

*Institute of Special Education Santa  
Juana*

***ABOUT GENDER EDUCATION IN PERSONS  
WITH MENTAL RETARDATION  
(an exploration, a work)***

*Institute of Special Education Santa Juana*

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*Special education and gender, a particular case:*  
*A history*

*Institute of Special Education Santa Juana, created May of 1980, 04 their main objective is offering services to people with special educational necessities with cognitive difficulty, so that they are more functional inside the environments than he or she acts.*

*Special education and gender, a particular case:*  
*A history*

*In a first moment a project on education of the sexuality which looked for that people with cognitive deficit will manage in a functionally appropriate way their sexuality, was developed.*

*In a second moment, we find that the speech of the sexuality is crossed by speeches socially built, these have attitudes and values, that is, if we revises with thoroughness finds the game of the sexuality in the person with mental retardation, is a construction gives by other which is the owner of the power.*

## *Special education and gender, a particular case: A history*

*We have worked according the Rainbow Project of the Central University; eight steps have been designed these are:*

- *Gender imagery. The gender like such it has built an entire lattice of words, sentences and images that end up modeling the behavior of the other one. This phase looks for to recognize that group of shared conceptions to begin to work on them.*
- *Interaction rules In the sceneries where the life of people converges they are mediated by specific interaction rules that although they are not explicit, if they are fulfilled rigor. To recognize this allows us to see like it is and their dynamics.*



*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
A history*

- *Hierarchization forms. It is the analysis of the supremacy, in this case the man on the woman.*
- *Tone of the interaction. The qualifying depend on the gender make that the understanding of languages in a particular way, contributing to build the appearances.*
- *Lists and formats of the participation The roles developed in the class formats are mediated of teacher's way assumes the handling of the class.*

*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
A history*

- *Body construction. It is the revision on the forms like we use, take care, and prescribe our body.*
- *Language games. Forms of interacting the students with the teachers, and the partners do always is present the personal narrative about his or her gender.*



*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
A history*

*The proposal turns it points fundamentally to revise in the contexts of people's interaction with special necessities how the image is built and how conceives their gender. So, languages, the performance, the interaction, are revised, here special pedagogic forms, neither novel methods are not promoted.*

*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
Approaching to the theories*

*Is important speak about the meaning to being man and being woman and recognize that is a speech that arrives at school also, there not only is the encounter of bodies and identities, but the encounter with the relationships of power, the cultural imaginaries, the social representations around what we have called generically: sex, but over there is an encounter field of attitudes, values and social practices.*

*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
Approaching to the theories*

*It has emerged a radical notion in opposition to the traditional liberal. In this new current they propose a society in that the accent in the equality of rights is set aside, differences among the individuals at last causing inequalities in the results, and now the organization principle passes of each one according to their capacities, to each one according to their necessities.*

*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
Approaching to the theories*

*A pedagogic project should be constituted through advances in the fundamental conceptual axes for its achievement, they are:*

- *The relational perspective of gender.*
- *The school likes cultures ecology.*
- *The real value of hidden curricula.*
- *A true coeducation sense.*
- *Gender is configured in the social lattice, through a complex process.*

*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
the context*

*Inside this characteristic we see the panorama now in which we  
unwrap ourselves:*

- *Our system have programs of respect for the children and the girls, a values pedagogy is building.*
- *In the day-to-day ness the children and girls with cognitive handicapped have become in subject of action of others.*
- *Our system educational although it offers these educative opportunities the covering is very low.*



*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
the context*

*The Colombian population continues growing, passing of 37.2 million people taken a census of in 1993 to the 44.5 millions projected when concluding the 2003.*

*The Colombian's hope of life is approximately ten years below that of developed countries. The differences of quality of life and the daily violence explain that difference. Our hope of life doesn't have increasing to the rhythm that should grow, in reason of the disorder and the violence that accompany to our daily life*



*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
the context*

*Special mention deserves the absence of information on the situation of the children, girls and young handicapped who should be protected in a special way by its condition, offering them the best opportunities for its development and protecting them of the abuse and the discrimination. The obtained information at national level for this population didn't allow to establish the number of children, girls and young that suffer some handicapped, less still to determine which receive an in agreement education with its necessities from them, in spite of some domestic advances in this field.*

*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
the context*

*The cultural imaginary show us the person with special necessities in several ways:*

- In the case of the men, he is hyper sexuality person, and the women are sexless.*
- He or she is not very intelligent person, that is to say, he or she doesn't understand, neither he nor she learned.*
- Is a subject of pities; he or she never will be normal.*
- He or she is subject of negations, is the concretion of what should not be a son.*
- The function of the school is to teach him or her to be normal, or in its defect to teach the basic habits.*
- He or she has an uncertain future, therefore, he or she doesn't have project of life, or better still, his or her project is determined by another.*

