## Human Rights Education in Schools. A Systematic Review within the Latin American Context\*

[English version]

La educación en derechos humanos en la escuela. Una revisión sistemática al contexto latinoamericano

Educação em direitos humanos nas escolas. Uma revisão sistemática do contexto latino-americano

Received on 26 September 2022. Accepted on 28 November 2022

, How to quote:
Fernández, E. & Tabares, A de J.
(2024). Human Rights Education in
Schools. A Systematic Review Within
the Latin American Context.
Ánfora, 31(56), 145-177.
https://doi.org/10.30854/anf.v31.
n56.2023.1007
Universidad Autónoma de
Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.
E-ISSN 2248-6941.
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#### **Abstract**

**Objective**: This systematic review aims to characterize studies on human rights education in schools in Latin America between 2016 and 2022. Its purpose is to

<sup>\*</sup> This article is part of the project «Saberes y prácticas de los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje de los derechos humanos. Una mirada al caso de Bogotá, 2004-2020» within the framework of the Doctorate in Education of the Universidad Antonio Nariño. The authors belong to the CONCIENCIA research group, classified B by Minciencias. Financing: The project is financed from internal sources. Declaration of interests: The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest. Data availability: All relevant data can be found in the paper.

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contribute to the discussion regarding the formation of this field of knowledge. The backdrop of the debate centers on how tensions between the political-legal and moral aspects, inherent in human rights theory, have influenced the development of the field of rights education. These tensions become apparent when the international political reality intersects with the local political context during the process of integrating human rights covenants, recommendations, and protocols into educational systems. Methodology: The documentary body consists of 51 manuscripts identified in the databases: Redalvc, Jstor, Scielo and Scopus, based on the Protocol for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis PRISMA. The literature analysis is organized by author, year, country, method, and contribution to the understanding of human rights in schools, through indicators related to the political establishment of rights in the educational system, and the set of moral conceptions and resources used for their appropriation. **Results**: Efforts to organize the school system and ensure education as a right prevail, while promoting knowledge of school systems' regulatory system. In addition, there are discursive practices of a moral nature oriented toward human rights education, but with effects on the formation of new citizenships. Conclusions: Two social forces have converged in the discursive establishment of Human Rights Education (HRE), one with a preeminence of political-legal aspects and a strong moral content; another covering actions coming from popular education. In schools, HRE has favored the development of critical thinking and the public use of reason, with effects on the shaping of political subjectivity.

**Keywords:** Human rights; comparative education; Latin America; school; teaching; learning.

#### Resumen

**Objetivo**: la revisión sistemática se orienta a caracterizar los estudios sobre la educación en derechos humanos en la escuela, entre los años 2016-2022 en Latinoamérica, con el propósito de aportar a la discusión en torno a la conformación de dicho objeto de conocimiento. El trasfondo del debate se centra en cómo las tensiones entre lo político- legal y lo moral, propio de la teoría de los derechos humanos, han influenciado la construcción del campo de la educación en derechos. Estas tensiones se manifiestan cuando la realidad política internacional entra en confrontación con la realidad política local al momento de incorporar los pactos, recomendaciones y protocolos en materia de derechos humanos al interior de los sistemas educativos. **Metodología**: el corpus documental está conformado por 51 manuscritos identificados en las bases de datos: Redalyc, Jstor, Scielo y Scopus; a partir del Protocolo de Revisiones Sistemáticas y Meta- análisis PRISMA. El análisis de la literatura se encuentra organizado por autor,

año, país, método y aporte a la comprensión de los derechos humanos en la escuela, mediante indicadores relacionados con la instauración política de los derechos en el sistema educativo y el conjunto de concepciones morales y recursos utilizados para su apropiación. **Resultados**: como resultado prevalecen los esfuerzos tendientes a organizar el sistema escolar y asegurar la educación como derecho, a la vez que se promueve el conocimiento del sistema normativo de los mismos. Además, existen prácticas discursivas de tipo moral, orientadas a la educación en derechos humanos, pero con efectos en la formación de nuevas ciudadanías. **Conclusiones**: dos fuerzas sociales han confluido en la instauración discursiva de la EDH, una con preminencia de los aspectos político-legales y un fuerte contenido moral; y, por otra, acciones provenientes de la educación popular. En la escuela la EDH ha favorecido el desarrollo del pensamiento crítico, el uso público de la razón con efectos en la conformación de la subjetividad política.

**Palabras clave:** Derechos humanos; educación comparada; América Latina; escuela; enseñanza; aprendizaje.

#### Resumo

Objetivo: a revisão sistemática tem como objetivo caracterizar os estudos sobre educação em direitos humanos nas escolas entre 2016 e 2022 na América Latina, visando contribuir para a discussão sobre a formação desse campo de conhecimento. O debate em questão se concentra em como as tensões entre o âmbito político-jurídico e o moral, intrínsecas à teoria dos direitos humanos, influenciaram a construção do campo da educação em direitos humanos. Essas tensões se manifestam quando a realidade política internacional entra em confronto com a realidade política local, no momento da incorporação de pactos, recomendações e protocolos de direitos humanos nos sistemas educacionais. **Metodologia**: o corpus documental é composto por 51 manuscritos identificados em bancos de dados como Redalyc, Jstor, Scielo e Scopus, utilizando o Protocolo para Revisões Sistemáticas e Meta-análises PRISMA. A análise da literatura está organizada por autor, ano, país, método e contribuição para a compreensão dos direitos humanos nas escolas, através de indicadores relacionados ao estabelecimento político dos direitos no sistema educacional e ao conjunto de concepções morais e recursos utilizados para sua apropriação. **Resultados**: como resultado, predominam os esforços para organizar o sistema escolar e garantir a educação como direito, enquanto promovem o conhecimento do sistema normativo. Além disso, há práticas discursivas de natureza moral, voltadas para a educação em direitos humanos, com efeitos na formação de novas cidadanias. Conclusões: duas forças sociais convergiram no estabelecimento discursivo da Educação em Direitos



