

Liberative Pedagogies for Mitigating Teenage pregnancy

John Kibwage Nyangaresi, Elvis Omondi Kauka

Department of Educational Foundations, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, P. O. BOX 190-50100, Kakamega, Kenya

Abstract: The role of pedagogy in transmitting preventive skills necessary for mitigating teenage pregnancies is usually sacrificed at the behest sociological and psychological curative and reactive measures. It is however permissible to entertain critical and philosophical preventive pedagogical procedures that are heavily hinged on the theory of man's capacity to think efficaciously. This article therefore purposed to examine the implications of liberative pedagogical dispositions in solving teenage pregnancy in schools. The article appeals to the implications of Freirian pedagogical dispositions in addressing teenage pregnancy and the implications of Deweyian pedagogical principles in mitigating teenage pregnancy. The article employed critical Method of Philosophical investigation. The study points that if teenage pregnancy is to be addressed in a more permanent and humanized way, then educators must embrace Pedagogical balance, Pedagogical humanization, Emotional intelligence, experiential pedagogy, Problematicization of pedagogy, Engaged Pedagogy and Democratic pedagogies. These forms of pedagogies are hinged on the concept of Educere-(Latin for bringing out-leading out). Educerean conception of education posits that pedagogy is a catalyst for the unfolding the latent powers within a learner. The latent experiential and cognitive powers are not only the best way of addressing teenage pregnancy from a liberative perspective but it is also philosophically sound.

Operational Definitions

Pedagogy: It is the art and science of transmitting knowledge, skills or attitudes. In this paper pedagogical orientation inclines towards learner centered transmissions.

Liberative pedagogies: Steps or action taken to set individuals free from oppressive environments

Teenage pregnancy: (Adolescent pregnancy) can be described as a conception by any female who is less than 19 years of age at the end of the pregnancy (WHO, 2004).

Critical pedagogy: Refers to methods and principles laid down for teaching children on careful and serious multi-sectoral approaches for instance mitigating teenage pregnancy

Humanizing Pedagogy: Instructional orientation that bring out latent human capabilities of the individual learner

Key words: Liberative Pedagogy, Teenage pregnancy, critical pedagogy

I. INTRODUCTION

World Health Organization-WHO (2020) reports indicate that Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has the highest

cumulative prevalence of teenage pregnancy compared to other regions in the world. WHO (2020) notes that 45% of girls aged between 16-19 years are victims of teenage pregnancy. This situation makes SSA countries experience difficult moments in accommodating and addressing challenges related to teenage pregnancy in schools (Nsamenang, 2002). Despite the existence of policies and strategies in the region the menace remains prevalent and is consequently leading to premature termination of girl child's education (Nsamenang, 2002). With the outbreak of the Corona Virus (COVID-19) the World Vision (2020) predicted that approximately one million girls across SSA region may fail to return to school due to teenage pregnancy. In regards to World Vision (2020) and UNESCO (2020), if teenage pregnancies have to be addressed effectively then teenagers are supposed to be exposed to liberative pedagogies. The goals of liberative pedagogies extend beyond critical thinking and emphasize the transformation of an oppressive society into a liberative one (Burbules & Berk, 1999). **A society that is liberated** advocates that liberative pedagogies are imperative in addressing teenage pregnancy and related social evils (Freire 1969).

Statement of the Problem

Teaching is a process of transmitting knowledge, values, skills and attitudes that are desirable in a given society (Njoroge and Benaars, 1986 and Bandura, 1982). The transmission of knowledge is the function of cognitive dimension of education while the transmission of values is based on normative criteria of education. Creative and psychological functions of education are respectively fulfilled in the transmission of skills and desirable attitudes.

Teaching as a pedagogical operation is thus practiced to not only prevent the undesirable social phenomena but also to cure the society from social predicaments such as teenage pregnancy.

Incumbent pedagogical procedures in Kenya tend to be bereft of its normative inclinations. It instead biases itself towards the cognitive dimension of teaching and learning as exhibited in exam oriented assessment. This imbalance creates a misnomer in normative pedagogy that is so crucial in mitigating teenage pregnancy. Pedagogies that intentionally present themselves as preventive and curative are hinged on critical philosophy for normative ends. Critical philosophies

of education are enunciated in reconstructivism and constructive theories of John Dewey, Ivan Illich, and Ira Shor and most poignantly in Paulo Freire's critical Pedagogy. Freire's critical Pedagogies are specifically wired to prevent social oppression in its different forms including but not limited to teenage pregnancy. This paper thus attempts to evaluate the efficacy of lacerative pedagogies in solving teenage pregnancy in Kenya.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine liberative pedagogical dispositions in solving teenage pregnancy in schools.

