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PARADIGMS

AND CONCEPTIONS OF THEORIES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE, EQUITY, AND VALUES

PARADIGMAS Y CONCEPCIONES DE LAS TEORÍAS DE LA JUSTICIA SOCIAL, EQUIDAD Y LOS VALORES

Adrian Ramírez-Quintana¹

E-mail: ramirezquintana@infomed.sld.cu

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2885-0683>

¹ Ministerio de Salud Pública. La Habana. Cuba.

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ABSTRACT

The new times, convulsive, characterized by an international crisis and other factors that aggravate social stability and in fact equitable and just coexistence for society. They make the human mind evolve and transform in search of well-being and quality of life according to the satisfaction of their needs, they need more knowledge to help them survive these ills that affect them. It is here that there is a proliferation of studies to increase the knowledge of social justice, equity and values because of their impact on the life of man and the importance of his understanding and comprehension. Respect for diversity, equity, the scarcity of resources, the protection of animals, women's rights, and the need to protect the most vulnerable groups call for a deeper understanding of these issues from a scientific perspective and to form a comprehensive culture that positions them in better circumstances in defence of their rights. The essential objective of social justice is to achieve equal opportunities for all, based on taking into account diversity and needs, both individual and common. The objective of this article is to carry out a theoretical and descriptive analysis that shows the different paradigms and conceptions of the theories of social justice, equity and values, which society demands so much.

Keywords:

Social justice, equity, diversity, values.

RESUMEN

Los nuevos tiempos, convulsos, caracterizado por una crisis internacional y otros factores que agravan la estabilidad social y de hecho la convivencia equitativa y justa para la sociedad. Hacen que la mente humana evolucione y se transforme en busca de bienestar y calidad de vida acorde a la satisfacción de sus necesidades, los hace necesitar de más conocimientos que les ayude a sobrevivir estos males que le afectan. Es aquí donde proliferan los estudios de intencionar más el conocimiento de la justicia social, equidad y valores por su repercusión en la vida del hombre e importancia de su entendimiento y comprensión. El respeto a la diversidad, la equidad, la escasez de recursos, la protección de los animales, el derecho de la mujer, la necesidad de protección a los grupos más vulnerables hacen un llamado a que se profundice en estos temas desde la ciencia y se logre formar una cultura integral que les posicione en mejores circunstancias en defensa de sus derechos. La esencial de la justicia social está en lograr darles igualdad de oportunidades a todos, partiendo de tener presente la diversidad y necesidades tanto individuales como comunes. El objetivo del presente artículo, radica en realizar un análisis teórico y descriptivo que muestre los distintos paradigmas y concepciones de las teorías de la justicia social, equidad y los valores, que tanto demanda la sociedad.

Palabras clave:

Justicia social, equidad, diversidad, valores.

INTRODUCTION

The new social scenarios generate a series of questions that demand the way in which social justice, equity and the values implicit in them are interpreted. This includes the deep inequalities that are being generated and that are still the essence of the social sciences. It is for them that it is recognized that social justice and equality of all human beings are not new concepts; rather they are incorporated in the constitutions of the countries and throughout the century's philosophers, sociologists among other specialists of different branches of science, have pointed out the need to adopt various measures, actions, strategies to ensure equal opportunities for all and gives the guidelines that serve as background for its evolution.

In several studies, different authors (Young, 2011; Dubet, 2012; Fraser, 2015; Jelin, 2021) have made a significant effort to choose basic indicators, variables of evaluation of the state in which justice is developed according to some of the main features that are related to inequity, such as sex, ethnicity, social class, race and geographical distribution, beliefs. This makes it possible to measure aspects focused on social justice and to fulfill its task of distributing goods and services essential for a person's development in an equitable manner. In society, such as health, education, social or cognitive and affective welfare with its axiological dimension.

According to Rawls (2006), as cited in Sarmiento (2020), justice in a social scheme depends on how fundamental rights and duties are assigned, and on the economic opportunities and social conditions in the various sectors of society. For his part, Luhmann (2005), proposes the concept of justice as a principle that feeds itself, so that the contingency formula presents an abstract and generalist nature. But Barp (2008), relied on the criterion that social justice is an important concept, since justice must by definition be a habit, not only of the individual, but of the collectivity, to achieve the true common good and harmony, which is destroyed by individualism.

In the research, Rosales (2021) is analyzed, as he expands the concept of injustice from two fundamental conceptions: the socioeconomic, rooted in the economic political structure of society, which produces exploitation and/or economic marginalization and/or the deprivation of material goods indispensable to lead a dignified life. The second way of understanding injustice is cultural, which is rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation and communication, examples of which are cultural domination, non-recognition and disrespect.