Humanos (EDH): uma com ênfase em aspectos político-jurídicos e conteúdo moral robusto; e, por outro lado, ações advindas da educação popular. Nas escolas, a EDH favoreceu o desenvolvimento do pensamento crítico e a utilização pública da razão, com impacto na formação da subjetividade política.

**Palavras-chave:** Direitos humanos; educação comparada; América Latina; escola; ensino; aprendizagem.

#### Introduction

Human rights education in the school context has been widely recognized in recent decades, especially due to the prominence of countries adjusting their educational policies in this area to the international context, and the increase of spaces for civil societal participation in the educational system. However, there are limited studies that provide an overview of the research carried out over the last six years. The purpose of this text is to characterize the work perspectives in their theoretical and methodological aspects to facilitate an approach to the state of the question. This approach can be used to formulate strategies in other contexts that contribute to improving the teaching-learning processes in schools.

The debates between politics and morality in human rights theory have contributed to shaping the field of study of human rights education (HRE). There are two predominant positions: those that promote knowledge of the organization of the normative system and the mechanisms for activating judicial processes to ensure rights; and, the democratic values and moral conceptions that foster the construction of a culture of rights. However, the implementation of the international normative system within the local educational system highlights the tensions between the political-legal establishment of rights and their moral appropriation in the school environment. Therefore, there are difficulties related to providing the resources and human capital to ensure quality education as a right. This includes teacher training, the curricular organization of the teaching-learning processes, ongoing reflection on the moral conceptions used in their promotion, and the connection between the school and the legal mechanisms that activate the system of rights.

Consequently, two frameworks of interpretation prevail in the field of HRE. There are those focused on political views that emphasize their legal nature. Their approaches justify their positivization, the challenges and possibilities

of their normative deployment, as well as the legal repertoire within the State that disseminates, ensures, and defends them. Second, there is a moral horizon that promotes these frameworks as imperatives guiding collective action and influencing the processes of subjectivation of individuals. For authors like Menke and Pollmann (2010), this tension has created a divide between political and moral rights. Political conceptions differ from moral conceptions by emphasizing that respect for human rights derives from the political community. Its members establish the political order that recognizes themselves as equals and creates the obligation to freely correspond to the demands of that order. In contrast, in the moral conception, the demands before the public order are justified because it is believed that, before that order, there are moral rights —whose source may be nature or divinity—that must be respected by all human beings.

The political perspective is based on the legal repertoire of guaranteeing human rights, which constitute a distinct category of rights with universal application. This is framed in the Kantian contractualist tradition. According to Rawls (1993, 2012), human rights derive from the law of nations, as it advocates a legal and rational international system that recognizes the necessity of respecting human rights. This is because human rights establish boundaries for domestic institutions. In this sense, each society establishes rational and politically justified ways of coexistence that must be adhered to.

Habermas (2010) posits that human rights are synthesized in fundamental rights when they are integrated into constitutional systems. This incorporation is founded on the significance of historically recognizing human dignity within legal systems. Its effectiveness lies in the aspect that dignity facilitates a shift from moral duties to political rights.

Moral rights also acknowledge a principle of universality, whose origin is rooted in human nature or divinity. Thus, moral rights attain the status of subjective rights, which manifest as claims directed toward the State in response to society's obligation to exist. As a result, these rights are regarded as primary goods that society must consider when acknowledging human dignity. Two positions prevail in this perspective: (Dávila, 2014) a moderate one that advocates placing rights beyond the communities, linked to the universalizable feature that configures them as true moral rights (Feinberg, 1970). This is explained by the fact that moral rights possess a pre-juridical nature that aligns, through the application of reason, with human rights (Harries, 2020). Another rigorous perspective emphasizes the role of morality in the evolution and validation of human rights. In this view, human rights take on the shape of fundamental rights rooted in the necessity to safeguard dignity and freedom (Pogge, 2012, 2017; Tugendhat, 2016). In this sense, human rights are a creation of human beings,



bestowed upon one another as people embrace and internalize the morality of universal respect.

Both positions pertain to the acknowledgment of human dignity and the principle of universality as the foundation of human rights, whether as a political or moral cornerstone. The crux of the matter lies in recognizing their position, whether as a precedent or a consequence. The convergence of the moral and political aspects in rights has given rise to reconciliatory viewpoints, notable among them being discursive ethics (Cortina, 2018; Prono, 2016) and the capabilities approach (Sen, 2019; Nussbaum, 2014; Pinedo, 2020, 2021). In both instances, the authors concur in acknowledging the role of human rights education as the mechanism that facilitates a deeper comprehension of human rights.

