

A Brazilian critique of UNESCO's Core curriculum as a tool for teaching Bioethics

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ABSTRACT

The Core Curriculum proposed by UNESCO as a tool for dissemination and ethical education has been widely used by several countries and seeks to structure a bioethical content related to human rights agreed at the UN. In this article, we review the contents present in this teaching material and the learning objectives that are worked on in the proposal. The proposed content is anthropocentric and instrumental. Some themes are missing from the material, notably the discussion of animal ethics which would involve the fact-based discussion of replacing animal use in experiments and animal welfare, and environmental ethics. Considering the limits of the pedagogical proposal, we suggest using the concepts of moral and ethical competence to structure the Core Curriculum and choose appropriate methods for teaching Bioethics.

Key words: UNESCO; Bioethics/education; Curriculum; moral development; teaching materials.

Introduction

Bioethics emerged as a phenomenon, in the second half of the last century, in the context of socio-cultural changes and advances in the biotechnical sciences [1]. Despite understanding that medical practice has had a moral code since the Hippocratic era, the fact is that these moral codes have come to be recognized as insufficient to cope with modern social complexity. The principle of the sacredness of life, which for centuries has guided health care decision making, is no longer

sufficient to determine, for example, who is to be treated and what is to be done, and who should be cared for in a situation of resource scarcity. Considering that this principle has always been an absolute principle, that is, it did not admit exception, and the fact that it was no longer sufficient for decision making, other principles could be considered in this process [1].

While the medical practice was guided by the principle mentioned earlier and anchored in historical aphorisms such as the one erroneously assigned to Hippocrates, "Cure when possible; relieve when necessary; comfort always ." This was probably an adaptation made under Christian interpretation of the phrase that appears in the Hippocratic Corpus: "As for medicine, as I conceive it, I believe that its aim, in general terms, is to remove the suffering of and reduce the ferocity of their illnesses, abstaining from treating diseases, refraining from treating the seriously ill for those whom medicine has no remedy," has no resources" [2, p. 56]. This adaptation, whose oldest record dates to the 15th century, rejects this certain Hippocratic fatalism for something more under Christian values and morals.

It is not surprising, then, that the recommendation concerning "medical ethics" should be taught in medical schools only emerged in the context of the World Medical Association in 1999, when a World Medical Association resolution "strongly recommends to medical schools throughout the world that the teaching of medical ethics and human rights be included as a compulsory course in their curricula" [3]. Until then, the moral principles of medicine were anchored in the morality of religions, as it still is for many practitioners, who claim to apply the rules of their specific religions to the lives of others.

Among so many different concepts that can be offered to Bioethics, we would like to point out our understanding that Bioethics includes more than ethics applied to the field of human health. We take as our task the analysis of moral arguments for and against certain human practices that affect the quality of life and well-being of humans and other living beings the quality of their environments and propose solutions based on this analysis [4].

In this context, UNESCO elaborated and published, in 2008, a proposal for a Core Curriculum [5-6] (CC) based on the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights. The Core Curriculum (CC) would be a means to disseminate basic concepts for teaching bioethics worldwide. It was divided into two parts. The first part is called "Thematic Program, Ethics Education Program." The second part is called "Study Materials, Ethics Education Program." The two sections make up the Basic Curriculum while leaving the topics and methodology open to be adopted by each professor or department of Bioethics in their respective universities and present a guiding sense for the teaching of Bioethics.

The titles of each teaching unit of the CC correspond to the articles contained in the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, approved on October 19th, 2005, by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 33rd session. In this sense, UNESCO presented this syllabus to guide the teaching of Bioethics as a strategy for disseminating the principles contained in this Declaration among its member states.

In addition to the units that address the Declaration's principles, there are two introductory units in the CC, which theoretically address the perspectives of ethics and bioethics, making a total of 17 units. The first part is a teacher's manual indicating the theoretical content covered in each unit. In the second part, the UNESCO syllabus suggests how to approach, in the classroom, the topics of the units for a better understanding of the contents.