Objectives

1. To explore the implications of Freirian pedagogical dispositions on teenage pregnancy
2. To examine implication of Deweyian pedagogical dispositions on teenage pregnancy

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Implications of Freirian pedagogical dispositions on teenage pregnancy

The word critical pedagogy is derived from the term 'critical' and pedagogy. Criticality is a thorough consideration of an issue while pedagogy refers to methods of instruction (Kincheloe, 2008). Critical pedagogies are liberative by design. Freire (1970) analyzed liberation and proposed how it might be achieved. They argued that it can only be achieved by the oppressed because "the oppressor, who is himself dehumanized, is unable to initiate and sustain struggle the struggle for social liberation". However, the oppressor can work in solidarity with the oppressed (Freire, 1973). Liberation can only be achieved through "a humanizing pedagogy in which the revolutionary leadership establishes a permanent relationship of dialogue with the oppressed" (Freire, 1997). He went on to outline the characteristics of humanizing and revolutionary pedagogy. In the first case he opposes the banking concept of education where "the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat" (Freire 1970). This type of pedagogy makes the learners passive as opposed to participatory and therefore they perceive things the way they are without transforming them (Kincheloe, 2008). To free teenage learners from oppressive relationships in the society they should be inclined towards dialogical pedagogy that is deliberately designed to empower them.

Justification of John Dewey's pedagogical dispositions and teenage pregnancy

According to Dewey pragmatic education can be summarise in the proposition below:

Give the learners something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking; learning naturally results (Dewey, 1944 pp. 131-136)

From the above Deweyan claim, it can be inferred that learning is accomplished by doing. Learners inquire into learning phenomenon and create knowledge through constructive practical experiences. Learning thus is critical, creative, practical, adaptive and existential (Dewey 1916b). It involves examining and analyzing of social and experience contracts. School should be designed in such a way that it helps the learner to not only live but also transcend their immediate existence and outgrow any habits that might keep them immature. Experiential pedagogy is heavily infused by pragmatic epistemology and the ontology of action (Dewey, 1938b). Pragmatic epistemology is essential in solving pragmatic, social and psychological issues (Dewey, 1897)

Synopsis of gaps in the literature reviewed: Paulo Freire and John Dewey are highly influential in both social construction and reformation of pedagogy. Their philosophy of Education is based on social experiences. However they do not explicitly and tacitly discuss particular social cases issues that directly affect the girl child's education-especially teenage pregnancy as an impediment to education of the girl child during their time of authorship.

III. METHODOLOGY

a) Critical method

According to Njoroge & Bennaars (1986) critical method is the exercise of in-depth thinking skills based on various standards. Its purpose is to clarify problems, issues and concepts. It can be conducted on a one-to-one basis, or with groups. It is the core service of philosophical consultancy. Critical method is inclined to Socrates in terms of searching for answers to critical problems. This method employs systematic reflection on questions asked and engages in rigorous analysis of dialectical arguments in an educational dialogue to arrive at solutions. The critical method equips the researcher with important skills to understand the various social injustices in a society (Freire, 1974). The method is relevant to this article because it provided intellectual insight on liberative pedagogies of Paulo Freire (Objective 1) and John Dewey (Objective 2) as the possible mitigation measure for teenage pregnancy. Pedagogical balance: Equality between the teacher and the learner. Freire's concept of education challenges the traditional style of a "banking" education. In "banking" education, teachers are subject-actors who contain knowledge (Freire 1969). Teachers, as owners of knowledge deposit it to the passive learners (object) who are deemed as empty containers. For Freire, transmission roles of pedagogy are too rigid, giving too much power to teachers and too little power to learners. Freire (1973) advocates the element of equality in teaching. In so doing the learners gain courage to pose questions, thus cultivating dialogic and problem posing education which empowers learners to think critically on the societal predicaments like teenage pregnancy. Freire (1995) indicates that learners with the skill of questioning and engaging in dialogue are able to withstand peer pressure which is considered as one of the main causes of

teenage pregnancy. Studies oppose “banking” concept of education in public secondary schools, which does not transform learners. Teachers are encouraged to nurture the element of equality in classroom environment as an antecedent of dialogue. Dialogue is the main way of enhancing equality between the teacher and the learner. Hooks (1994) described dialogue as the simplest way people can cross boundaries erected by systems of oppression. Freire (1973) asserts that dialogue is a relationship involving empathy nourished by love, humility, hope, faith and trust.