Thus, the recognition of respect and human dignity serves as the foundation for asserting or formulating demands within the political community. To achieve this, it is necessary to perceive the human being as a subject endowed with communicative ability to forge binding and universally applicable agreements (Alexy, 2013). Additionally, humans possess the capability to act within a framework of opportunities and freedom, wherein intertwined consensuses (explanatory) and the public utilization of reason (existential) motivate actions within the normative system. Consequently, human rights are characterized as universal, fundamental, abstract, valid, and moral. They are built upon a constructivist metaphysics that amalgamates explanatory and existential attributes (Alexy, 2007).

In contrast to this reconciliatory approach, authors like Rorty (2019), MacIntyre (2019), Sánchez (2018), and De Sousa (2019) adopt a critical position on this matter. They even suggest moving beyond the debate and focusing on specific social practices that render rights viable, without requiring concern about their foundation. Rorty (2019) posits that human rights emerge from social constructs rooted in sentiments, which in turn transition into the realm of morality. His critique centers on questioning the metaphysical essence of rights. Prevailing unconditional interpretations in their discursive use have diminished them to mere slogans.

De Sousa and Martins (2019) challenge the dominant and Eurocentric paradigm of rights. They reject the monolithic perspective that has resulted in a significant portion of individuals not being acknowledged as rights-bearers, but rather as objects within the discourse of rights. This occurs because, throughout its history, two prevailing conceptions have emerged: the hegemonic and the counter-hegemonic. The former strengthens the ideologies of individualism and property by perpetuating the colonial and patriarchal capitalist disorder. The latter supports alternative perspectives on autonomy and emancipation, possessing the potential to foster the establishment of a more dignified and equitable society. The counter-hegemonic conception has been utilized to underscore the practices

of collective human rights and the preservation of nature, thus strengthening the self-determination and autonomy of communities.

Therefore, HRE offers instruments to reshape this conceptual framework, grounded in the comprehension of rights as integral to a social movement (Gallardo, 2009) and stemming from cultural processes and political engagement (Herrera, 2008). In this sense, there is a need to shift from focusing solely on the violative aspect of rights to a preceding stage (pre-violative). In this earlier stage, rights are not only outcomes of activating the normative and legal framework established by the State for their protection, but also stem from the realization that there exist countless opportunities for their formation and efficacy (Sanchez, 2018). In this context, the institutional mechanisms for defense and promotion align with individual or collective social relationships that perceive them as lived experiences.

The latter critical perspective does not take into account the grounding of human rights in politics or moralism, even though it acknowledges the significance of these factors in shaping them. Furthermore, it embodies a critical ethical-political comprehension that consistently queries and contemplates its historical nature, explores the potential for broadening the social framework, and fosters intercultural dialogues.

### Methodology

A systematic literature review was conducted using the PRISMA method (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses), a framework endorsed by a considerable group of researchers and scientific journal editors. PRISMA aims to identify, select, assess, and synthesize studies (McKenzie et al., 2021). The search criteria and descriptors used to identify the manuscripts can be seen in Table 1.



**Table 1.** Systematic Review Process.

Phases	Actions	Removed/Excluded	
Identification	Search descriptors: «Teaching» AND «human rights » AND «school level» OR «< 2} school". «School» AND «Human Rights» «Education» OR «School level» {2> AND «Human rights». Records identified in the searches (Redalyc, Jstor, Scielo, Scopus) 3,522	Records removed before the screening: Reasons: duplicated (1,843) and do not address the object of study (1,523).	
Screening	Total records screened: 156	Total records removed during screening: 10	
	Records read and reviewed: 51	Records excluded after reading Reasons: They do not belong to the field of education at school (37). Not from the Latin American context (54). Outside the time range 2016-2021 (14).	
Included	Additional records identified in other sources: 0		
Inclusion Criteria	Total records included in the qualitative synthesis: 51 documents.  Open access articles in Spanish Published between 2016 and 2021 Indexed journals in Latin America countries Belonging to the discipline or field of education Descriptors used in title and keywords		

The preliminary result allowed working, initially, with 156 manuscripts reviewed one by one. Duplicate documents and those that were outside the field of school education, or were outside the Latin American context, were then excluded. At the end of this second review, 51 publications were located and reviewed, read and systematized in an analysis grid in which the following were identified: summary, main idea of the author, developed research method and approach to the teaching-learning processes of human rights in their political-legal and moral aspects. The collection and reading of the information favored the organization of the documentary corpus around the question: What do they say and how is rights education approached in the school environment?

#### **Results**

When organizing the data collected from the publication year and the country where the study was carried out, it was found that, in general terms, there is a tendency toward a decrease in academic productions. Despite this, initiatives in this area have increased in Colombia, possibly due to the political reality surrounding the peace process and the post-conflict. In the same way, there are investigations that carry out comparative views between countries, which contribute significantly to the understanding of how human rights policies have been incorporated into educational systems.

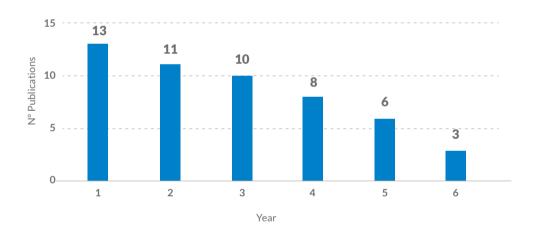


Figure 1. Number of Publications per Year (2016-2021).

The predominant methodology is qualitative. Publications are grouped into two components, those of factual type that include: historical (3), theoretical-reflexive (20), compared (2), evaluative (1), content analysis (1) and exploratory-descriptive (1); and those derived from intervention with live sources, which include: discussion groups (3), case studies (5), ethnography (5), action-research (6), systematization of experiences (2) and proactive (2). Only one investigation stood out due to its quantitative approach.