The purpose of this article is to reflect on the proposed content and learning objectives present in the main curriculum, as well as on the concept of education indicated in the UNESCO program, accepting the challenge posed by the Program itself to understand it only as an initial basis for the teaching of Bioethics and to propose possible ways for its use. Thus, we intend to analyze the Program from two perspectives. The first will focus on the contents written in the CC to establish relationships with the more general debate on ethics and bioethics. In contrast, the second perspective will focus on the concept of learning from the CC. In the end, the concept of competence will be presented, distinguishing it as moral competence and ethical competence, according to Lawrence Kohlberg and Georg Lind, as a suggestion for the formulation of educational objectives in Bioethics.

Review of the contents of the basic curriculum

In this first topic, we intend to critically analyze the contents covered in the two sections of the Basic Bioethics Syllabus. With this, we will discuss some points of the Program, the approach, and absences, identifying, in the end, the bioethics perspective that leads it. This first approach will serve as a basis for a critical reflection on the UNESCO program, more specifically, the teaching of Bioethics.

It is known that the official languages of the United Nations (UN) are English, Chinese, French, Spanish, Russian, and Arabic. Therefore, there is no official version of the CC for Portuguese or other languages. Such absences may lead to the proliferation of unofficial versions that may present translation biases that may even be relevant. Therefore, this omission, which also occurs in World Health Organization (WHO), is regretted.

The concept of ethics is presented in the first unit, whose title is "What is ethics?". Although it emphasizes the idea of variability in human morality, it does not clarify the conceptual differences between ethics, legal, religious and moral rules, and punctilio. In the same way, it does not explain what causes a problem in morality. It is necessary to highlight that the values between those involved can and will be different since the CC affirms that "there are some universal and immutable elements in human morality." However, an inattentive reader of the example offered by the UNESCO's document may understand the propositions "do no harm" and "tell the truth" as absolute universal obligations. However, this should be understood in accordance with secular a bioethical thought, expressed, for example, by Beauchamp and Childress' theory of principles [7]. According to these authors, ethical principles are valid "prima facie," i.e., valid in principle but admitting exceptions.

Furthermore, we must consider that one's own understanding of what would be a harm to someone may vary significantly among the agents involved in the same situation under consideration. However, the concepts "moral" and "ethical" could be treated in general as equivalent. However, we must recognize the understanding that morality is the set of rules external to the individual and ethics as a second-order reflection on the problems situated in the field of morality.

From the third unit of the CC onwards, the contents are organized according to the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights. The CC itself justifies this option because it is only a program considered to be minimal, which has as its starting point bioethical principles that have acquired legal status by consensus. However, the document also encourages the adoption of the flexible curriculum so that its application is as broad as possible, both in terms of content approaches and in accordance with the local context. As the document indicates, a critical reflection of the curriculum itself is necessary for its practical application.

Considering these proposals set out in the document itself, it is unavoidable to analyze the content present in the CC and its approach to analyze its construction as teaching material claiming to be an international reference for teaching bioethics. Human rights can be considered "as the closest expression of what we can call universal morality" [8, p. 479]. However, it is recognized as a social and historical construction of Western culture and an expression of its desire.

Therefore, it is equally essential to be aware of its limitations as didactic material for universal use. Human rights are clear and constant as a guiding network throughout this curriculum, even being structured around the 15 principles of the Declaration of Bioethics. The principles were chosen to lead the discussion of Bioethics within what was debated by experts from different countries and to respect universal human rights.

In the same way that the invocation of human rights is an asset of the CC, giving it strength and credibility at the international level, reinforced through the figure of the UN, it is also a potential limiting factor that we must always consider. By appealing to human rights, we call for a discussion of the principles explained in the Universal Declaration, which lists the rights to be safeguarded by every citizen of the world and the concepts involved in constructing that Declaration.

The risk of positioning Human Rights, fundamentally with a function of modern international law, as the fixed structure of a curriculum that aims to discuss and teach ethics is to place it within the limits of such law. Both the discussions and the concepts of ethics and bioethics themselves would only be conceived and carried out within the confines of human rights law. With this,

although adequate and just, more fixed in time/space than ethics, the law ends up pruning the competence to think about itself.

