

“Sex Education in Dialogue” dossier presentation

The dossier *Sex Education Through Dialogue: Possible approaches in and for Education*, consolidates a body of research and scholarly work that, within the field of sex education, engages with the thematic priorities of the 2020 Agenda of the United Nations (UN) alongside teacher education in Brazil. It fosters critical dialogues of sexuality, advancing theoretically grounded reflections across the broader educational landscape.

The editors of this dossier were particularly concerned with focusing on the last five years, the final phase of the sustainable development framework established by the 2030 Agenda, especially regarding the contributions of sexuality education over this period and its prospective role in addressing the impacts and challenges of the contemporary context. These include, notably, climate change and its intersections with human sexuality within educational settings, as well as implications of the recent National Curriculum guidelines for initial teacher education at higher education level in Brazil (Brasil, 2024)

The 2030 Agenda establishes, for teacher education programs, a commitment to reducing gender inequities through the recognition of diversity. It is therefore positioned against all form of prejudice and discrimination, while promoting sustainability, particularly as framed by pluralism in both ideas and conceptual approaches, whether in relation to sustainability itself or the pedagogical and formative dimensions of teacher education. In this context, the dossier *Sex Education Through Dialogue: Possible approaches in and for Education* aims to critically examine teacher programs and to outline possible pathways in light of public policies for initial (and continuing) teacher education. It does so with attention to the present and, above all, with a forward-looking perspective regarding the place of sex education within teacher education curricula and the professional practice of educators, from early childhood education onward;

The global sustainability goals advanced by the 2020 Agenda of the UN, alongside the recent resolution on teacher education in Brazil, foreground gender



equality as a central objective; here, however, we advocate for the notion of gender equity. Within this framework, sexuality education encompasses a wide range of interconnected themes, including sexualities across the life course (from childhood to elderly, as well as among persons with disabilities), LGNTQIAPN+ populations, feminist perspectives, gender-based violence, and child sexual abuse. In addition to these topics, sexual social movements are also included, particularly those that problematize ableism, as well as debates on sex robots (AI and sexual robotics). These discussions extend beyond sexuality studies within the scope of science education, opening space for multiple perspectives and fields of research.

The proposal of this dossier, as well as the contributions of the articles presented, is justified by the social relevance concerning the role of teacher education programs in initial teacher training, particularly in the light of the current social and historical context, in which the essentiality of incorporating sexual education into the sphere of school education is unequivocally evident, as numerous national and international scientific studies corroborate this perspective. It is important to emphasize that Sex Education aimed at the formation of social actors is a school and pedagogical urgency, since it is decisive from early childhood education through secondary education aimed at fostering the construction of an anti-sexist, non-violent, non-prejudiced, non-misogynistic, and non-sexist society, effectively engaged in the committed to the establishment of gender and sexual equity on both national and global scales. Alongside this broader social relevance, it is also necessary to consider the two-year deadline for Brazilian teacher education programs to adapt to a new resolution.

In light of the foregoing, the texts aim to analyze sexual education proposals from a multiple perspective that goes beyond emancipatory approaches, Foucauldian post-structuralist views, Marxist frameworks or human rights perspectives, ultimately achieving, as suggested by the new resolution “the foundations of pluralism of ideas and pedagogical conceptions.” Such plurality, aligned with and supported by research in and on the school context, presents an intrinsic articulation with teacher education, given its indispensable nature, which makes it possible to address the political, social and educational-pedagogical urgency of the debate, as well as the new configurations being proposed for Brazilian teacher education programs, which must align with the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.

Undoubtedly, there will be no sustainability without due attention to and the necessary pursuit of resolving existing humanization-related issues; issues which, within the scope of Sex Education, concern sexual freedoms, including the right to knowledge about sexuality grounded in legal, scientific, social cultural and economic frameworks, so as to avoid the prevailing risk of associating such dialogues with the encouragement of sex, libertinism and with discourses and practices that have yet to break away from persistence between common sense and science in general and the science of sexuality in particular.

We intend here to bring forth fruitful dialogues, in the sense of reframing the initial teacher education curriculum; dialogues that may lead to the indispensable changes required for a society that acts in favor of peace and empathy, thus becoming harmonious, inclusive, just, egalitarian and equitable and, in particular, aligned with global sustainability. What follows is a brief presentation of these dialogues.