The literature tends to show that there is a strong component of discursive productions, in which normative and human rights positivization devices prevail in the educational system, oriented to the regularization and preservation of the social order. The discourse of human rights is used as a set of regulations



from which content is extracted to favor initiatives in school classrooms, but, there is also a horizon of school and reflective practices that develop critical and disruptive discourses in which initiatives transit with a strong content oriented to the establishment of an instituting praxis of rights. This is explained because the construction of the human rights education field is linked to the historical processes of the social and political reality of each country. These include: the rise or restriction of democracy, citizenship processes deployed by the State, and moral values used for this purpose.

Processes of the Institutionalization of Human Rights in the Educational System in Latin America (Establishment-Preservation)

Studies provide an account of efforts made by governments to adjust the international normative system of rights within the school system. These proclamations are managed within a framework of transition processes between periods of authoritarianism or civic-military dictatorship and those of democratic construction. In this sense, the works of Fernández (2016) and Siede (2017) in Argentina, Magendzo and Pávez (2016), Orellana and Muñoz (2019) and Álvarez (2019) in Chile, stand out in the southern cone. For the authors of this article, the socio-political and economic context of the 70's and 80's favored the establishment of initiatives aimed at understanding human rights in formal and non-formal areas, which discursively transitioned between community and legal demands and resistance, until reaching the spaces of curricular formalization.

Said transition began with two modes of activation of rights in the socio-political sphere, which included: tensions between the different social actors that promoted or restricted them, and adjustments to public policies during periods of national reconciliation. Hence, the practices and contents around human rights in school have been subject to political changes that attenuated or promoted the processes of curricular construction of rights in the educational system.

In Brazil, Tavares (2016) highlights that educational policies recognize HRE civic training potential. At the beginning of the 21st century, following international guidelines, Brazilian states formulated policies aimed at building support networks to generate human rights inclusion processes in schools. Human rights education goes beyond training focused on values, as it implies a political character based on the right to have rights since these guarantee dignity and promote the construction of public ethics. Subsequently, the efforts maintained the transverse contents and sought to update the human rights curriculum, based on established public policies and the continuous preparation of teachers (Barros, 2018; Barrios, 2021).

Likewise, Díaz (2017), and Chávez and Bonifacio (2019), in Mexico, observe that the formation of an educational policy on human rights in schools was directed by the articulation of these policies to other scenarios that guaranteed access to useful supplemental references. In line with what happened in other countries, between 2005 and 2006, the Mexican National Plan for Education in Human Rights was established with broad participation of civil society. In the same way, Nava and Méndez (2019) point out that there are two periods in the establishment of the HRE field. One of wide production (2002-2011), in which prescriptive and normative contributions prevail, that include philosophical reflections but few investigations in situ that offered analytical diagnoses on HRE. And a later period, with few initiatives in the context of primary education, except for some systematizations carried out by teachers in which views prevail that subordinate rights to obligations.

In Cuba, Rodríguez (2018) highlights that human rights education requires a change in the conceptions that underlie it, with the purpose of favoring the construction of a culture of peace, whose guiding axis would be an education based on basic skills to function in social life and respect for rights. In accordance with UNESCO guidelines, this change requires considering that education is not only a right, but that knowledge of these, is accessed through education, and in turn, this helps human beings to be autonomous, have a better quality of life, make decisions and show solidarity.

In Colombia, Espinel-Bernal (2013, 2016), Bonilla (2019), Restrepo (2018) and Velásquez (2020), agree that, despite the efforts made in the country to adjust its public policy on education in human rights to international standards, there are still challenges and limitations associated with the political culture that favors the understanding of human rights, with implications for the exercise of citizenship. This is explained because, although the country did not experience a military dictatorship as in the southern cone, the period of the National Front (1958-1974) and the Democratic Security Statute (1978) limited social and political participation, and even some defenders of human rights were assassinated or persecuted. However, there were some collective and popular resistances that had vindications as their axes, such as the right to access the city, education, health, access to better public services and the expansion of the democratic regime.

The 1991 Colombian constitution becomes a breaking point since it included some citizen demands, and the State began to manage policies that would make those demands possible. However, actors of the armed conflict —insurgents, paramilitaries and armed forces— have diminished those efforts through belligerent actions, which include the school context and have resulted in violations of human rights and International Humanitarian Law.



**Table 2.** Studies Addressing the Institutionalization of Human Rights in the Educational System (Installation-preservation).

Author- Year- Country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights in Schools: Political-Moral Perspective
Fernández (2016) Argentina	Factual historical	The educational policy of human rights during the dictatorship period was a low-intensity citizen training device. Link HRE with ethical-political training.
Siede (2017) Argentina	Factual historical	Political establishment of human rights through educational reforms aimed at strengthening civic and democratic values.
Magendzo, A & Pávez (2016) Colombia- Costa Rica- México	Factual comparative	Citizen training guidelines must show inspiration or identifiable commitment to the set of values and principles that give rise to human rights in official international instruments.
Orellana & Muñoz (2019) Chile	Discussion groups	Changes in the curriculum and introduced public policies, persist in the formation of a citizen connected to rights and duties, with a marked national sense.
Tavares (2016) Brasil	Content analysis	The organization of the curriculum and the production of pedagogical materials on Human Rights must be strengthened since the public policy implementation processes do not follow linear trajectories but present differentiated rhythms and movements.
Barros (2018) Brasil	Exploratory- descriptive	There is a disruption between public policy and the reality in schools in terms of HRE, therefore the school must strengthen multicultural education, in the sense of promoting respect for differences and dignity.
Díaz (2017) México	Factual theoretical- reflexive	Sex education is one of the ways in which human rights are ensured, in this case, the disputes between the secular State and the church affect the ways in which they are promoted and experienced in the educational system.
Chávez & Bonifa- cio (2019) México	Action-research	Prescriptive guidelines that promote the idea of rights as obligations. Human rights as an ethical reference to assess educational practices.