In analyzing the content presented within the CC, we notice the intense focus on medicine. The document even explains that medical students are the primary focus group of the curriculum. Although the document acknowledges that the teaching of bioethics is relevant to other foreground health courses and courses in social sciences, law, and background in philosophy, the examples placed within the CC Part 2 are, in their vast majority, related to a hospital or medical situations. On the other hand, there are faulty parts in content within the CC. Animal ethics is a fundamental part of bioethics, with discussions around different areas of human society, from the use of animals in food to cultural use. Authors in this field also made contributions to Bioethics such as Singer [9-10], Adams [11], Joy [12], demonstrating the versatile and applied scope of the discussion of animal ethics, also combined with criticism of the daily mode of production and violence suffered by various groups. However, the small mention made within the CC about nonhuman animals is given by the discussion on the use of animals in experiments, most notably in medical experiments. Nominally, in Case 1 of the Unit 17 study material, there is a discussion of the use of rats in clinical studies on insulin in the fight against diabetes. In addition to being the only proposed discussion of animal ethics in the entire material, the case ends by stating that medical scientists say that there is no alternative to the use of animals in this case, and that is for the good of the majority should be maintained. The material fails to mention the existence of divergences within the field on animal use and the existence of dense literature on alternatives to animal use, even without mentioning the internationally known 3R's [13].

Environmental ethics is also an area of great general interest within Bioethics today. Furthermore, again, it is only in specific cases that this discussion arises within the material. In the first part of the Program, in which theoretical concepts are presented, concepts in environmental ethics are mentioned - such as ecocentrism and biocentrism - however, there is a gap in the different currents of environmental ethics that fit into the discussion. Looking at the second part of the Program, the cases that directly address plants and the environment in Units 16 and 17 are intensely focused on the well-being of human beings, particularly with future generations who will be at risk due to environmental consequences of anthropocentric actions.

These limitations of the CC can be understood as a result of adherence to the human rights framework in a very limited way. Human rights, anchoring their basis in the concern of human beings, derive their environmental concerns and concerns with other beings; from there, compromising a more holistic vision that evaluated the interests of these beings and the environment and sought more eco-centric paths of production and interactions [14].

The main concern for the maintenance of future generations, a fundamental point of the environmental vision, figured directly in the initial concept of sustainability. It was coined by the UN in 1987, according to which sustainability would be a "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" [15]. However, as discussions on the subject have progressed, the concept has expanded to include economic development, resource preservation, human health, and species preservation [16].

Sustainability and concern for the environment are not only listed as one of the points of the UN Millennium Development Goals. However, they have also become the focus of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, a guide to orient actions at the international level. Among these 17 goals, there is reportedly a concern for life, terrestrial, aquatic life, and gender equality issues that have not been explored in either part of the core curriculum.

The limits presented in the CC programmatic analysis indicate a limited perspective on bioethics and human rights rather than a restriction of topics. Therefore, the critique focuses on the choices made by UNESCO in its teaching program. The limits presented are evidenced by its objectives, the target audience, how the topics are approached, but also by its conception of the subject of ethics and morality. Given these observations regarding content, it is necessary to discuss a pedagogical concept that can understand ethics as a dynamic and constantly changing subject.

The pedagogical concept of the Core Curriculum

The educational perspective adopted by the CC can be seen by the pedagogical objectives, general and specific, and by the methodologies indicated for teaching the Program. According to José Carlos Libâneo [17], the teaching-learning process is characterized by the relationship established between objectives, contents, and methods. In the previous section, we commented on the contents and how they are approached from a bioethical perspective. In order to reflect more globally on the CC, the learning objectives and the mediation between them, contents, and teaching methods will be analyzed. The learning objectives chosen for a pedagogical process determine the organization of the contents of this process, reflecting an educational concept.

