscious elaboration on the part of the subject of said content so that a certain objective or purpose can become an effective regulator of behavior".

On the other hand, humanistic psychologists emphasize the importance that the conscious elaboration of the contents of future projects acquires; they also consider the elaboration level of the future projection as a fundamental indicator of personality development. A. Maslow (1979), expressed that every theory of personality should study the concept that each man has about his future, by its dynamic significance in the present. While C. Rogers (1989) pointed out that in every psychologically healthy person there is a tendency towards self-realization, a force that drives the subject to achieve its objectives and constitutes a psychological mechanism of self-regulation of the human being.

G. W. Allport (1971), builds the category of intention, emphasizing that it indicates purpose, the effectiveness of conscious planning, drive exercised by the image that man is formed on his future and that acts on his present behavior (cited by Domínguez, G., L., 2015, p.30). Allport considers that each person has a "unifying philosophy of life," given by those objectives that the subject elaborates in the short, medium or long term. For this author, every normal man directs his conduct for purposes, even when some people orient their behavior for the sake of the primary purpose and others do so for several defined purposes.

For Maslow, Rogers, and Allport, authors who identify with the humanist current, the notion of future projection and its tendency to self-realize is a main function of the personality. It is valid to emphasize that the considerations issued on the subject by humanistic psychologists have the virtue of having emphasized the significance acquired by cognitive elaborations in the structuring of the future projection of personality. They also highlight the active role played by the subject in this process and conceive this projection as an indicator of the mature and healthy personality.

In the considerations of the cognitivist and humanistic authors referred to above, it can be seen that they do not achieve a sufficient integration of the cognitive and affective aspects, which allows an adequate interpretation of the development of the future projection. In the process of its formation, the elaboration of projects that regulate adequately and stably the behavior of the subject needs the unity of both poles (cognitive-affective).

Other criteria and terms issued on the subject were in charge of the Marxist-oriented Soviet Psychology, where authors such as Bozhovich (1976), Raskin, & Dukat (1961) and Kon (1990), who conceptualized the future projection of motivation under the term "ideals." These Soviet psychologists characterized the ideals as much by their content as by their structure and dynamic elements. This was made possible by the studies carried out on the variations that occur in the development of this motivational training, in the different stages through which the development of the personality takes place, especially in school age, adolescence and youth.

They explained that the progress of ideals ranges from the existence of a concrete ideal in school age to the emergence of abstract ideals in adolescence. In the young age they continue being abstract and acquire a generalized character, the subject becomes the center of the ideal, and this formation plays an important role in the process of self-perfection. In adulthood, the future projection is embodied in personality goals and purposes.

The criteria supported by Soviet psychologists, aimed at highlighting the socio-historical and cultural determination of the contents of the personality, without forgetting the active role of the subject, depart from what is proposed by the cognitivist and humanist currents. These authors give importance to the social element in which the subject is framed to develop their life plan, without ignoring that for personal growth and to develop the future projection of man it is necessary to reconcile the social model with the interests and individual needs to those who aspire.

In Cuba, Dr. Gustavo Torroella (2001) was a pioneer in the study of personality. This author assumes that there are two ways of projecting life. The first is living daily, free will at every moment, without goals or purposes. Which means to live like a robot, subjected to emotional impulses, lacking self-control, all of which prevents the development of personality healthily and autonomously, which leads to alienation and deterioration. The second way is planning and projecting consciously and responsibly the life of the subject, in which activities are organized and programmed long, medium and short-term. In this case, the subject addresses himself and orders his life, according to his values and goals with the orientation of his personality. Also, it takes into consideration that the subject is able to control their emotional impulses and subject them to self-direction, promotes independence, exercises willpower and self-direction, which contributes to development. (Castro, E., Y., 2012, page 15).

Other Cuban authors have devoted their research to this topic, among them D. González (1977), F. González (1983), H. Arias (1988) and O. D'Angelo stand out. (1994), who believes that "the elaboration of a life project, which involves the realization of a series of future-oriented goals, constitutes the superior and typical form of human motivation and indicator that differentiates the psychologically healthy subject from the patient."

Arias H. (1988), investigated the category of Purposes for being the one that in his opinion links the ideal and self-assessment. In this sense, he emphasizes the need to know not only what objectives the personality poses, but also the reasons that determine it and the strategies for its attainment (cited by Domínguez, G., L., 2015, p.31).

González F. (1983), "raises the need to study the richness of content and the level of elaboration of the ideal content as fundamental indicators of its regulatory possibilities" (cited by Dominguez, G., L., 2015, p.32).

D'Angelo. O. (1994), defined the project of life as "objectives and plans of the realization of the subject in the temporal dimensions of individual experience, referring to the different spheres of life and activity of the individual." The author conceives this project of life as an expression of the tendency towards self-realization, characteristic of the developed personality (cited by Domínguez, L., G., 2015, p.31).

L. Domínguez and L. Ibarra, based on their research, defined the term future projection as "the structuring and integration of a set of reasons elaborated in a future temporal perspective, in the medium or long term. Which have a high level of emotional significance or personal sense for the subject and the other corresponding strategies for the achievement of the proposed objectives ". (2003, p.446).

The studies carried out by these authors confirm that the young person projects himself to the future using the elaboration of objectives and goals, and of the corresponding strategies that allow his achievement. Thus, emerging the project of life as a set of future projects, supported by the scientific and moral conception of the world and personal identity.

R. Vargas (2005) states that a life project is a form of strategic planning of the personality, which in the pedagogical area allows developing the actions in the direction of the educational teaching process.

For J. L. Del Pino, (2011) the project of life expresses the extent to which ideals are consciously assumed and plans the personal path to achieve them. Therefore, it is a high expression of consciousness and a product of personality development (cited by Castro, E., Y., 2012, page 16).

This psychological shape may not occur in some people, whose personal development does not allow them to take an active role in shaping their personal history. Not being able to identify with ideals, set goals, identify actions to achieve them and regulate their behavior about their demands.

3. Conclusions

In the previous definitions, it can be seen that there are different ways of understanding and conceiving the future projection. In general, there is a tendency to relate the term of life project, either explicitly or implicitly, with complex personality contents that express plans, life orientations, and models. Also to a lesser extent with the needs of self-actualization or self-realization.

It is necessary to emphasize that although the elaboration of this projection occurs from early ages of development, it is not until the youth that is structured at the level of complex psychological formations, expressing themselves in the ideals and the conception of the world. That is why it is necessary to bear in mind the volitional processes, because of the role that the study of this formation has. When the subject proposes an objective, if he assumes it, is involved and persists in achieving it, he will achieve what he proposes.

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