To open the dossier and guide the dialogues proposed for the studies research of the invited authors and collaborators. The organizers present in the article *Sexuality, Sustainability and teacher education: theoretical “frameworks”* as a contribution to sexual education. Within these frameworks, the authors advance as their central argument that, given the urgency of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the sexual education curriculum in teacher education finds, in the current resolution 4/2024 (which restructures teacher education programs in Brazil), an opportunity for new reflections among researchers in the field and scholars of teaching and learning in basic educations, in order to more robustly advance formal and non-formal sexual education aimed at responsible, fair and equitable citizenship grounded in human rights and in gender and sexuality equity, something already guaranteed by the Federal Constitution. However, this is not yet been realized as a curricular and social reality that demands further research on these issues, unlike in countries such as Argentina and Uruguay, where Sexual Education is incorporated into the official curriculum through comprehensive sexual education (CSE).

Directly from Argentina, the international article in the dossier engages with CSE, which is established as a state policy and a mandatory component of the curriculum. Colleagues from the Universidad Nacional del Nordeste wrote the text entitled *“Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) in teacher education trajectories and early childhood education programs: debates and challenges in the face of new right-*

wing”. They point out that initial teacher education in Argentina, even with CSE as a state policy and a mandatory presence in the curriculum, faces challenges, particularly in light of the social realities of children, adolescents and young people who arrive at school with their own experiences of sexuality. In this sense, the study aims to identify prior ideas and representations of CSE among pre-service teachers in higher education who will work in early childhood education in the country, offering a panorama of the challenges faced by this policy, especially the challenge of eliminating obstacles to its implementation in the national educational curriculum for that country.

In “*The history of Sexual Education In Brazil in eight moments: preliminary research notes for reflection by teacher education instructors and Sexual Education researchers*”, the colleagues from UNESP/ Faculdade de Ciências e Letras (FCLAr) organize, across eight moments, from colonial period to the present, the trajectories of the institutionalization of sexual education in the country, aiming to highlight the urgency of sustainability in addressing social inequalities, including sexual inequalities, given that prejudice and discrimination still remain part of lived experiences and realities in Brazil in the twenty-first century. Addressing teacher education in Brazil, this historically oriented text project us towards the past, as well as the present and the future, more specifically to the new resolution for undergraduate programs in the country, inviting all readers to look ahead without losing sight of the rearview mirror, as perspectives from all directions are essential for advancing the path towards emancipation in sexuality within the basic education curriculum and in research in the field.

Researchers from the Faculdade de Ciências de Bauru (UNESP), in the article “Sexuality in the experience of overweight adolescents: an analysis of university student’s accounts”, engage with normative standards are perceived through the perspectives of overweight youth during adolescence. The quantitative and qualitative data help to envision Sexual Education from a perspective aimed at the promotion of sexuality, not only with regard to gender diversity, but also to diversify as expressed through bodies, specifically those that do not conform to so-called normative standards, which may be considered within the framework of the SDGs and human rights, particularly in relation to curriculum that respect and support diverse bodies, taking into account the identities of these subjects as sexual subjects.

Knowledge and Silences: student’s perceptions of Sexual diversity and LGBTQphobia in school is a study conducted in Jataí, in the state of Goiás, which

reflects on homophobia in schools among secondary education students and on how they experience sexual diversity, particularly whether they perceive homophobia in their daily lives. The findings lead us to consider that, in the light of the issue raised during the interviews and from the perspective of the SDGs and the new guidelines for teacher education in Brazil, new structures within both the educational system and school units are required in order to eliminate LGBTQphobia in particular, and homophobia in a broader context. Thus, the study highlights the need, within the Fields of Sexual Education, for greater attention to this issue, not only as a curricular component, but specially as a policy framework for addressing LGBTQphobic situations

From Uberlândia, in Minas Gerais state, we are prompted by the article entitled *“Body, Sexuality and Gender: are these themes in science education outdated paradigms?”* within the scope of the dossier, and taking into account the SDGs and the new guidelines for teacher education in Brazil, the study questions science education, particularly in the natural sciences, as well as research and curriculum, regarding the overcoming of determinisms and the needs for advances in learning grounded in social, cultural and aesthetic problematizations. Conducted with undergraduate students in biological sciences, the study examines their perceptions of the use of cultural studies approaches to gender and sexuality, considering whether these perspectives foster new directions for discussing such themes beyond positivists scientific determinism. The findings offer important contributions to the focus of the dossier, insofar as cultural studies support the discussion of these issues by demonstrating that such debates are not solely the responsibility of biological sciences professionals, but that teachers and researchers, across their respective fields of practice, can converge towards sexual education.

