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NON-VIOLENT LIFESTYLES IN UNIVERSITIES FROM COMMENSALITY AND FOOD

David Eduardo Velázquez Muñoz

Autonomous University of the State of Mexico, Institute of University Studies
Toluca, State of Mexico
ORCID: 0000-0003-0818-1099

Hilda Carmen Vargas Cancino

Autonomous University of the State of Mexico, Institute of University Studies
Toluca, State of Mexico
ORCID: 0000-0002-5012-9537

Lucía Matilde Collado Medina

Autonomous University of the State of Mexico, Institute of University Studies
Toluca, State of Mexico
ORCID: 0000-0002-3729-9793

Virginia Pilar Panchi Vanegas

Autonomous University of the State of Mexico, Institute of University Studies
Toluca, State of Mexico
ORCID: 0000-0001-9262-0773

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Abstract: In promoting non-violent lifestyles that foster human development and comprehensive relationships with others and the community of life, school coexistence is crucial, since it promotes the ethical-social, emotional and intellectual formation of people, contributing to citizen coexistence and the promotion of peace. Non-violent coexistence within the school space motivates the cultivation of fair and harmonious relationships, from physical and temporary spaces consciously created for dialogue and conflict resolution. A vital example for this type of coexistence is found in school cafeterias, where commensality, that is, sharing the table and food in company, strengthens social ties and promotes dialogue and collaboration. In university environments, commensality becomes a space for interaction that goes beyond academics, facilitating meaningful relationships and informal learning opportunities. Furthermore, food in university cafeterias plays a fundamental role in promoting sustainable and non-violent lifestyles. Prioritizing agroecological products from local suppliers not only benefits the health and well-being of the school community, but also supports the families of producers and promotes environmental conservation. It is crucial to raise awareness about eating habits and opt for healthy and sustainable eating in educational institutions. It is necessary to promote humanistic values and cultivate virtues such as love, justice, truth and non-violence in the university environment. Establishing spaces for dialogue and transformative learning, such as sustainable school cafeterias, can contribute significantly to the promotion of non-violent lifestyles and the construction of a more just and harmonious society.

Keywords: Non-violence, Commensality, Cafes, Sustainability

INTRODUCTION

From the beginning of his life, human beings learn to live naturally with others, who primarily constitute their family nucleus. Family coexistence is the most common and one of the most important, since thanks to it the personality of the individual is experienced and developed day by day and he is trained to live with assertiveness and harmony.

When you begin to interact with other people outside that nucleus, in the social sphere, for example, you respond to a need for socialization that needs to be satisfied, so it is important to generate and build the environment conducive to a peaceful and fair coexistence of mutual benefit for good living. This type of coexistence is part of non-violent lifestyles, which have the characteristic of promoting the full development of human potential and capabilities, while establishing integral relationships with other people, other living and inert beings and the Everything of which we are part (Earth Charter, 2000). To achieve this kind of coexistence, norms and codes of conduct are established based on shared values and agreements. Thanks to the laws and norms of the family and the community, social coexistence can be guaranteed and regulated.

Within this, the ways of living together are numerous, among them is school coexistence that can be assessed, as stated by Loera (cited by Chaparro et. al., 2015 p. 22), through the indicators on schools with management of high social effectiveness, resulting from the external evaluation of the Quality Schools Program (PEC) of Mexico, which contrasted with each other gave rise to three important dimensions: democratic, inclusive and peaceful, also stated by UNESCO (2008) in its document *Convivencia democracy, inclusion and culture of peace* (Chaparro et. al., 2015).

School coexistence implies the interrelation between the members of an educational center, such as the teaching staff, the student community and the administrative community; In order to develop fully, it is important to focus first on personal development and try to be in the best physical, mental, and spiritual conditions to learn to take care of oneself, since with this one is able to respond to the inherent commitment to take care of the other. and the other.

Carozzo (2017, p. 28) states that:

[...] In school life, coexistence is not just another component or the privileged tool that helps educational work understood as the acquisition of new knowledge; It is actually the very essence of school life.

Through this, values and competencies are acquired for ethical-social, socio-affective and intellectual development to derive them into another type, citizen coexistence (Cortina, cited by Association of Psychological and Social Studies, p. 4), understood as the quality of the set of daily relationships that occur between members of a society with which, through its norms and laws, individual interests are harmonized with collective ones, resolving conflicts in a more constructive and productive way. It means sharing with those who think differently or are different because of their language, culture, race or religion, also taking care of people's rights.

The human being has always been a social being, who has seen the need to rely on others. Thanks to this, society has been able to develop, achieving great benefits in communities and people, always trying to promote fair coexistence, respectful interrelations and tolerance. It is important to keep in mind that all human beings have the right to an equitable and egalitarian environment to live together, regardless of differences. In this sense, it is important that school environments consider within their principles the notions of

education for peace and non-violence, which according to Zurbano (1998) is conceived as a continuous and permanent process of personality development, inspired by a positive way of learning to live with oneself, with others, as well as creating environments and spheres of justice, respect and harmony.