Author- Year- Country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights in Schools: Political-Moral Perspective
Nava & Méndez (2019) México	Discussion groups	Ignorance of the law is linked to the ineffective exercise of human rights. The greater the misinformation of the agents, the greater the inclination of teachers to violate the rights of students in the classroom, and the less capacity of the latter to demand those rights.
Terrazas (2019) México	Factual theoretical- reflexive	Human rights education contributes to the mitigation of school violence. Education in values, dialogue and moral dilemmas are covered.
Rodríguez (2018) Cuba	Factual theoretical- reflexive	Balance of educational policy in human rights. HRE as a human right that contributes to promoting a culture of peace and competencies for social life, hence respect for rights.
Bonilla (2016) Colombia	Factual historical	Balance of the political configuration of human rights education, from 1991 to 2016. Analysis of the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic perspectives. Takes a moral approach to human rights.
Velásquez (2020) Colombia	Evaluative	The State expands the curricularization of human rights but the reality in schools has generated tensions between the nature of the contents and the measures for its deployment. Assume a humanist formation.
Blanco (2016) Colombia	Quantitative- descriptive	Balance of the regulations on HRE and the teaching-learning strategies that are promoted from State policies.
Chaustre (2017) Colombia	Factual theoretical- reflexive	Human rights as rights and duties. Citizen training is the responsibility of schools; ethical-pedagogical processes must be articulated that promote the construction of peace and recognize the dynamics of globalization.

# Efforts to Promote Human Rights as Public Policy in the Educational System

Studies show that there are challenges and restrictions associated with HRE implementation. The challenge for educators is to teach students without putting them at risk of being vulnerable. Therefore, there are recurrent initiatives that conceive of other ways to promote their learning. The debates between curricularize or universalized contents have given this perspective greater



recognition; this implies thinking of its contents as legal instruments, moral principles or both. As a result, the resources used to expand the possibilities of teaching and learning have increased. New pedagogical strategies that go beyond traditional educational practices are sought; hence the existence of processes that are close to innovation in the classroom. Magendzo and Morales (2018), who are aware of this issue, have argued that the Declaration of Human Rights is not just a normative tool but also an ideal tool for a universal ethical dialogue. In this way, a perspective is assumed that enriches the public discourse on issues relating to values like human dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity, social justice, nondiscrimination, and diversity.

As a result, concerns about the creation of the content go beyond knowledge of the normative device and take into account complementary aspects like education for peace because of their development in the educational setting, and even teacher training, enables the creation of environments that foster social harmony and cooperation. To achieve this, it is necessary to focus on promoting values through transformative and mediating practices that serve as fundamental tools for enabling individuals to understand and exercise their rights (Garca & Mora, 2020). In this regard, authors like Osornio-Callejas (2016) acknowledge the role that logic and cooperation games have in creating a peaceful and harmonious learning environment. These encourage positive emotions like empathy and help students develop a sense of their rights.

In contrast, Carranza (2016), Alvarado (2017), Rodriguez (2018), and Bonilla (2019) address the relationship between human rights and education for peace in the educational environment in recognition of the influence this has on those who participate in their own human development. The authors of this article agree that conflicts between peers are a reality in schools, therefore teaching human rights allows for their mitigation and puts pressure on the teachers charged with doing so. This requires measures in the classroom that encourage participation, communication, and adjustments to the curriculum from a critical perspective. The direct consequence of this process is the improvement of peaceful coexistence and the construction of responsible and democratic citizenship in young people. Human rights education develops into a mechanism that enables the development of the peaceful attitudes required in post-conflict settings. To achieve this, it is necessary to strengthen an integrated, holistic, contextualized education whose focus is on developing democratic values and constructing political subjects. Without taking distance from the above, some initiatives recognize conflict as part of educational environments, therefore, the reduction of school violence is a strategy that serves as a middle-ground problem to guide the processes of education in rights, because the violence that occurs there mostly affects rights related to personal integrity, equality, non-discrimination, and human dignity (Calle et al., 2016).

Thus, cultivating the development of critical thinking becomes a useful mechanism to understand the relationship of power and subordination within the context of school violence, increasing the possibilities to mitigate them, through pedagogical and coexistence actions, favoring an environment of understanding and experience of human rights. In line with this, the introduction of approaches based on restorative justice, such as those put out by De Mézerville (2019) and others transforms the school into a setting that is suitable for the effective exercise of rights. To be effective, it must be acknowledged that rights violations occur in schools, as well as in families, communities, and other settings where they are vulnerable to natural practices. These actors must be included in teaching processes to broaden their capacity to make demands on the social fabric.