## *Special education and gender, a particular case: the workshop*

### *Objective.*

- *To promote the reflection on the gender in people that work with men and women with mental retard.*

### *Specific objectives.*

- *To sensitize persons who work with persons with mental retardation on the gender situation that we live in the day-to-day ness.*
- *To sensitize persons who work with persons with mental retardation on the gender situation that our students are living.*
- *To develop proposals they allow transformation stocks in the population with special necessities.*

*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
the workshop*

*Methodology: Workshop.*

*Procedure.*

- *Phase one. Construction of the gender concept.*

*Differences. Attitudes. Origins.*

- *Phase two. Gender analysis.*

*Environments, control profiles, practical, factors.*

- *Phase three. The participation*

*Images. Interest, actors, powers, participation and levels.*

# *Special education and gender, a particular case: the workshop*

## *Population*

- *Professionals who work with people with mental retard. (16 people)*
- *Families, parents with children with problems of mental retard. (65 mothers, 50 parents)*

## *Indirect population.*

- *Students of the Institute of Special Education Santa Juana (42 women, 23 men)*

*Evaluation: Field diary.*



# *Special education and gender, a particular case: the workshop*

*Workshop name: ¿Why we are thus?*

*Objective.*

- *Exploring different explanations on the difference about the activities of the men and the women.*

*Methodology.*

- *Introducing the topic talking of the official data about the man's participation and of the woman in the social environment.*
- *Participants answer the questionnaire individually.*
- *Participants discuss the answers.*
- *Participants elaborate a definition of the gender concept, guided to a consensual encounter.*



*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
the workshop*

*Questionnaire.*

- 1. Why do you believe that the tasks in home are carried out fundamentally by women?*
- 2. Why do you believe you that ninety percent of the direction positions in the companies are in possession of men?*
- 3. Why do you believe that less than ten percent of the positions of popular election for public corporations are in women's hands?*
- 4. Why do you believe you, in general, being in equality of possibilities and having the same qualities, the men is better paid than the women?*

*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
the workshop*

- 5. What do you think about why are so few men involved in family parents' associations and community groups or of volunteers?*
- 6. Why do you believe you that there are more women single head of the household than men single head of the household?*
- 7. Why do you believe you that crimes like the violation and the abuse, are commented fundamentally against women?*
- 8. Why do you believe you that the men cry, touch him or them, and kiss less than the women?*

## *Special education and gender, a particular case: the workshop*

### *Second moment.*

*A definition of gender is presented to the participants and they form two groups, one of men and one of women, to evaluate it:*

- 1. Which the fundamental characteristics that define the feminine identity are? What are the differences of the masculine ones?*
- 2. What are the differences in the masculine activities of the feminine ones?*
- 3. This difference of activities and identities, do opportunities different to the men give and to the women?*

*The will respond this way: The men make the reflection on the women's role and the women on the man's role.*

## *Special education and gender, a particular case: the workshop*

- *Organizer and key person. The organizing team are compose for director of the institute and a group of two psychologists in their final year or of professional practices.*
- *Human resource for the activity. We worked basically with the staff of professionals compose: Academic coordinator, Speech Therapists. Occupational therapist. Special education teachers. Students of special education in professional practices. Auxiliaries of the institution.*

# *Special education and gender, a particular case: the workshop*

## *Outcome*

*Starting from the initial results we intend to develop a program on gender with the students of the institution, this has been a slow process because the individual characteristics of the students are making meditate about it. We are designed a new project around the ethical and values proposals.*



# *Special education and gender, a particular case: the workshop*

## *Problem encountered*

- *They were difficulties around accepting new forms of conceptualizing the gender, and apply to a daily life. The most difficult work is with the parents. “Life is ok like this, so, why we want to change?”*
- *An important aspect of the person's situation with mental retard is that the domestic situation has made many students that belonged to the school system to desert for lack of money and the parents' cooperation.*
- *The situation of the social inclusion in the alone public schools covers a 10% of population, the private institutions absorbed around 60%, this percentage has lowered around 35%*



*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
To conclude.*

*The reflection a critic of images provides on the education from the gender will also imply a modification about our the attitudes, values and imaginary that will help to that improve in the work with this particular population, it is clear that the simple desire is not enough, it is necessary to assume the risk of the change, because if this it is to improve, welcome it is.*

*Special education and gender, a particular case:  
To conclude.*

*The imaginary ones built socially they are elaborations that allow us to interact with the other one, but unfortunately in Christian tradition like ours, where the being woman is a smaller status than the being man, makes that the girl with mental retard, have more prohibitions, more norms, less freedom.*

*Special education and gender, a particular case:*  
*To conclude*

*Only by the acceptance of our own gender and respect to the other one will be able to go ahead in the education of our students, because they, inside their vulnerability claim of us stocks they allow them to be constituted as autonomous and ethical fellows.*