Therefore, the author of this research focuses the study on the search for an equitable distribution that must begin with a demonstration of the existing inequalities, and this can only be achieved if the necessary basic knowledge and the respective and timely information are available. It

is not possible to program and implement effective measures aimed at populations or social groups at greater risk without first identifying the socio-affective, economic and axiological gaps in the presence of their determinants.

About values Pinto (2016), refers, the daily unfolding of each individual, is impregnated with value actions that he shares with other individuals of his own culture, which is realized through communicative interaction. Rojas (2019), highlights, educating in respect for diversity is a relevant topic in these times of social uncertainty and, the ideal space to develop respect for diversity is through education in values.

However, it is important to highlight the position that social justice is synonymous with social equity, terms that even with this relationship differ in terms of expressions of the search for equality. Since the first implies creating and applying laws and norms to achieve its purposes, the second contains all types of equality, whether written or not, appealing to a more axiological justice, in this case, a moral-ethical one. Therefore, in order to contribute to this framework of reflection, and to be able to understand to some extent the complexity of a concept such as social justice, an analysis of its paradigms and conceptions is made.

As it is well expressed, social justice is an essential part of the basic structure of society and has a close relationship with equity and equality in order to fulfill its purpose. And it is clear that where it predominates, it necessarily opens spaces for a greater social insertion of its members and disadvantaged or vulnerable groups. Its main and most significant purpose is to achieve equal opportunities for all, taking into account the diversity and needs that in fact are also different and therefore reinforces their rights. Therefore, the objective of this article is to carry out a theoretical and descriptive analysis that shows the different paradigms and conceptions of the theories of social justice, equity and values, which society demands so much.

METHODOLOGY

For the development of the research that gives rise to the ideas presented here, a reflexive criterion is assumed with respect to the categories worked on, from the critical analysis of different authors, evidently with a practical theoretical value, in terms of meaning, based on a descriptive-interpretative approach, and own perceptions, contrasted with the pertinent theoretical foundations. Consequently, what the researcher considers to be a contribution is shown.

In addition, the bibliographic review, analysis, synthesis and generalization are methods that were used, which made it possible for the authors to take a position. The results obtained indicate the existence of a diversity of opinions regarding the conception of social justice and its

link with equity and axiology. It should be noted that it is a broad topic with many edges to be analyzed and deepened, of interest to the scientific community, but which still demands efficient solutions and contributions in the positioning of those who follow its study.

DEVELOPMENT

In the current scenario in which our world finds itself, social problems do not seem to stop increasing, although in previous years there were efforts in actions to counteract the ills that represented society, these were not enough, due to economic, political, epidemiological factors among others, which requires a new style of development, which is why several researchers of these branches of science, intensify their studies in the search for alternatives that promote equity and provide opportunities for improvement to this phenomenon. However, it should be kept in mind that to speak of social justice is not merely in the legal term, but in its axiological dimension and from sociology itself.

The epistemic study conducted (Young, 2011; Dubet, 2012; Fraser, 2015; Jelin, 2021) reflects that the essence of social justice, in addition to its special relationship with equity, is nothing more than the axiological vision that transverses it, based on the conception that social values are recognized as part of social behavior and that they strengthen human relations, thus recognizing the need to put into practice respect, friendship, justice, freedom, love, tolerance, honesty, beneficence, responsibility, resilience, equality, among others, to procure a better future with perspectives, empathy and humanity.

Regarding the emergence of the term social justice, it is recognized that theories on social justice were developed to describe different approaches, but there is no consensus on when it emerged. However, it can be said that it was not until the appearance of John Rawls' Theory of Justice in 1971 that there was a before and after in public policies. Social justice, which is but a form of what has been classically called distributive justice, began to interest the State and public policies which up to that time were dominated by a utilitarian spirit (Dierlethen, 2012, as cited in Rosales, 2021).

From this point of view Sen (2009), does not ask about the degree of satisfaction of people or the number of resources they have to lead one type of life or another, but about what these people are able to do or really be. Therefore, this is a point that leads to rethinking justice and distribution schemes, since it establishes relevant differences based on the existing demands from a social point of view to improve the quality of life of its members. Thus, the question is not about the basic needs or the resources a person has, but about the capabilities that allow him/her to do or to be from the set of knowledge.