The studies conducted allow stating that there is interest in addressing the axiomatic aspect of human rights to promote an empathetic focus (Chávez & Bonifacio, 2019; Garca & Mora, 2020). The topic of human rights and the values associated with them are frequently addressed through initiatives that deviate from conventional education; as such, teachers develop activities like forums, conversations, artistic endeavors, and group projects. The students, on the other hand, demand expanding the spaces and communication channels in which their voices are heard, as well as creating environments that value tolerance, respect, and unity. This viewpoint calls for the development of inclusive educational processes because it guarantees everyone's access to a high-quality educational system without discrimination and encourages the promotion, disclosure, and protection of human rights inside the system (Tovar, 2021).

Other concerns include studies that list the following as problems: child labor, particularly in rural areas (Jorge & Sánchez, 2018); mobile school that stimulate life skills (Chaves & Dorado, 2019); and strategic learning environments that link human dignity to sustainable development goals (Aldana, 2020). The initiatives that have been taken are a part of government technologies that aim to implement human rights education because they stem from an understanding of educational policy and produce concrete actions that make understanding it possible.



**Table 3.** Studies Focused on Efforts and Resources to Implement Human Rights as Public Policy in the School System.

Author- Year- Country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights at School: Political-Moral Perspective
Magendzo & Morales (2018) Chile	Theoretical- reflexive documentary	The Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a didactic resource for its teaching should promote a universal ethical dialogue.
García & Mora (2020) Costa Rica	Case Study	Expanding on the cultivation of values through transformative practices that aid in understanding rights.
Osornio-Callejas (2016)	Ethnography for peace	Playful and cooperative games in the construction of a school environment based on peace and harmony.
Carranza (2016) México	Ethnography for peace	Transversal educational projects that promote human rights respect to create peaceful learning environments at the school.
Alvarado et al. (2016) Colombia	Systematization of pedagogical experiences	Consider concrete collaborative work activities that enable visibility, strengthening, and awareness of the HRE through online projects involving literature, the arts, and knowledge of armed conflict.
Bonilla (2019) Colombia	Theoretical- reflexive documentary	HRE contributes to the strengthening of democracy and the social state by serving as a mechanism for creating peaceful subjectivities.
Barrios (2021) Brasil	Constructivist sociocultural perspective	Promote a participatory pedagogy that makes HRE a relevant element for students, as well as teacher training based on the analysis of pedagogical practices and HRE programmatic actions.
Calle et al. (2016) Colombia	Case Study	Encourage pedagogical initiatives based on assertive communication for HRE and mitigate school violence.

Author- Year- Country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights at School: Political-Moral Perspective
Calle & Ocampo (2017) Colombia	Group Discussion	Armed and social conflict as a means of promoting human rights awareness and reducing school violence.
De Mézerville et al. (2019) Costa Rica	Theoretical- reflexive documentary	Promotion of critical thinking and restorative justice as HRE resources.
Tovar (2021) Colombia	Ethnography	Human rights as a tool for promoting inclusive education, educating for diversity and enhancing the student's teacher's preparation in these areas.
Jorge & Sánchez (2018) Argentina	Quantitative- qualitative research: interviews, documents, observation without participation in the study	Rural child labor negatively affects children's schooling at the primary level, their right to quality education, development, and equal opportunities.
Martínez (2016) Argentina	Ethnography	There are conflicts between moral categorizations that tend to downplay the needs of immigrant groups and the hierarchization of children's social rights.
Chaves & Dorado (2019) Ecuador	Action-research	Mobile school with a focus on legal rights to strengthen life skills.
Aldana (2020) Guatemala	Theoretical- reflexive documentary	Strategic human rights education taking into account both the goals of sustainable development and an individual's dignity.



## Counter-hegemonic and Displacement Processes (Dislocation-transformation).

The second area that distinguishes the teaching-learning of human rights in the classroom arises in response to established educational policies. The authors claim that the theoretical contributions of Herrera (2008), Gallardo (2009), and De Sousa and Martins (2019) allow for the recognition of human rights as a means of overcoming the conditions of vulnerability, discrimination, exclusion, and social inequality that are imposed by the capitalist system and neoliberal ideology. The educational practices that some teachers and students are developing aim to establish new ways of understanding human rights, close to an institutional practice that upsets the hegemonic pretensions of imposing certain ingrained worldviews. The works that focus on creating a critical, dialogical, liberated subject that is aware of the ontological transformation that underpins their history, interculturality, and memory have received a lot of attention from this perspective. Critical pedagogy constitutes the horizon of action and reflection of classroom initiatives.

The contributions of Magendzo (2016, 2017 & 2018), Espinel-Bernal (2016), Baena and Vela (2019) and Nez (2020) are predominant. The contribution of Magendzo is noteworthy due to its impact on the continent, whether it is because it serves as a theoretical and reflective foundation for the ideas exposed in the classroom or because it takes into account experiences with the educational system. In this regard, the comparative study of the ways in which civic education in some of the region's countries, such as Mexico, Colombia, and Costa Rica, has been guided by HRE stands out.

In addition, Espinel-Bernal (2016) acknowledges the importance of rights in civic education; however, her methodological approach necessitates a critical analysis grounded in a present-day ontology that questions the conditions necessary for civic education to take place in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Based on Freire's contributions, it recognizes that HRE contributes to the formation of political-critical subjects. This requires that the school move away from the verticality that mutes the voices of its protagonists and recognize that the interactions between teachers and students must be open to awareness through an emancipatory education that enhances the construction of subjectivities related to this.

