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Knowledge Society and The (De)Stabilization of Families

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Abstract

This paper analyzes different aspects of the knowledge society with special emphasis on the new roles and the repositioning of school and family. The authors are critical of the concept of "knowledge societies," emphasizing the very wide range of (re) interpretation and (re) defining both society and knowledge. Knowledge is a very elusive term, and therefore determining the knowledge society implies that we need to determine knowledge itself. Although there are different kinds and types of knowledge, there are arguments that lead us to believe that the "knowledge society "is based on knowledge accepted in the Western academic tradition. Despite the differences, it is a fact that knowledge has touched many aspects of our lives, especially school and family. In contrast to the "stable" times, technology development in knowledge society, increased mobility, access to information and other products that can be subsumed under the knowledge society have significantly detradicionalized certain educational settings by creating a number of other public and private systems, along with the increase in the number and shape of interpersonal communication. The modern "knowledge society ", requires the active involvement of all actors especially families, and finding an answer to the question whether the modern era has superseded some of the basic functions of the family?

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Main Text

"Knowledge Society" is a particularly complex concept that allows different (re)interpretations. This complexity stems, among other things, due to the complexity of knowledge as the backbone of the "knowledge society". Knowledge is an "elusive" category and thus answering the question what "knowledge society" is raises questions (and answers) what kind of society and knowledge. Nevertheless, we can determine the "knowledge society", through the political concept of (neo)capitalist countries in which knowledge is treated as a commodity even though the original perspective should include knowledge as the potential of personal and collective (social) development.

Countries in transition have "joined" the globalization processes\(^1\) which have "culturally westernized" the world or, as some authors emphasize Americanized because that culture has penetrated the whole world through fast-food restaurants, consumption and hedonism and the invasive commercialization of all segments of life. In such conditions "knowledge society" Stehr (1994) was created. The phrase "knowledge society" has recently been (miss)used: it is the subject of political debate, the knowledge society has found its place in many documents of (semi) binding character. We speak of the "knowledge society" in strategies\(^2\) that project the development of education and the establishment of the best educational policy: the school curriculum is also adorned with "knowledge society" and the only acceptable evaluation (in higher education) is the evaluation of the learning outcomes which are based in the knowledge society. There is also a "laic" perspective because individuals are becoming aware of the importance of knowledge which they prove by stating their formal acknowledgments in their biographies. It is therefore legitimate to question what is "knowledge society"? It seems that giving an unambiguous answer to this question is almost impossible and is therefore particularly necessary to respect different discourses.

Neoliberalism, which "produced" "knowledge society", is not a homogeneous ideology, but an ideology with a number of sub – or disorganized discourses, it is multidimensional and dynamic when it comes to the (relative) importance of science and technology, the importance of modern educational technology, innovation and globalization and in the background of everything is the focus on profit (White, 2004).

The relationship between the offered political solutions and national mechanisms of neoliberalism is contextually stained and dependent as it is not irrelevant whether they are developed or developing countries. The power of the state as opposed to global institutions such as the World Bank, the OECD, the IMF and others, is crucial in determining the different manifestations of neo-liberal political solutions and national mechanisms in different (political) sectors. Recent research, as well as projections of future societies, especially in the political documents, tend to be founded on knowledge (in 1999 the World Bank reported about knowledge for development"

Knowledge for Development", UN and OECD deal with science, technology and development and regional organizations also emphasize the importance of knowledge for the transformation of society in the future). The analysis of textual elements identifies the political dictionary by which governments forecast development, such as knowledge, knowledge economy, technology, technology development, knowledge and development, educational equity and the like. The authors point out that for a better understanding of neoliberal politics in contemporary society it is important for organizations at the local and global level to distinguish between policy in the knowledge which "floats" over the society of knowledge and substantially shapes it whereas the policy of knowledge society describes how political programs will be conceptualized and implemented (Grewal, 2008).\(^3\)

Pedagogical discourse can define the knowledge society as de-monopolization\(^4\) of school because knowledge is acquired in different situations, especially because knowledge is always a personal process and a product that is realized in social contacts. No man is deprived of knowledge because many possess valuable experiential knowledge; we all have opinions and believes; some of us have more or less "official" knowledge and can even have

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\(^1\) Although the tendency is to emphasize the positive aspects of globalization, there are authors Stegar (2002) and King (1999) believe that globalization strictly respects the rules of neoliberalism, development is not globalized but poverty (developed countries have 88% Internet users, these countries control 97% of world patents and receive over 90% of international law licenses while many countries do not have the possibility of using intellectual property rights). The global economic order works well for 20% of the population while the remaining 80% is degraded and humiliated.


