

## Providing sex education without considering digital education is an incomplete and, therefore, ineffective approach to education

### Digitalisation in the experience of sexuality

#### Interview with Raúl Marcos Estrada



**Digital technology came into our lives just over three decades ago. It has brought about significant changes that have affected many aspects of daily life. What have been the main educational challenges posed by this digital development?**

Indeed, the development of digital technology has dramatically changed many aspects of people's lives. This technological development has profoundly affected communication, access to information, entertainment, ways of relating to each other, and even how we build our identity. In terms of communication, the digital era has pulverised time and space and, in terms of relationships between people, it has allowed us to communicate synchronously with people

who may be hundreds or thousands of kilometres away.

On the other hand, the emergence of online social networks has led to the creation of new socialising spaces with new rules and codes that are different from those found in analogue environments. But above all, social media have become a major source of social pressure, having a greater influence than even your own peer group may have. For many people, online social media is the mirror through which they look at themselves and, above all, through which they compare themselves. This constant self-observation and comparison have shaped how we build our identity. The traditional identity factors, such as the way we dress, the way we belong to different urban tribes or the music we listen to, have been joined by new identity building factors, giving rise to a new identity dimension of a markedly digital nature.

Moreover, the experience of many aspects of sexuality has been digitised, such as the processes of seduction and courtship, access to the first shared erotic relationships, the formation of the couple or the influence that pornography has on the collective erotic imaginary.

Addressing all these issues in an educational manner requires a holistic approach when it comes to gender education.

## **Do you mean sex education has to address all these digital issues?**

If we intend to take a holistic approach to people's sexuality, we cannot ignore all these digital issues. It is a fundamental error to consider digital education as separate from sex education, and all those involved in education must have the training and resources to enable them to digitise their educational agenda.

Digital education can no longer be seen and, above all, implemented separately from sex education. We must implement tools and guidelines that take into account this new digital dimension that permeates many aspects related to the sexual dimension of people. Providing sex education without considering digital education is an incomplete and, therefore, ineffective approach to education. Indeed, when educators lack basic digital skills, they risk approaching these issues from two positions: one in which digital aspects are downplayed and allowed, and the other in which digital elements are seen as a threat and are therefore banned. In other words, they apply a normative approach based on permissiveness or prohibition.

Quality education requires a focus on cultivating a culture that allows us to help people develop in their uniqueness, to know themselves, to accept themselves and to express themselves positively, both in the analogue and in the digital spheres.