Abstract

The different assumptions of Authorities in students attending High schools.

This research work focuses on the analysis and understanding of the different assumptions of Authorities of students attending High schools in Buenos Aires city. The proposal was to inquire students about the way in which they define Authority, identifying the features, characteristics and practice they recognize in people who they regard as an authority. As well, it was proposed to explore how these assumptions are expressed in the functioning of authority in the family and at school. The study, of exploratory characteristics, was done from a qualitative approximation through ten group interviews (focus group) provided to fifteen to nineteen-year-old youngsters attending High Schools in Buenos Aires city.

The main conclusions are: Authority is defined as an essentially social bond among unequal people, established from the voluntary recognition of the authority from the weaker member of the relationship. Authority appears to be reciprocal. Respect appears to be a key feature in the recognition of authority. The characteristics of people in a position of authority lies on a particular association among age, knowledge and experience, the possession of knowledge related to leadership and management and the possession of some features building up a particular type of personality. For the students, the functioning of authority in the family and school environment turns around the identification of authority and the description of the rule system in each environment. In the family, it is included as a main characteristic of authority, the dimension of responsibility associated to care whereas at school it evidently appears the concept of power related to hierarchy.

Key words: Authority – Students – High School