Critical Education in Human Rights for the Construction of Peace: an Experience at the Carlos Albán Holguín School[*]

[English version]

Educación crítica en Derechos Humanos para la construcción de paz: una experiencia en el colegio Carlos Albán Holguín

Educação crítica em direitos humanos para a construção da paz: uma experiência na escola Carlos Albán Holguín

Paula-Andrea Sanabria-Rodríguez[**]
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7054-7579
Colombia

Abstract

Objective: to promote human rights education from critical theory as a contribution to peacebuilding with eighth grade students at the Carlos Albán Holguín school. **Methodology:** educational ethnography was used as a research method, using information gathering instruments such as a field diary, participant observation, interviews and surveys. **Results:** these show the data obtained from the surveys, a comparison and the results of the informative projects carried out by the students. **Conclusions:** the reflections achieved with the students are shown, noting the importance of education and the defense of human rights; all aimed at achieving peace.

Keywords: Human Rights Education; Peace; Critical pedagogy; Critical Theory.

Resumen

Objetivo: promover la educación en Derechos Humanos desde la teoría crítica como aporte a la construcción de paz con los estudiantes de grado octavo del colegio Carlos Albán Holguín. **Metodología:** se tomó la etnografía educativa como método de investigación, utilizando instrumentos de recolección de información como diario de campo, observación participante, entrevista y encuesta. **Resultados:** se muestran los datos obtenidos de las encuestas, la comparación entre ellas y los resultados de los proyectos informativos que realizaron los y las estudiantes. **Conclusiones:** se muestran las reflexiones logradas con los y las estudiantes, notando la importancia de la educación y defensa de los Derechos Humanos; todo ello encaminado a la búsqueda de la paz.

Palabras clave: Educación en Derechos Humanos; Paz; Pedagogía crítica; Teoría crítica.

Resumo

Objetivo: promover a educação em Direitos Humanos a partir da teoria crítica como contribuição para a construção da paz com alunos da oitava série da escola Carlos Albán Holguín. **Metodologia:** etnografia educacional foi utilizada como método de pesquisa, utilizando instrumentos de coleta de informações como diário de campo, observação participante, entrevista e inqueritos. **Resultados:** mostra os dados obtidos nas pesquisas, a comparação entre elas e os resultados dos projetos informativos realizados pelos alunos. **Conclusões:** são apresentadas as reflexões alcançadas com os alunos, ressaltando a importância da educação e defesa dos Direitos Humanos; todos voltados para a busca da paz.

Palavras-chave: Educação em direitos humanos; Paz; Pedagogia crítica; Teoria critica.

Introduction

Immersed in violence and misery, in recent years, Colombia had the opportunity to change its history, thanks to the peace agreement signed between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP, from which different initiatives were started that have had peace as their center. A peace chairmanship was established with the aim of "creating and consolidating a space for learning, reflection and dialogue on the culture of peace" (Law 1732, 2014). This is enabling analysis and its repercussions on the territories and the context "with the purpose of rebuilding the social fabric, promoting general prosperity and guaranteeing the effectiveness of the principles, rights and duties enshrined in the Constitution" (Decree 1038, 2015).

Despite this, currently in the Colombian panorama, human rights violations and murders of social leaders are daily and recurrent. According to *El Espectador*, based on the report "All Names, All Faces" of the Instituto de Estudios para el Desarrollo y la Paz (Indepaz) and the Patriotic March, "there have been 837 people murdered between January 2016 and May 2019. Of this number, 702 are social leaders and 135 are ex-FARC combatants." (El Espectador, 2019). Also, Indepaz compiled a report on the murders of human rights defenders and social leaders in 2020, reaching 138 murders, plus six relatives or people close to the murdered leaders and defenders. Likewise, to date 25 former FARC-EP combatants who signed the peace agreement had been assassinated. (González Perafán, 2020).

When tracing investigative works on human rights education in schools in Bogotá, it was possible to find relevant starting points. Beatriz Cadena (2017) developed tools that allow teachers to address conflicts by taking historical memory as an identity forger and observing the transformational potential in the subjects. Cindy Jiménez (2013) highlighted critical education on human rights in contexts of violence as a way to promote actions that transform these dynamics. Active participation was highlighted, understanding the student as a transformational subject, the contextual approach and the relevance of critical pedagogy.

Arles Bello (2016) identified an imbalance between legal discourse and practice, observing that, in several institutions, there is no depth when talking about human rights, based on a juxtaposed vision that, according to Helio Gallardo (2011), only that which is legally consigned is valid, but ends up being irrelevant for the students as they do not really understand what human rights are or how they have been constituted throughout history. While Inéride Álvarez

(2012) proposed that human rights education must have a clear intention in the formation of the political subject of rights, overcoming the "simplistic" vision of history.

The Carlos Albán Holguín school is located in Bosa, an area in the southwest of Bogotá. This sector has many problems such as fights, insecurity, trafficking of psychoactive substances, the difficulty of access to the healthcare system and spaces for participation, among others. In the midst of this, the possibility of redefining the teaching of human rights from critical theory was found, addressing them in a contextual way with a view toward building peace in the classroom.

According to Castillo (2017) School is considered a setting where young people "create new ways of living politics, of interacting with institutions, dealing with conflicts, confronting other generations, living sexuality and, in general, organizing collective life." (p.67). [Own translation]. Developing a training process was found to be necessary, starting from joint critical reflection that comprised the students' context as its starting point, allowing students to take part from a human rights perspective in the construction of peace, based on a more participatory education where peace is a flag, memory an instrument and indignation a weapon to unite them and claim the rights of youth, children and adults.