\(^3\) The radical school theorists indicated the necessity of the de-monopolization of school before the phrase "knowledge society" was created.
the qualifications that signify "possessing" knowledge and there is no guarantee that these, and other types of knowledge were acquired only in schools. In everyday use knowledge is a word that has many synonyms - knowledge implies skills, habits, awareness (about something), knowledge, diligence, prudence, doctrine, dogma, enlightenment, expertise, facts, instruction, intelligence, learning, observation, cognition, know-how, science, philosophy, theory, practice, and a number of other meanings. The Greek philosopher Aristotle distinguished three approaches to knowledge - Praxis, poiesis and techne.

According to Francis Bacon knowledge is power which is acquired by the inductive method as generally verified knowledge. It is necessary to consider the present and the past while looking for "The Power of Knowledge ", when controlling knowledge went hand in hand with inequalities, social exclusion and social conflict. For a long period of time (formal) knowledge was exclusively in the domain of a small circle of wise men and the mystification of knowledge was the organizing principle of those exclusive knowledge societies (Osten, 2002). The Western educational system(s) is a hybrid system that was acquired through the globalizing processes with the intention of directing our learning in formal terms because they identify learning and education (schooling) and the evaluation of knowledge is a result of such identification. Determining the legitimacy of knowledge is the result of society, that is, knowledge is socially and situational constructed (Berger, Lukman, 1966) and therefore its legitimacy is variable. There are different types of knowledge and as Hayek (1945) pointed out, in the now famous essay from 1945, "The use of knowledge in society," that, academics, as well as politicians, intellectuals and the general public, give too much importance to one type of knowledge: scientific knowledge. Whether we are talking about the natural or social sciences scientific knowledge is not the only knowledge that is important. For economic prosperity the most important is special knowledge of some local characteristics of the market and the society, or in Hayek’s words, "the knowledge of the particular circumstances of time and place."

The above and other uses indicate that there is no socially relevant and universally accepted definition of knowledge. However, it should be noted that we are all thrown into a "knowledge society" and that we are exposed to it in different ways and in different dimensions. For example it is important to point out the changes that are happening in the wider social and economic domain and reflect the dynamics of family life, in terms of its functioning, family structure, as well as changes in lifestyle. The modern concept of the knowledge society implies new paradigms, which redefine the static and impersonal relationship towards the parents’ needs and the possibility of their involvement in the system of "knowledge society".

The ideology of the family as a pillar of support in the society, the basic cell of the national organism still prevails in some societies. Developments in technology, increased mobility, availability of information, transfer of traditional family functions to other public and private systems, increased number and form of interpersonal communication are ruining the integrity of the (traditional) family. Analysis of family functioning lead us to the discovery of virtual relationships that according to some authors successfully complement the absence of real ones (Gillis, 2000, Giddens,1990). This often results in the emergence of an independent "forced" growing up as a consequence of reduced child care and time, and superficial emotional contact that parents devote a child. But as much as we talk about the negative aspects of these relations, it is necessary to analytically consider some possibly positive effects in order to meet the developmental tasks of post-modern - modern family. There are many questions that can be asked in relation to the family and family life. For example, is it possible that despite some pessimistic views on the weakening of interpersonal family relations as the inevitability of the modern era, they could actually strengthen? Can we really look for happy families only in the past? Has the contemporary era superseded some of the basic functions of the family? Can electronic brokers and simulators of family life replace

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17 It is evident from the work of Alexander von Humboldt that knowledge was the right of members of exclusive societies and that it should be closer to the public. Humboldt is determined as the protagonist of the scientific concept of globalization which is associated with the promotion of science with equality, liberty and fraternity. Humboldt pointed out that it is important that individuals contribute to the concept of humanity with their own actions and that education is the highest task of human existence.
the emotional relations between parents and children? It seems there are many reasons why today families spend their time living- next to each other - instead of with each other. Understanding this distinction is important in understanding how our memory of - the golden age of family life in the past - exists in contemporary family life as well. The developmental- humanistic paradigm aims toward the "new" Brofenbrenner ecological model (1979) according to which family is seen as a complex social group that should be observed through a variety of interactive levels. The goal is to comprehend what is happening in the family (defining the problem), which are the likely reasons for that (identification of risk factors) and which is the base support (protective factors, intervention development, implementation, evaluation). Despite the different approaches to family and proclamations about "family " as an important and powerful social force", there is also a tendency to look at family as a passive participant in the process of social, political and cultural changes as well as in the context of the "knowledge society".

**Literature**