In this sense, within these non-violent areas, the physical environment is also considered and as an indivisible part of it, nature, that is, the community of life: the entire set of living beings from the smallest insect, the transient bird and the most robust trees, whose presence is immanent even in environments with high urbanization. In particular, there is a common physical space that fosters the possibility of personal relationships that occur around food, an act that is carried out in specific places and which are generally known as "school cafeterias" (González, 2021).

Thus, it is of interest to recognize the type of coexistence that is fostered in these spaces in which, in addition to academic and personal issues, other important topics could be discussed, such as what type of food we are consuming, what effects the forms cause. of food in the environment and in human health, what social and environmental costs does consuming certain foods have; What people or communities do to generate a harmonious, fair and respectful coexistence with the community of life, critically question what we are consuming and why we are doing it.

Although they are not common topics of conversation during the times in which coexistence occurs at school and particularly during the stay in the cafeterias, it is important that these school areas transit as one more factor for the training of people towards the cultivation of non-violent lifestyles, where in addition to coexistence in integrity with the external, non-violent coexistence with oneself is considered, with comprehensive health, eating and consumption habits, since

it is a reality that distancing of society towards conscious consumption represents one of the civilizational features that keep the possibility of planetary survival in crisis and on alert.

For this possibility of personal and collective meeting in school cafeterias, various factors intervene, such as class schedules, the type of food offered, waiting times, furniture and atmosphere, but one of them that stands out is coexistence. -violent is the possibility of commensality.

COMMENSALITY IN UNIVERSITIES

The lifestyle today to coincide with meal times is defined by the prevailing interests of food production and consumption; The continuous work schedule and the great distances between the workplace and home make it impossible to go home to eat, which has disrupted commensality and the privilege of meeting to live together at lunch, lunch or dinner every day.

Commensality refers to the human act of eating collectively, eating together, sharing food and drink at a common table where those who for some reason are similar and different from others with whom they do not eat sit. Its etymological roots are Co, which means to share, and mensa, which means table (cf.). Eating together historically and culturally transcends what we eat. It is an act that gives identity and belonging to an initially primary group such as the family and, based on physical and social development, gives a sense of community, just as it was done in the origins of humanity when food was hunted and gathered, gathering it to increase the quantity and quality of the diet that was eaten collectively.

Sharing food at the common table makes harmonious coexistence possible, it involves communication without fear of what is harmful, without fear of injury, pain, or

poison in food; It enables open and free dialogue about life and its events; You can talk about the problems of everyone who sits at the table, it allows you to free your speech and give your opinion on the immediate reality; It implies meeting in mutual trust and peace to share what is eaten without suspicion. Those who sit together at the table are family and friends, hence, as Boff (2008, p. 1) points out, “commensality is so central that it is linked to the very essence of the human being as human.”

Sitting at the table to share food is relevant not only in physical conservation, but in the social reproduction of individuals and the community, it constitutes an important interaction where norms and values of the community and family tradition are transmitted collectively and culturally. and personal identity, therefore, the moment in which food is shared is extremely privileged; From the eco-theological thought of Leonardo Boff (op.cit) “the table, rather than a piece of furniture, refers to an existential experience and a ritual. It is the privileged place of family, communion and brotherhood.”

Its impact is important because it involves affecting a human and social bond at different levels, which include health and even the environment. Commensality as an ancestral practice has found its place in universities where students, teachers and administrative staff gather around the table to share moments of meaningful interaction.

From the university perspective, commensality is presented as a meeting space that transcends classrooms and conferences. The moments shared around a table generate informal conversations and the opportunity to meet people outside the strict academic context. Today these relationships can lead to lasting friendships, professional connections and collaborative projects, from critical awareness of contexts, in an increasingly digitalized

world where face-to-face interactions may be limited; Commensality therefore offers a tangible space to build genuine human connections so in terms of informal education, commensality can be considered a form of learning.

Informal discussions and debates that arise during meals can enrich understanding of topics studied in the classroom. Students have the opportunity to exchange ideas, ask questions and receive different perspectives on a topic, which can contribute to their intellectual growth and critical development, where neither pleasure nor reflective awareness must be neglected, with full awareness of the existence of :

structures of appropriation/domination/hierarchies, predatory practices, and violent disputes over sources of supply [...] we observe that agro-food production has generally been based on a sense of production and enjoyment of (and for) the community at a scale local (Rossi, 2021, p.113).

However, commensality around coexistence and especially nutrition, from the university perspective, also faces challenges such as the availability of suitable food options for all students, including those with dietary restrictions, which constitutes an important aspect to consider for guarantee a healthy and nutritious experience with agroecological and sustainable products in the design of university menus.