The general objectives of the analyzed Program and the specific learning objectives described in each unit indicate an educational perspective for the teaching of bioethics. It is observed that the learning objectives of the CC are always marked by the expression "should be able to." This expression defines what students, at the end of each unit, must achieve for the curriculum to have fulfilled its purpose. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the face of educational objectives being limited to abstract capabilities, such as "applying the ethical principles of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights," the contents would be restricted to an institutionalized and static ethical perspective and human rights.

The Unit 3 of the CC, referred to Article 3 of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, addresses the theme of human dignity and human rights. The unit, specifically, aims to develop students' ability to explain and apply concepts on these two topics. However, these are central issues in the current discussion of bioethics regarding, for example, medical intervention for the extension of life and respect for the rights and dignity of users [18]. In healthcare, this type of conflict requires from the healthcare workers a set of skills that go far beyond being able to explain and apply concepts.

The traditional model of teaching ethics and bioethics is a heteronomous process. Even adherence to concepts that express supposed universal moral values, such as those present in the Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, usually occurs through memorization only [19]. When faced with a concrete situation, moral action cannot be taught simply by explaining concepts. Thus, the educational objectives for teaching bioethics should aim to develop a critical capacity to build moral decisions that are expressed in the interaction with the external environment and with the worldviews internalized by the student [19].

Using appropriate teaching methods and techniques, these educational objectives are possible in the teaching and learning process. According to Libâneo, "methods are determined by the objective-content relationship and refer to the means to achieve general and specific didactic objectives" [17, p. 149]. Part 2 of the UNESCO program, called "study materials," suggests discussing cases done in groups, including the projection of films and a complimentary bibliography to support the discussions. Case discussion is undoubtedly a good learning technique anchored in active methodologies, encouraging participation and debate between subjects with different views and moral values.

Furthermore, this type of activity, in which the cases are prepared in advance, usually has a certain prior expectation about the students' behavior. One of the cases proposed for group discussion in Unit 3, for example, concerned a prisoner who was kept handcuffed when undergoing medical intervention. Undoubtedly, this is a case that can generate exciting questions for bioethics teaching. On the other hand, it is made clear that a measure is expected between respect for human dignity, regardless of the prisoner's condition against the subject, and the protection of society. However, concrete situations do not always present themselves in an obvious way and sometimes involve a much broader set of moral issues that need to be considered in deliberations.

Thus, for the development of skills related to critical thinking and autonomous moral action, the teaching of bioethics could also indicate methodologies in which students were responsible for formulating cases. In specific cases, it could even be suggested that students investigate at health services, or in interviews with health professionals, specific situations that could be discussed in the training set. This type of technique allows not only the application of the concepts learned in previously elaborated cases but, fundamentally, contributes to the active exercise in recognition of a situation in which an ethical conflict is established in health practices.

From the analysis of the CC, it is understood that its critical use as a reference can stimulate the development of teaching projects more compatible with current discussions in the field of ethics and bioethics and with local contexts. Therefore, taking the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights as a starting point should not mean restricting oneself to it but adopting it as a minimum point of reference that can and should be expanded. This is made possible by appropriate pedagogical objectives and teaching methods. In this sense, it is interesting to note that the UNESCO document does not work with the concept of competence, so fashionable in contemporary discussions on training, even before vocational training.

The pedagogy of competencies

It is believed that the pedagogical conception for teaching bioethics to learn the development of skills can contribute to the articulation between knowledge and practice. Indeed, the concept of competence is polysemic, with diverse origins and applications that can also be highly questionable when used in a technical perspective to develop specific skills for a given technical activity.

In addition, more recently, the strategic use of competencies has been favored by the neoliberal speech of governments and international organizations for the conduction of reforms in educational systems [20]. According to this critique, competencies would link education directly to the business world, eliminating its humanistic perspective and devaluing diplomas as defining social position in the labor market [20-21].

While recognizing the relevance of discussions on teaching by competencies, it is necessary to critically reflect on the subject to adequately define this concept for its adoption in bioethics teaching. Perrenoud's perspective on education by competencies differs, notably, from the business and technical vision of education. The author thus introduces the topic "Competence is the ability to mobilize a set of cognitive resources (knowledge, skills, information, etc.) to resolve a series of situations with relevance and effectiveness" [22].