For authors such as Young (2011); Dubet (2012); Fraser (2015); Jelin (2021), it is insufficient to leave the debate of justice in the simple distribution, and they introduce recognition as a fundamental element to rethink justice, it is not enough one of the other, as they must complement each other, as well as a real equality of opportunities in access to power and the possibility that this gives to participate both in public spaces and gives access to knowledge.

Hence, let us take a moment to make a brief review of the injustices in this process. And to do so, we refer to Rosales (2021), who expands the concept of injustice from two fundamental conceptions: the socioeconomic, on the one hand, rooted in the economic political structure of society, which produces exploitation and/or economic marginalization and/or the deprivation of material goods essential to lead a dignified life. The second way of understanding injustice is cultural or symbolic, which is rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation and communication, examples of which are cultural domination, non-recognition and disrespect.

In reference to what Rosales (2021) mentions, it is essential to emphasize that, like injustice, inequalities bring with them significant threats that, depending on the social and economic development achieved, directly affect the feeling of fulfillment and influence emotions, the level of crime and other ills that afflict humanity.

Likewise, dissimilar specialists have developed approaches on distributive justice (Nozick, 1988; Rawls, 1999; Mazzola, 2014), so, social justice, refers to the definition of distributive justice that has to do with what is fair or right with respect to the allocation of goods in a society. There are different views on what type of inequality is relevant and should be prevented through public action. Within this discussion there are different ideas of justice that present different visions of equality and its relation to public policy.

In this same line of thought, Walzer (1993), starts from the idea that equality is a complex relationship of people regulated by the goods that are produced, shared and exchanged, and not an identity of possessions; hence, social goods have different meanings, and the distributive criteria and procedures are intrinsic to the social good. When meanings are distinct, distributions must be autonomous. In that sense, every social good or set of goods "constitutes a distributive sphere within which only certain criteria and dispositions are appropriate." (Walzer, 1993, p. 31)

From Moreira's (2013) perspective, relations of expectations compose life in society, insofar as people behave and expect others to behave according to a pattern of behaviors considered appropriate. As can be extracted from the semantics of the word itself, expectations are only selections of behaviors and actions, so that they may end

up being rejected or contrary to what is expected, which will determine the degree of insertion of the individual in the social system. Society is in charge of determining, based on its past experiences, the values that will serve as guides for behavior and reciprocal expectations, with the purpose of building structures responsible for reducing complexity and contingency.

In relation to this topic, Barp (2008), relied on the criterion that social justice is an important concept, since justice must be by definition a habit, not only of the individual, but of the collectivity, to achieve the true common good and harmony, which is destroyed by individualism.

Social justice is defined through the principles of human dignity, the common good, solidarity, subsidiarity, the universal destination of goods and the value of human work, and its purpose is to encourage man to create certain conditions necessary for his own realization and that of others. Similarly, Barp (2008) refers that it can be conceived as the synthesis of the three classic modes of justice (general or legal, particular commutative and particular distributive) that remain the fertile germs of any universal declaration of human rights.

Another contribution of Barp (2008), in his article and which is important to take into account in this analysis, is the description of universal principles that can lead to a genuine definition of social justice. The principle of the common good can be defined only with reference to the value of the human person, who is social by nature. As can be seen, for Barp (2008), the common good supposes respect for the person; the Principle of solidarity, in order to base a genuine definition of social justice, it is urgent to feel the needs of others as part of our own being and to seek the appropriate means to satisfy them; the Principle of subsidiarity, it is necessary to cultivate the virtue of subsidiarity, which complements the virtue of solidarity. Subsidiarity protects individuals and particular groups from the danger of losing their legitimate autonomy.

Similarly, Barp (2008) also emphasizes the principle of the value of human work. It is necessary to revalue human work, which is fundamentally performed in three spheres: personal, family and social. In the personal sphere, work has as its primary purpose the improvement of all the dimensions of the human being. In the family sphere, work promotes integral domestic development. In addition, for Barp (2008), examples of responsibility in the obligation to work contribute to educate family members in industriousness.

In the social sphere, Barp (2008), contributes that the work of each individual and of each family is a contribution to the common good, understood as the set of economic, educational, political and cultural conditions that promote the development of individuals and of all social groups. For the author of this research, these principles serve as a

basis for the conception of social justice that one wishes to construct from its study, content and depending on the context to be worked on. However, there are other significant criteria to be evaluated. They have also been taken into account in the description and value judgment of the main categories worked on in this regard.