Dialogue involves participation by learners, through learners and for learners. Freire maintained that for education to be relevant, learners need to be active participants in the process of learning (Freire, 1985). This can be achieved through Socratic questioning, brain storming, group discussions and debates. In so doing, learners will have courage to pose questions in complex situations which ignites dialogue hence empowering or transforming the teenagers to think critically to overcome teenage pregnancy among school girls.

b). Pedagogical humanization

Freire, (1972) asserts that critical consciousness is deeply rooted in lived experience. It was the “real and concrete hunger” of not knowing where or when his next meal would come from that drove Freire to be passionate about changing the world (Freire, 1970). The hunger created in Freire deep belief in humanity and opened the future possibility to take actions that brought about social change (Freire, 1969). Freire’s statements differ with the findings of various studies. Some findings indicate that teenagers have no passion to change their future but they are swallowed by the concrete hunger of teenage pregnancy. Therefore, teenagers and all other stake holders need human agency education to handle the concrete hunger of teenage pregnancy which has no specific time of departure from public secondary schools. This type of education will dissolve and resolve the causes of teenage pregnancy as well as provide solid humanization of the learner.

c.) Emotional intelligence

“Learning cannot be reduced to a purely intellectual activity. It is more than a mental operation and more than the facts or ideas transmitted by books or lectures” (Freire cited in Shor, 1992). Critical education embraces both the intellectual and emotional aspects of learning. As emotions are brought into the learning experience, students are freed to experience a wide variety of feelings. Some of the emotions that students experience include curiosity, laughter, hope, joy, anxiety, defensiveness, and sadness which give the learner the ability to acquire a holistic range of educational experiences (Freire 1972). Girls are driven by their desires and interest without excluding peer pressure. Learning should be anchored on both mental operations and emotional intelligence that enable the teenagers to control their anxiety and desires that pave way to teenage pregnancy. Therefore, school should embrace both

emotional and intellectual learning to enhance learning experience that would subject learners to a wider variety of feelings and learn how to control them even when they are out of the school compound.

Objective Two: Implication of Deweyian pedagogical dispositions on teenage pregnancy

a. Experiential pedagogy

Dewey (2004) advances active participation and experiential learning. Dewey was particularly interested in critical thinking, which includes critical reflection on the prevailing dominations associated with teenage pregnancy. Gadoti (1994) views Dewey as having influenced by Freire to a large extent. According to Gadoti (1994) the major difference in the philosophies of Dewey and Freire lies in the foundational beliefs about the purpose of education. Dewey(2004) viewed education as a means of helping learners to live and participate in a democratic or liberal society free from oppressive elements or oppression like teenage pregnancy. Studies indicates that Dewey’s assertion negates the findings of various researchers who have established that the society enslave its members.

b. Problematized pedagogy

Through Deweyan principles education moves away from problem-solving project to problem posing. Problem-solving education reduces the human experience to mere problems that are solved. On the other hand, problem-posing education humanizes life in all of its complexities and empowers humans to have agency to change their lives for the better by understanding and intervening in these complex problems (Dewey, 2000). Dewey’s problem posing education contradicts some studies which indicated that learners were unable to solve problems they encountered. Learners encounter problems like negative peer pressure, poverty, drug abuse and parental in efficiency but they don’t manage them hence succumbed to teenage pregnancy. Therefore, learners should be empowered with problem posing skill as a human agency to strive in changing their lives positively. Further, problem posing education enables the teenagers to think critically to arrive at inductive solutions for educational impediment like teenage pregnancy.