Commensality when sharing the table also refers to what is eaten and the preparation of food, which “supposes solidarity and cooperation with each other” (Boff, 2008, p.1), in both cases, demands recognition what is prepared and with what inputs it is cooked with the certainty that food is a collective action since its realization turns out to be collaborative from its production, acquisition, preparation and putting it on the table to be consumed:

[...] Behind the local consumption of sustainable products (mainly those in which producer and consumer have direct contact), there is also a social interest, which moves consumers beyond the simple search for foods that guarantee health and nutrition. Being part of a space of coexistence, where you have contact with the person who produces the food, generates a feeling of tranquility and trust (...) difficult to experience when reading a label in a super market (Sanjuán, et. al and Rodríguez et. al, 2003 in Juárez, 2014, p.

Thus, acquiring agroecological products from community producers to make the menu of university cafeterias implies a dynamic of face-to-face personal commerce, where interpersonal relationships create community since they occur in a social space of direct contact where people live together and share, totally different from that where the acquisition of food occurs in a shopping center characterized by self-service.

NON-VIOLENT COEXISTENCE PROPOSAL

Commensality in the university cafeteria environment makes connection and learning possible through food made with agroecological products; Furthermore, understood as the act of sharing a meal in the company of others, it plays an essential role since it goes beyond simple nutrition and becomes a means to strengthen social ties, encourage collaboration and enrich the educational experience of consuming the production. agroecological locality that in turn benefits the communities and networks of producers, families and farmers linked to the university school environment.

This way, non-violent coexistence in the field of university cafeterias includes both the possibility of meeting for dialogue and learning in commensality, the opportunity to provide health to the school community through food of agroecological origin, as

well as well-being for producer families. This way, the university is not only part of the ideological support of society's lifestyles, it also encourages and creates, consciously or not, lifestyles in its student population. This generates an important alert when eating habits are observed. In the facilities of its cafeterias, where ultra- and hyper-processed products, dairy products, meats form the basis of its menu, in addition to fruits and vegetables that were surely irrigated with pesticides and that, for the most part, are not produced by local suppliers. (Martín, 2019; Mardones et al., 2017; Saavedra-Garcia, et al., 2020; Vargas et al., 2023).

Many of the conditions that favor these eating styles that are not favorable for health have political implications and the dissemination of foods of low nutritional value, so a set of actions is necessary to counteract such circumstances, such as:

[...] the dissemination, supervision and promotion [which requires] including directors and teachers, merchants [...] and students, so that these actions translate into behavioral changes and that food environments are sustainable over time. (Saavedra-Garcia, et al., 2020).

It is possible, from within the university, to generate strategies for a more sustainable lifestyle, based on food within its cafeterias, where, on the one hand, priority is given to local suppliers, whose production, planting or transformation is from agroecological processes, which ensure that food, even fresh, does not arrive loaded with the different toxins involved in normalized planting practices in the world:

[...] The use of these products on crops carries the risk of exposing consumers to harmful chemicals through the residues left after raising the animal or processing the crop (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FAO, 2022, s.n).

From the Gandhian or ahimsa ethical perspective, one of the bases that allows human beings to be sovereign is food and its health, as it can provide the basic nutrients that also allow a healthy life; on the other hand, the value of Community is another element that makes it easier to build a more just life, which prevents harm to others and to the nature or community of life. Its precepts remain in force, even more so now that humanity is on board a multifactorial collapse. Despite the fact that Gandhian proposals began to take shape at the beginning of the 20th century, given that Gandhi:

[...] Between 1904 and 1908 he outlined in theory and practice his doctrines of satyagraha or non-violent activism and of a constructive reordering of society based on the simplification of community life. (Woodcock, 1971, p. 54).

They are the excesses of a Western society, which has caused problems in relation to health, pollution and the generation of greater poverty in the already poor. Therefore, it is relevant to recover Gandhi's contributions to a non-violent lifestyle, where awareness of one's own habits, both student and institutional, food free of agrotoxins, support for local suppliers is highlighted., instead of transnational companies, to artisanal work and dialogue for the solution or transformation of conflicts (Vargas, 2018).

CONCLUSIONS

It is necessary to reaffirm that education for peace and non-violence does not consist of giving talks or conferences on the subject, nor of placing posters alluding to peace and tolerance along the corridors and corridors, but rather of achieving active participation of school members, stimulating the structuring of a community whose actions project educational processes focused on collective reflection and the transformation

of individual and group relationships with a vision of the future; to acquire the instruments or means that allow people to transform the relationships they have with themselves, with other people and with the community of life (Benavides, 2003, p. 16), in such a way that university efforts towards achieving non-violent lifestyles through food based on principles of agroecology and food sovereignty, strengthening the sense of identity and belonging during commensality, as well as the generation of spaces for

dialogue and transformative learning such as cafeterias Sustainable schools can represent creative institutional contributions that our civilization in the context closest to the school urgently requires.

Parent (2009) expressed his cry for university students to change their vision of the materialist world (finite, transferable and economic goals) for a humanistic vision, where virtues are cultivated, love, justice, truth, and non-violence.

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