In light of this, a critical paradigm is needed to establish links between human rights, local development, and education, conceiving them as the result of social struggles that push territories to emancipate themselves. Therefore, according to Baena and Vela (2019), education is a crucial component of creating processes for fighting for dignity if it is seen as a cultural and liberating process.

Education, as a practice of freedom, requires the construction of school processes and initiatives that must be based on the heterogeneity of the territories, to generate processes that prevent social exclusion. This viewpoint suggests that HRE is a result of emancipatory cultural processes that lead to the protection of human dignity. Reimagining human rights by challenging the claim that there are no alternatives to the dominant ideology is essential. In this process, school interactions and tensions encourage a de-naturalization in which the excluded might raise their voice.

The efforts to promote a critical understanding of human rights in schools find in the curricular adjustments means that favor it, but in their background, they seek to go beyond it. For this reason, there are many initiatives that, in the context of critical pedagogy, make significant changes at the curricular and content level, with a strong emphasis on transversalization. In this regard, Magendzo and Bermudez (2018) propose an HRE with a contentious perspective to cultivate critical citizens in a pluralist democracy through three action axes that include a universal, minimal, and moral plurality. Moral dilemmas and controversies are a method for boosting HRE and citizen learning because they foster a deliberative climate that aids in developing communication skills by encouraging the deliberate debate of polemic issues. Thus, HRE promotes the development of moral judgment. Closest to this approach, Álvarez (2019) states that the educational system should foster scenarios for dialogue, expressing emotions and critical reflection, since HRE constitutes an enriching synergy because of the humanizing experiences it encourages.

**Table 4.** Research Focused on a Counter-hegemonic Perspective (Dislocation-transformation).

Author- Year- Country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights at School: Political-Moral Perspective
Magendzo (2017) Chile	Theoretical- reflexive documental	HRE must promote critical ethical and political empowerment of the excluded and indignant.
Baena y Vela Jiménez (2019) Uruguay	Theoretical- reflexive documental	Human rights education involves understanding the struggles for territorial dignity.
Núñez (2020) Costa Rica	Theoretical- reflexive documental	Reinvent human rights to distort discourse, thus the excluded can raise their voices.
Álvarez (2019) Chile	Theoretical- reflexive documental	Encourage dialogue and critical reflection based on an understanding of recent history and political reality.



Author- Year- Country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights at School: Political-Moral Perspective
Areiza (2018) Colombia	Theoretical- reflexive documental	HRE contributes to the training of ethical- political subjects through the deployment of practical and experiential processes. They include citizen competences and civic values, but with a critical view.
Espinel-Bernal (2016) Colombia	Theoretical- reflexive documental	Calls attention to citizenship practices under the auspices of a universal discourse of human rights. Human rights are a game of epochal truth from which subjects are recognized, declared, and projected.
Suárez (2017). Colombia	Proposal – prescriptive model	Proposes a curricular alternative structure for teaching human rights. Considers the <i>ethos</i> , the free subject, and selfdetermination.

#### **Critical Human Rights Initiatives in Schools**

Literature concerns for the deployment of teaching-learning processes, beyond the normalization of hegemonic discourse within the educational system, through initiatives aimed at transforming the structural aspects of the political system. Within critical pedagogy, these initiatives seek to establish new senses that affect hegemonic discourses. The core of this perspective are the subjects and their contexts as determinants of the content on human rights (Suárez, 2017). Therefore, the strategies used are varied; because the learning axis does not lie in information about rights, but in making them act as excuses for the mobilization of actions that makes it possible to understand them through experiences. Literature, music, theater, care for life, and the environment, the recovery of ancestral knowledge, as well as memory in the context of post-conflict are some of the strategies.

Based on critical pedagogy in dialogue with Development Goals, and concerns about the environmental transformation of life on the planet, authors such as Caride (2017) and Vogelfanger (2020) state that human rights education is a requirement that corresponds to human beings as a specie. The negative consequences of economic models based on development theories are putting life on the planet at risk. To educate, in this way, includes training in a liberating and transformative practice. In this way, socio-environmental changes in spaces directed by social or community education are sometimes articulated with guidelines in the agendas of international organizations such as UNESCO. This

link becomes closer when the school and the territories foster the construction of a democratic communitarism, as its immediate effect is the promotion of democratic values necessary for an effective experience of rights.

Furthermore, there is a constant interest in transforming the schemes in which human rights are traditionally taught, especially in contexts affected by democracy. In this way, the triad is broken: political violence, armed conflict, and memory that emerge as an axis to advance an effective understanding of rights, especially in contexts of the State's precarious assistance.

In territories where political violence leads a barrier of exclusion and discrimination through the establishment of authoritarian political regimes or democratic precariousness, HRE becomes the most efficient strategy for the transformation of political culture through emancipation (Sgró, 2018). Pérez (2018) recognizes the potential of memory as a formative strategy for human rights and the construction of new citizenships. For the authors of this article, HRE moves into a social transformation, through the development of critical thinking and the formation of an ethical-political subject that promotes and demands its rights from social mobilization and the construction of political consensus.

**Table 5.** Critical Human Rights Initiatives in the School Area.

Author-year- country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights at School: Political-Moral Perspective
Suesca et al. (2020) Colombia	Theoretical- reflexive documental	Recognize the role of social movements and moral emotions in understanding human rights.
Castro (2017) Colombia	Theoretical- reflexive documental	Community education contributes to HRE, human rights must be recognized as cultural and historical artifacts produced by social struggles.
Vogelfanger (2020) Argentina	Theoretical- reflexive documental	Resources and contributions of critical pedagogy contribute to HRE, in conjunction with education for sustainable development. Takes on an environmental perspective.
Arguedas (2018) Costa Rica	Research-action	The incorporation of musical strategies favors HRE and intercultural ethics.