In this regard, Luhmann (2005) stated that public offenses can only be reacted to immediately. Any delay reduces their credibility, or even their legitimacy, and they do not want to suffer disappointments. Their attempt to impose their expectation a posteriori, or at least for future cases, at the same time clearly demonstrates their decision to maintain the expectation. This leads to the attempt to define the concept of the norm by means of the disposition to use sanctions in cases of its transgression. In short, for Luhmann (2005), everyday life offers a considerable choice between possible explanations of disappointments in the form of reactions. With that, the perspective of its persistence is opened to diverse normative projections, without assuming beforehand the need for it to be consensual, consistent or free of contradictions.

Therefore, it is assumed, based on Luhmann's studies (2005), that the concept of social justice is linked to the essential aspects of axiology with respect to human rights. On the basis of this idea, the way in which social justice operates is systematically reflected and considered and can be considered as the result of a close interrelation between society, law and politics. As well, society establishes expectations of justice, which may or may not be explicitly expressed.

From the position of Rawls (2006), as cited in Sarmiento (2020), justice in a social scheme depends on how fundamental rights and duties are assigned, and on the economic opportunities and social conditions in the various sectors of society, therefore, a conception of social justice must be considered as one that provides, in the first instance, a guideline with which to evaluate the distributive aspects of the basic structure of society.

With regard to the problem of social justice (conceptually linked to the notion of equality), Luhmann (2005) presents the concept of justice as a principle that feeds itself, so that the formula of contingency presents an abstract and generalist nature, as it is expressed that at the same time, the legal practice oriented by texts (concepts, dogmas), allows a different understanding of the problem of justice. Justice can be related, says Luhmann (2005), in a different way to the form of equality: in the form of rules that decide equal cases in an equal way (and therefore; unequal cases, in an unequal way). In a compact version: justice can be designated as consistency of decision making.

In relation to commutative justice and distributive justice (which is parallel to it), for Luhmann (2005), a step of abstraction is achieved here that presupposes the existence

of a differentiated legal system that constitutes the legal cases. The principle of consistency in decision-making, which is separated from other value judgments that circulate in society, for example, from the question of whether the affected parties are rich or poor, whether they have an unimpeachable moral conduct, does urgently require help.

As has been implicitly expressed, for the author of this research, social justice is an essential part of the basic structure of society and has a close relationship with equity and equality in order to fulfill its purpose. And he makes it clear that where it predominates, it necessarily opens spaces for a greater social insertion of its members and disadvantaged or vulnerable groups. That we must work to provide equal opportunities to all, starting from taking into account the diversity and needs that in fact are also different and therefore reinforces their rights. Therefore, through the principle of equity, individual differences are valued, that is to say, the existing diversity in the environment is valued.

Through social justice we will be able to create sustainable solutions that help us to achieve full inclusion, thus creating inclusive environments to be complemented with the recognition of the different obstacles to be faced in any scenario, helping the development of human beings, their social integration, and achieve equality, a human rights approach. Which means in its broadest sense, advancing as a society as a whole, fighting inequalities, decent work, inclusion, social solidarity, social welfare, personal development. According to the Meaning Encyclopedia (2024), it is a value that promotes equal respect for the rights and obligations of every human being in a given society.

Therefore, from this same source Luhmann (2005), it is inferred that social justice is characterized as one of the most important social values of society, by ensuring the common good and harmonious coexistence. As well as the balance between the individual good and the common good based on fundamental human values, it therefore focuses on the search for equity in the dissimilar social issues that still need to be resolved.

In the same line of ideas on values, specifically social values from the educational dimension, Pinto (2016), refers that the daily development of each individual is impregnated with value actions that he shares with other individuals of his own culture, which is done through communicative interaction, actions and behaviors, therefore, it is essential the collaboration and communication between parents and educators to enable a comprehensive training of the child or young person, instilling or promoting in them the transmission of values. In this order, Cardenas & Aguilar (2015), call attention to the diversity emerges from the peace paradigm that is based on the idea of the human

being with differences and singularities, where interpersonal relationships are built in individual differences, in diversity.

The practice of values as a strategy to promote respect for diversity, in a globalized environment, is shown as indispensable to teach children from a very early age to know the reality of the variety present in the world around them and, from a critical awareness, to develop skills and competences to understand that everyone has a personality, unique qualities, a different family and therefore, should be valued and respected as a condition of their own and of others (Quisaguano et al., 2023).