In the book "Building competencies from school" [23], Perrenoud refutes the idea that the concept of competencies is used in the field of education in the same sense in which it is used in relation to changes and modernization of the labor market. According to the author, the idea of competency-based curriculum reforms is not necessarily, or at least not exclusively, related to the proposals advocated by economic agents. On the contrary, competencies in education are defended by segments with different thoughts about the world and the education of these agents. For the author, teaching by competencies is fundamental to guaranteeing an efficient school strongly linked to reality.

Competencies, for Perrenoud, should have a management role in relation to knowledge and not in opposition to it [23]. Although he does not deny the importance of knowledge, the author's perspective understands that this knowledge must have a practical application, a verifiable and accountable meaning in order to be mobilized in education. Theoretical concepts, in this way, become unnecessary or secondary when a practical value is not verified. The rising of the idea of competencies as an organizing principle of training would exclude, in this sense, concepts and categories characterized by disinterested knowledge, affirming an education in which knowledge has practical applicability, i.e., a recognizable value.

The point is that, in this case, only the contents and objectives of education are removed from the economic world, but the utilitarian logic of education persists. Recently, some authors have stated that Neo-liberalism is constituted as rationality in which even the non-economic aspects of social processes begin to be treated in economic terms [24-26]. Neo-liberal changes in education do not justify its management model, its commercialization, or budgetary restrictions and privatizations. Educational Neo-liberalism is also the sheath, and it is proven when the management of school knowledge links the validity of knowledge to its usefulness [25]. However, the school also consists of disinterested knowledge, which sets the pace of imagination and human development to its full potential.

The criticism of the pedagogy of competencies, formulated by Perrenoud, does not concern, therefore, its linkage with the educational agenda of economic agents. The limitation lies within the utilitarian logic in which knowledge, including knowledge related to the exercise of citizenship, is made available. In order to prioritize content for its practical utility, the author empties the

broader meaning of education and its role in the formation of democratic citizenship. Considering the teaching of bioethics, it makes no sense to understand that the necessary knowledge for moral deliberation, in the face of ethical conflicts arising from human practices, should be guided by utilitarian logic.

The development of the field of bioethics is linked, as mentioned above, to issues such as human dignity, justice, environmental protection, human and nonhuman rights, as well as values such as respect for the plurality of thought and autonomy of subjects. These categories can be understood from the perspective of secular bioethics, which advocates the guarantee, on the part of society, of individual projects without State interference, as long as it does not compromise the collective welfare [27]. This type of thinking in the field of health education refers to knowledge that cannot always be identified, immediately or previously, as helpful or not for the exercise of professional practice.

However, it is understood that the notion of competence can contribute to the pedagogical conception in the teaching of bioethics. Nevertheless, this will only be possible if there are areas of approximation between contents that articulate more general knowledge about humanity with those more easily identifiable with practices and their ethical conflicts. The pedagogy of competencies can be redefined to configure, in addition to a capacity, an ethical and political commitment of the professional in training concerning the society in which he/she is inserted.

This commitment must be permeated by articulating theoretical knowledge and professional practice without any hierarchy. By adopting the CC from this perspective, bioethics education is configured as a process embodied in the interaction between theory, skills, and professional practice that are constantly nourished and changed. The practical requirement for the development of competencies in the field of bioethics must be supported by the teacher's active role in the selection of content, in the configuration of a plural and respectful debate, and the contextualization of the production of the content addressed. The concept of learning, guided by the notion of competence, can thus contribute, during the pedagogical process, to the production of new knowledge in bioethics, to the appreciation of the practical knowledge of the health professional, and to the formation of competent subjects to act in the ethically committed world.

