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SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS OF CANCER IN STUDENTS WHO ATTEND PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS BRAZILIAN

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The cancer as a disease was set in the social imaginary. Individuals build their impressions from the contributions of doctors, media and popular discourses, making it difficult to prevent. The educational intervention in elementary and high school is centralized in disseminating “biomedical” information, remaining oblivious to the social connotations. The present study aims to identify in 980 adolescents, 12 to 18 years, their perceptions of the disease. For it, a voluntary and anonymous questionnaire was applied, which allowed a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the dice. The results indicate that the negative representations of cancer predominate in younger age groups, a fact that gradually decreases with advancing age. They are not static and change structurally in dependence of the environments and social contexts, predominating in the male sex. Basically disease is viewed from three perspectives: “destruction”, focusing the expressions on the death, especially when there is a family history or known affected; “incurability” whose association with the death divides equally opinions regarding the binomials: life/death and heal/sicken, and finally “resolution”, depending on the diagnosis and early treatment. Despite there is consensus on the benefits of early diagnosis, most of the opinions describes the disease as invasive, painful, and cruel, with potential to extend. The obscure logic of “contagion” resurfaces in lay discourse as a possible means of transmission. In the perception of the students, “traditional barriers for access” to the health system, provable in the adult world, continue to be an obstacle to the cure.

Biography

Eduardo Blanco Cardoso has been graduated in Medicine (1987) from the Medical School - University of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay (MS-UORU), obtained the title of Specialist in Obstetrics and Gynecology (1991) by MS-UORU and Degree in Biological Sciences from the Faculty of Science-UORU (1991). He performed Master degree (1996), Doctorate (2000) and Post-Doctoral (2003) in Medicine, by the Medical School - University of Sao Paulo (MS-USP); Doctor of Science (2006) the same institution and Post-Doctoral in Sociology of Education (2016), by the School of Education-USP. His areas of research are: oncologic imaging in gynecologic malignancies, and social construction of cancer.

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