Social justice encompasses much more than the fundamentals that characterize it; in this research, those mentioned in the Encyclopaedia Meanings (2024) are assumed and adapted to it:

- Labor social justice, which ensures both healthy relations between worker and employer, as well as the physical and psychological conditions necessary for the employee to perform his or her duties properly.
- Economic social justice, by regulating that the distribution of wealth tends to a state of equity, which is not accumulated only by some, as it creates as a consequence, an extreme disparity of social classes, among other social injustices.
- Social health justice, which is nothing more than the right to health must be ensured for all human beings equally, being a fundamental right that everyone can access, ensuring a healthy body and mind.

From the known studies (Cardenas & Aguilar, 2015; Quisaguano et al., 2023; Encyclopedia Significados, 2024) this classification gives the measure of the diversity of scenarios in which social justice itself develops. The general impact of its consequences on society. As an example of social justice, starting from this sociocultural variety: there are laws for the protection of women in order to fight against gender violence, against femicide and sexual violence, being difficult, because it requires a cultural change, not only social, to promote education in social values of equality.

Similarly, other examples may be the legislation of equal marriages, help with scholarship plans for advantaged students with few resources, inclusion policies for the disabled, animal protection policies, and environmental protection, etc.. All these are examples of evils that afflict humanity, affecting coexistence based on peace and respect. They have in common challenges that each group must face and that society itself demands solutions. This also implies strengthening values, unity among them and their inclusion. All this must be seen from the different socioeconomic and professional scenarios.

Along the same line of thought, Gordon (1995) mentions that the particularistic application of the law has serious consequences in the face of the profound social inequalities and social heterogeneity that exist in some countries. These consequences are expressed, in the best of cases, in discriminatory behavior by intermediate authorities against members of indigenous groups, or in the discrimination suffered by illiterate peasants, especially those who migrate to urban areas; and in the worst, in abuses of authority that leave attacks and disposessions against indigenous people unpunished.

The scale of human values is a necessary condition for coexistence, thus, it is the task of parents to lay these foundations and, it is up to the teacher to value the educational task of parents and to advance in it with assertiveness. In this particular Rojas (2019), highlights, educating respect for diversity is a relevant topic in these times of social uncertainty and, the ideal space to develop respect for diversity is through education in values, since, as considered by Puig & Martín (2015), as cited in Quisaguano et al. (2023), such education in values aims to direct the gaze towards the present time because human beings must take into account their individual life, but also the collective way of organizing coexistence.

Based on the analysis of the context of the subject and because of the significance it enhances, it is significant to highlight the criterion of Blanco (2006), that progress towards greater equity in education will only be possible if the principle of equal opportunities is ensured; giving more to those who need it most and providing each person with what he or she requires, according to his or her individual characteristics and needs, in order to be on an equal footing to take advantage of educational opportunities. It is not enough to offer educational opportunities; we must create the conditions for everyone to take advantage of them.

Equity and respect for diversity is today an indispensable competence for the healthy coexistence of all individuals in an increasingly heterogeneous and diverse world. Consequently, it allows for the development of peaceful, fairer and more equitable societies for all, and in this fact, the practice of values can help a lot as a strategy to promote it.

CONCLUSIONS

Although most of the conceptual approaches to social justice, equity and the values that integrate it converge in this article, the debate facing the media in this regard remains unresolved, the common benefit must be taken into account. Social justice should be valued in every action of life itself, in every specific activity carried out by human beings, so that equal opportunities prevail, since it is an intrinsic part of our habitat. It is not possible to achieve

optimal progress in society, nor to achieve a better world, if there are still vulnerable people, deprived of opportunities, of a pleasant life, or benefits of equality, indispensable factors for the achievement of this objective.

As a way of solution in the search for justice, equity and equality inculcated from transversal values. We can mention communication from the different media as previously suggested, since we are in the information era and this has and will have a fundamental role in the social processes that demand solutions to problems of inclusion, respect and claim of equity and equality rights. This allows a higher level of disclosure and socialization of society's interests, specifically those of vulnerable groups. At the same time, everything implies organization, planning and basic and deep knowledge to be treated.

It is here where the values to be achieved, their meanings and above all the benefits of carrying them for the common good are explicit. Where justice transcends, to a plane of greater equity, of greater knowledge, and greater commitment of humanity to themselves and to others. In the face of all the diversity of knowledge, it is worth noting that if we manage to define in each case the essence of the content to transform and work for the achievement of social justice. It is essential to always keep in mind that everything that is done is aimed at integral individual and group development, guaranteeing human rights and contributing to reduce or eliminate inequalities and discrimination. Therefore, this justice is an essential principle to achieve peace and prosperity for the members of society.

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