This perspective allows us to think of the teaching of bioethics as permeable to the collective demands that originate in society with the participation of various actors and social movements. Knowledge thus begins to make sense; professional practice is revalued, and cognitive and emotional competencies take on a collective dimension. This set of competencies, linked, at the same time, to a pedagogical current oriented to the formation of a democratic society (21) and secular and contemporary bioethics [27], will be called ethical competency.

Ethical Competence and Moral Competence

We constantly make moral decisions about issues that involve our own lives throughout our existence. However, this competence is not entirely innate. It must always be developed, considering cognition and emotions as inseparable dimensions and being driven by agents trained to develop this function. With the theoretical perspective of socio-cognitive developmental psychology, we assume that Moral Competence is necessary to understand the formation process that will result in autonomous and critical individuals. George Lind (1947-2021) [28] emphasizes that the affective dimension is what drives this competence and is inseparable from the cognitive structure. These two dimensions, although distinct, are contained in moral behavior, and this construction of moral competence requires the integration of both. He, like Kohlberg, worked with Jean Piaget's theory. Through Piaget's studies with children, he discovered that knowledge is neither innate nor transmitted is the result of a process of continuous construction of inventions and discoveries from the interactions between the subject and the environment in which he lives. He stated that there was a parallel development of the intellectual and affective characteristics of being, so that, concerning moral conscience, every individual would have the potential to evolve from a situation of moral anomy, when he ignores some law or norm, followed by a phase in which he acts in accordance with expectations and norms external to the individual (moral heteronomy), until, finally, he can make moral decisions based on his own convictions and values (autonomy) [28-29].

However, Lawrence Kohlberg (1927-1987) expanded, in the 1970s, the studies on moral development based on Piaget's theory [29]. For him, moral reasoning is based on a sense of justice and not on emotions and actions. He affirms a universalist perspective in terms of morality, following the tradition of Kantian thought like Piaget.

Recently, intending to guide educational practices to develop the moral reasoning of students of all ages and at any educational level, Professor Georg Lind of the University of Konstanz (Germany) has developed a teaching methodology called Konstanz Method Dilemma Discussion (KMDD). Based on John Dewey's conceptions of the essential relationship between morality, democracy, and education and on Moshe Blatt and Kohlberg's concept of dilemma discussion, Lind says that it is essential for the individual to be able to act in accordance with his moral ideals, even in the most challenging situations [30]. So that, in a given situation, moral feelings come to the fore and place the individual in front of his primary challenge: to cope with emotions. Behaviors are shaped by beliefs, values, prejudices, feelings, experiences, and previous knowledge. Therefore, the definition of moral competence must encompass emotion and cognition, so its methodological approach includes a new educational format based on the development of competencies [31]. Considering reason and emotion separately is only reasonable for descriptive didactic reasons.

This Kohlberg's idea of moral competence is different from what can be called competence in ethics or bioethics [32]. This other concept is characterized by the ability to identify, understand, and internalize moral aspects in situations of possible ethical conflicts, respecting the diversity and plurality of values and beliefs with critical reflection, seeking coherent decision making based on consistent arguments [30-31].

In summary, the concept of moral competence that we use was developed by the psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg in 1958 and referred to "the competence [of an individual] to make decisions and moral judgments (based on internal principles) and to act in accordance with such judgments" [33, p.425]. There should be careful not to confuse moral competence with competence in ethics, which can be understood as the competence to mobilize a set of cognitive resources (theoretical and methodological knowledge - the toolbox [34] related to ethics/bioethics.

The challenge comes in the form of how we should stimulate the development of moral and ethical competencies in the present day, with changes in ethical behavior, with the quest for the expansion of rights, and with the sophistication of the human being in a pluralistic society, which is constantly changing. Therefore, to think about the teaching of Bioethics, we propose a different meaning to what was defined as moral competence. The idea of ethical competence or bioethical competence aims to broaden the content of bioethics teaching, but mainly to renew its conception of education and, consequently, its objectives and methodologies. If for the Basic Curriculum the objective is to train professionals capable of making ethical decisions, for the notion of ethical competence, the objective is to train autonomous, critical citizens committed to the rights of justice in a pluralistic society and that will be able to ethically justify their decisions and commit themselves to them.