‘Sexual Education from the perspective of psychologists: contributions a challenge in professional training’, from the Faculdade de Ciências e Letras de Araraquara (UNESP), signals the researcher’s concern with scientific knowledge on gender and sexuality, aiming to reach all individuals by disseminating and teaching-learning in a way that promotes the popularization of science for all. The author’s theoretical framework, grounded in Bourdieusian sociology, presents psychologist’s perspectives on Sexual Education oriented towards holistic child development, so that teachers may also benefit from scientific contributions from the field of Psychology,

alongside interpretative sociological approaches. The Perspectives of psychologists are particularly relevant for addressing the new resolution and the current challenges of sustainability from early childhood education onward. The interfaces between psychology and education are essential to the dialogue that is proposed here.

From the Southern region of Brazil comes the article “A History of the present: the constitution of an early childhood education school that promotes gender equality. The quality and innovate character of the study, focused on the first stage of basic education and highlighting the importance of a school committed to a sexual education perspective in childhood or, in the author’s terms, a school that “promotes gender and sexuality issues”. Teachers and school administrators were interviewed with the aim of understanding, through a Foucauldian perspective, the historical construction of this school’s trajectory in promoting discussions on sexuality. Based on these narratives and memories, the study points to the potential for fostering gender and sexual diversity in (and from) early childhood, provided that spaces for teacher’s education, professional development, and school management practices are committed to not reproducing prejudice and discrimination. Furthermore, the authors emphasize the need to include the community, despite tensions and advances, in order to make emancipatory sexual education possible.

Studies about the body have been gaining ground in educational research in Brazil as a specific field. ANPED¹ has recently established the study group (SG) “Body and Education”. About this topic, and concluding this dossier, we present the article “*Bodily practices in body education: biopolitics and biopower in Belém do Pará*”. In this study, colleagues from the north region of Brazil provide a historically grounded on a Foucauldian analysis of the body in gymnastics and sports practices during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the city of Belém do Pará. Drawing on documentary sources, the proposed analysis contributes to the understanding that the body played a role in social regulation, which the researchers conceptualize, within the educational context, as “control-stimulation”. Alongside the study “*The History of Sexual Education in Brazil in eight Moments: preliminary research notes*”, this article offers important projections for the focus on sustainability and the current guidelines for teacher education programs in Brazil, particularly with regard to reflections on the

¹ Associação Nacional de Pós-Graduação e Pesquisa em Educação.

school curriculum and, specifically, to ongoing research on “Body and Education”, a field currently undergoing significant development within ANPED.

Therefore, all those interested are invited to engage in the present dialogue, which encompass the place of sexuality studies (Sexual Education) in the light of the impacts and challenges of the 2030 Agenda and the current guidelines for teacher education, particularly the 2024 resolution, within the framework of a democratic and civic-oriented school. Moreover, this entails a notion of a good living that incorporates, highlights and promotes sustainability through actions grounded in social proximity, from the most remote and least resourced localities to the most frequented urban centers, including the school. These are actions aimed at teacher education, shaped by the intersections, inflections and impacts of Sexual Education themes, with a view to building a sustainable society.

The organizers, together with collaborators from all regions of Brazil, from south to north, as well from Argentina, including many well-known scholars in the field of Sexual Education, express their gratitude for the feedback and contributions on this publication, which have enriched the present dialogue, an urgent one in lights of the impacts and challenges facing the world, and which demand a form of education grounded in differentiated human values in order to address issues of sustainability and teacher education. Therefore, a social movement in favor of human sexuality is urgently needed, aligned with both formal and informal Sexual Education of quality and with emancipatory and ethical-sustainability commitments. It is with this purpose that this dossier has been developed.

Finally, we wish all the readers fruitful reflections

Spring, 2026.

Andreza Marques de Castro Leão (UNESP, Araraquara, SP)

Claudionor Renato da Silva (UFJ, Jataí, GO)

Joanalira Corpes Magalhães (FURG, Rio Grande, RS)