Author-year- country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights at School: Political-Moral Perspective
Lara et al. (2017) Colombia	Pedagogical Proposal	Literature favors HRE and fosters the development of critical thinking.
Burmeister (2021) Chile	Case study	Use of theatrical pedagogy as an input to HRE and critical reflection.
Suárez (2017) Colombia	Case study	Implement alternative curriculum models that use critical approaches and theories of society.
Caride (2017) Chile	Theoretical- reflexive documental	HRE is a requirement for human beings as a species, and it involves the care of life on the planet. Takes on an environmental perspective.
De los Santos y Cuevas (2020) México	Research-action	Use the good living category for HRE from the construction of school gardens.
Cortés et al. (2016) Colombia	Theoretical- reflexive documental	Unlink the school from armed conflict. Begins by considering what the school has done to survive in the midst of the conflict.
Osorio (2016) Colombia	Case studies	Recognize the armed conflict from memory in the understanding of human rights to favor the building of a forgiveness culture.
Sgró (2018) Argentina	Theoretical- reflexive documental	Takes HRE from a critical approach that takes political violence into account.
Pérez (2018) Colombia- Chile	Factual comparative	Memory as a pedagogical tool for addressing HRE and fostering critical thinking.
Pino & Sánchez (2017) Colombia	Systematization of experiences	The community organization is a civil societal space for HRE within the context of armed conflict and displacement.

#### **Discussion**

The field of human rights education in Latin America formed among tensions of political contexts —moving between authoritarian regimes and struggles for the return of democracy— and the educational reality, involving curricular organization and teacher training. In this context, the debate between the moral and political character of human rights was assumed as discursive strategies and devices used to shape that field. While political issues are predominant as part of the legal establishment of rights within educational systems, moral references have been used for their deployment in the school system to strengthen their appropriation. Thus, the teaching resources used in the classroom involved strengthening their view as moral rights from the recognition of defenses such as human dignity and respect.

The universal and reasonable nature of human rights has promoted their dissemination within Latin American educational systems. However, the political and social reality has obscured institutional efforts, and there have been some initiatives from civil society that have impacted teaching-learning processes in schools. This happens because the needs of the contexts enhance the mobilization of collective processes in the territories to claim rights. These initiatives are not reduced to the scope of their legal and normative knowledge, but are infused with the historical forces of social movements and community organizations which have managed to enter the school space to affect it in their practices (Archila, 2018; Franco, 2022). There are several ways of understanding rights based on popular education through strategies that include: literature, music, theater, and environmental education to dispel cultural practices that contribute to the experience of human rights in school with a high impact on social dynamics.

This is explained by the expansion of civil society into greater spaces of public participation. It includes the promotion, defense, and claim of human rights. As a result, institutional and non-governmental efforts are proliferating in organizing strategies aimed at building a culture of rights. Discourses that include training in citizenship skills, democratic pluralism, and education for peace are becoming stronger. HRE contributes to the construction of new citizenships, as it affects the processes of political subjectivization and, therefore, the patterns of cognitive, emotional and valuative orientation of subjects towards the political system.

The debate between politics and morality is becoming relevant, as it is not focused on how they are articulated in the foundations of rights, but on how the dilemmas inherent in the debate become reflexive nodes that broaden their deliberation. Therefore, to educate in human rights is to foster ethical-political



thinking, the promotion of the public use of reason, the possibility of establishing crossing consensus and educating on moral and political emotions (Nussbaum, 2014). This makes HRE a field under construction, there the institutional efforts come into dialogue with contextual realities from the tensions between the discursive establishment of rights and the processes that guide their claim even as they displaced hegemonic discourses.

A weak point in HRE is the training of teachers and the prevalence of the hegemonic discourse of rights that emphasizes a moralizing theory, but not the legal contents that in practice activate the normative system for its claim. Pedagogical strategies tend to focus on historical contents, foundations, and axiology of rights; this is necessary, but may lead to a loss of knowledge of legal instruments. This situation entails a possible de-politization of rights that reduces them to a monolithic abstraction. It demands that school promotes experiential scenarios to bring students closer to a practice of rights.

#### Conclusions

The discursive establishment of HRE shows the predominance of political-legal aspects that were promoted through the use of moral-based educational resources and methods, as well as the deployment of initiatives regarding the critical appropriation of rights that have broadened the mechanisms for their understanding. The school has become a practical setting for the experience of rights, but the evaluative view on the effectiveness of these initiatives needs to be broadened. School context has fostered the building of a culture of appropriation of human rights in dialogue with civil society. It makes the tensions between law-legal and law-moral through critical thinking, the public use of reason, and the recognition of moral emotions in collective life with implications for political subjectivity construction visible.

This debate leads toward the formulation of an ethics rooted in human rights. This approach relies on the potential of establishing an ongoing reflection on politics and morality within the cultural framework. This intricate interplay influences the establishment of cultural norms and practices that individuals engage in respecting social order. The incorporation of foreign language literature into this endeavor broadens the scope and would foster interesting comparative methodologies. By acknowledging the ways in which diverse contexts have shaped HRE within educational institutions.

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