The purpose of this article was to attempt to analyze the UNESCO syllabus for teaching Bioethics critically. From this analysis, we accepted the challenge posed by the syllabus itself to understand it only as an initial basis for teaching Bioethics and to propose possible avenues for its use. The basic curricular boundaries were analyzed both from the perspective of the content that covered much of its pedagogical design.

The Basic Bioethics Curriculum proposed by UNESCO, or "Core Curriculum," has great merits. The very conception of its creation, investing in dense and explanatory material to serve as an initial basis for introducing Bioethics and its discussions in different parts of the world, is laudable. Its value as an educational tool is straightforward and valid with a set of well-written contents, exciting discussions, and didactics. Moreover, more than 15 countries in different continents are actively using it in universities [35]. It is also worth noting the constant concern not to limit itself, even calling on professors who use it to collaborate actively by sending suggestions. It is in this spirit that we wrote this article.

However, created as a direct result of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights and this of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the proposed Program has the same limits. Based firmly on the Declaration on Bioethics, when structured, the CC applies a specific cut,

guided by the 15 items of the Declaration of Bioethics contents to work. While it is explained that the Program is not intended to be a definitive tool, it is essential to keep in mind the cuts used.

When creating any document intended as a curriculum, a projection is made of the contents to be inserted and, therefore, considered fundamental for that subject. Likewise, by not mentioning or simply forgetting other contents, the message is being transmitted that these are not essential knowledge and are not part of what would be a minimum knowledge in the subject. Likewise, the idea of training professionals capable of carrying out certain activities also limits the collective and dynamic dimension of conflicts in bioethics.

This cultural construction with educational intentions can end up silencing voices that are dissonant with the cultural and social hegemonic within an area. It is up to a select group of professionals, ordered by a higher body, in this case, the UN, to define the contents that would be the minimum necessary and the pedagogical concept to teach Bioethics. With a strong inclination towards the medical field and with scientific heritage and thinking centered in the geopolitical North, there is always the questioning of the cut used, with the risk of consistently inserting a hidden curriculum, remnants of practices and values never directly explained in the contents, but which permeate both the content and its didactic aspect [36].

Also, does the selection of specialists consulted to elaborate this Core Curriculum, all men, not affect the bioethical issues that will be inserted, especially those of gender? Feminist-centered bioethics currents, such as ecofeminism and inter-sectional bioethics, could further enrich this material and disseminate these currents.

As much as the material mentions at the beginning that it is not intended to provide a specific vision of Bioethics, the construction of a curriculum, especially when intended to introduce something, is a cut impregnated with socio-political conjunctures of those involved. This construction can silence voices that are dissonant to hegemonic thought or do not have the political/scientific force to be disseminated. However, it has all the philosophical and scientific support to be a valid theory. Therefore, to reflect on a curriculum is also to reflect on the socio-political and cultural context in which that course and institution are inserted, and to analyze the CC is also to analyze UNESCO's vision of Bioethics and confront it with its objectives.

The critical analysis suggested by the CC in applying the contents, especially regarding the use of the curriculum and its structure to suit the reality of that country or region, starts from a minimum knowledge of the subject of Bioethics or ethics in general way. If the educator in question knows little about the subject, critical thinking about applying these theories to his or her reality is limited or limited, and it becomes safer to stick to the problems and didactics presented by the material. In this sense, the notion of ethical competence allows the use of CC to be carried out in dialogue with the actors and issues that emerge in the teaching-learning process.

In making a critical analysis of the programmatic delimitation of CC, a perspective on Bioethics was presented that recognizes the importance of the issues highlighted by the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights but considers it necessary to broaden them. On the other hand, this context of bioethics requires an educational concept in which the values of bioethics such as autonomy, democracy, and justice are inserted in the pedagogical action itself. The teaching of bioethics based on the development of ethical competence articulated with a secular conception of bioethics can contribute to the adoption of CE in a contextualized way, open to new knowledge, and committed to the human formation of health professionals.

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