c) Democratic pedagogy

Democratic pedagogy develops students’ capacities to participate in and create democratic spaces (Dewey, 1897). In traditional forms of education, students learn that unilateral authority is normal, yet at the same time, they are contradictory to democratic ideals presented to them by adults (Dewey, 1920). Through Democratic pedagogy, students experiment with sharing power, co-creating solutions, and taking command of the learning process (Dewey, 1938a). According to Dewey (1916a, 1938b & 1899), learning works best in an active creative process infused with freedom, equality, and justice. Democratic education in a just society

empowers the teenagers with the skills of problem posing which in turn will enable them to engage sexual predators to arrive at a logical conclusion. Further it will enable them to co –create solution to the problem of teenage pregnancy in the society rather than succumbing to negative peer pressure. Therefore, democratic education is paramount in taming teenage pregnancy because it empowers the teenagers to identify and solve sexually related suggestions that are likely to interfere with their democratic well being

d.) Engaged Pedagogy

Hooks(1994) wrote posited an “engaged pedagogy” that connects the ideas learned in the classroom to the lived experiences of the students. The concept of engaged pedagogy is based on John Dewey’s epistemological principle of Pragmatism (Dewey, 1916b). Pragmatism provokes the learner to embrace education as a practice of freedom. This freedom emerges as students test and experiment ideasacquired in the classroom to determine whether they can liberate them from the oppressive systems they experience in their daily lives. Therefore, education should be hinged towards resolvingoppressive elements insociety especially teenage pregnancy.

IV. CONCLUSION

A synthesis of Freirian and Dewey’s approaches to pedagogy is therefore a preventive antidote against teenage pregnancy. The liberative approaches of the two philosophers are based on the anthropological conception of the human learner both as an active entity but also as an agent of problem solving as indicated in Pedagogical balance learner, Pedagogical humanization, Emotional intelligence, Problematicized pedagogy, Experiential pedagogy, Democratic pedagogy

And Engaged Pedagogy. These pedagogies resonate with the active ontology that illuminates humanity of teenagers as agents of problem solving.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bandura, A. (1982). The psychology of chance encounters and life paths. *American psychologist*, 37(7), 747.
- [2] Burbules, N. C., & Berk, R. (1999). *Critical Thinking and Critical Pedagogy: Relations, Differences, and Limits*. In T.S. Popkewitz & L. Fendler (Eds). *Critical Theories in Education*. New York City, NY: Routledge.
- [3] Dewey, J. (2004). *A comparison of reading development by learners of Japanese in intensive domestic immersion and study abroad contexts*. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 26(2), 303-327.
- [4] Dewey, J. (1897). My Pedagogic Creed, *School Journal*, 54(Jan.): 77–80.
- [5] Dewey, J. (1899). *The School and Society*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- [6] Dewey, J. (1916a). *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*, New York: Macmillan.
- [7] Dewey, J. (1916b). *Essays in Experimental Logic*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- [8] Dewey, J. (1920). *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, New York: Henry Holt and Co. Reprinted in Dewey, J. (1938a). “Democracy and Education in the World of Today”, pamphlet by the Society for Ethical Culture, New York.
- [9] Dewey, J. (1938b). *Experience and Education*, New York: Macmillan.
- [10] Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Herder and Herder.
- [11] Freire, P. (1973). *Education for critical consciousness*. New York, NY: Continuum.
- [12] Freire, P. (1978). *Pedagogy in Process: The Letters to Guinea-Bissau*. New York: Seabury Press.
- [13] Freire, P. (1985). *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation*. Trans. Donaldo Macedo. South Hadley: Bergin and Garvey.
- [14] Freire, P. (1995) *Pedagogy of Hope: Reviving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Trans. Robert R. Barr. New York: Continuum.
- [15] Freire, P. (1997). *Pedagogy of the Heart*. New York: Continuum, 1997.
- [16] Gadotti, M. (1994). *Reading Paulo Freire: His Life and Work*. New York: New York University Press.
- [17] Hooks, bell. (1994). *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York City, NY: Routledge.
- [18] Njoroge, R. J., & Bennaars, G. A. (1986). *Education and philosophy in Africa*
- [19] Shor, I. (1992). *Empowering education: Critical teaching for social change*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press
- [20] Shor, I. (1999). *What is critical literacy? I. Shor & C. Pari (Eds.), Critical literacy in action: Writing words, changing worlds* (pp. 1-31). Portsmouth: Heinemann
- [21] UNESCO.(2009). *International Technical Guidance on Sexual Education*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.
- [22] WHO.(2020). *Adolescent pregnancy*. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-pregnancy>. Accessed on 12 May 2021.
- [23] World Vision (2020). *Nearly one million pregnant sub-Saharan African girls may be blocked from returning to school following COVID-19*. <https://www.wvi.org/stories/view/nearly-one-million-pregnant-sub-saharan-african-girls-may-be-blocked-returning-school>.
- [24] WHO(2004). *Adolescent Pregnancy*: http://wqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2007/9789241595650_eng.pdf.