The main objective of the Pedagogical-investigative project was to promote human rights education from critical theory as a contribution to peacebuilding with eighth grade students at the Carlos Albán Holguín school. For this, inquiring about the human rights training practices offered by the institution and its association with peacebuilding was first necessary, then subsequently, generating a pedagogical proposal for the construction of peace from human rights for the eighth grade students. And finally, the training practices needed to reflect and discuss critical human rights theory as the result of the students' informative and artistic projects and the workshops carried out.

Human Rights from Critical Theory

It is known that there is not a single way to understand human rights, one of the first documents that is known about the subject is the Declaration of Rights of Virginia in 1776, as a result of which in the French Revolution consolidated the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen in 1789, laying the foundations for the so-called civil and political rights, located in a naturalistic position that assumes that, by the very fact of being born, rights are already

conferred, linked to obligations and duties. Thus, by constituting rights acquired by all men at birth, the State only intervenes in "the effects of recognizing, declaring and normatively protecting them, but not conferring or granting them." (Manili, 2012, p. 6). [Own translation]. Therefore, no one can take away or grant the rights.

Later, in the framework of the Russian Revolution in 1917, the "Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploited People" appears, which positions so-called economic, social and cultural rights. For 1981 the "African Charter of Human Rights and the Rights of the Peoples" appeared, from which collective rights were proclaimed. (Camargo, 2012). There is also the legal positivism vision that conceives as valid only the rights consigned in treaties or legal documents with international approval, thus having some instances where they can be legally demanded. (Gallardo, 2011).

Critical theory states that: "Nobody gives, concedes or grants rights, insofar as they are a work that is reached through extended struggles and social tensions. Human rights are, then, human constructions at the service of humanizing the human being" (Restrepo Domínguez, M. 2010, p. 14). [Own translation]. This implies recognizing that they are not only a norm or an official document, but that they collect the mobilizations and social demands of oppressed people or workers without comfortable or sufficient material conditions, who identified a shared problem and decided to act to seek guarantees and improvements to the situation.

Furthermore, as it is a social production that has been construed through history, they are not finished, they continue to be elaborated, they continue to evoke new guarantees for society that will then be the impetus to achieve more. It happens in this way, while, in the search for dignity and good living, the material and mental conditions that human beings needs must be taken into account, proceeding hand-in-hand with the context in which it develops. Likewise, from critical theory human rights are not understood in isolation from each other, as human beings require all living conditions for their full development and dignified existence.

Critical Education in Human Rights

It is essential to remember that, within critical pedagogy, teaching-knowledge-learning is considered an intentional and not neutral practice, insofar as different interests are at stake. It is important, then, to recognize within what context the educational process takes place and what are the discourses that

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are presented. Starting from Popular Education, but applied completely to the interests in this project, "invites an epistemological rethinking (from the student as subject) and ethical (the unequal power relationship in the traditional educational act and in the choice of the contents, among others)." (Solano, 2016, p.97). [Author´s translation]. This proposal is presented as an ethical-political commitment. Ethically, this is based on the recognition of the other as legitimate within the coexistence from the non-denial of the subject (Maturana, 1997) giving way to open and respectful dialogue, seeking the empowerment and participation of subjects who are recognized and affirmed from their differences – which historically have given way to social, economic and political inequality – such as their gender preferences, their class or racial situation (Ortega Valencia, 2009, p. 27) [Author´s translation] seeking the elimination of inequalities.

This commitment from the political field leads to the creation of spaces in the classrooms where "students can imagine a different world outside the capitalist law of value, in which alternatives to capitalism and its institutions can be discussed and debated." (McLaren, 2012, p. 45). [Author´s translation] Likewise, Giroux says, citing Marcuse, that any form of political action requires a political education that advocates a "new language, qualitatively different social relations and a new set of values" (Giroux, 2004, p. 65) [Author´s translation] to create a radically different environment and context. Human Rights education is not conducted in a neutral way. This is not possible as a pedagogical exercise, and the position from which it approaches Human Rights are loaded with intentionality. Not only is knowledge about Human Rights sought, but the knowledge itself is also committed to its defense and promotion with the entire community. Abraham Magendzo (2008) defines that human rights education "aims to develop in individuals and peoples their maximum capacities as subjects of rights and to provide them with the tools and elements to make them effective" (p. 20). [Author´s translation]

This exercise within a classroom must be accompanied by coherent dynamics that seek active participation, discussion, analysis, reflection and recognition of everyone's knowledge. This is why the educational institution "as a teaching-learning space will then be a center for discussions of ideas, solutions, reflections, where the popular organization systematizes its own experience." (Freire 1997, p. 19). [Author´s translation] In addition, it is essential that this process be linked to the context and, therefore, to the realities of the students, and that it allows for situating rights, so that they stop being something abstract. Both in the school and in the neighborhoods, identifying situations in which human dignity and good living are strongly affected is possible. This must come

from these situations that allow analysis and critical reflection, as well as actions for defense and memory that will advocate non-repetition.

Peace: Beyond the Absence of War

Mentioning peace becomes difficult as many times it is referred to without really knowing what it refers to, becoming a mobile concept serving the interests of those who use it. In general terms, three main lines or types of peace have been identified, the first refers to the so-called "negative peace" from which the absence of war or armed conflict is prioritized, but which ignores other types of violence such as psychological or the structural. (Hernández, Luna, Cadena, 2017, p. 153) [Author´s translation]. On the other hand, there is the so-called imperfect peace, which seeks the satisfaction of some human needs without really eliminating conflicts (Hernández, Luna, Cadena, 2017, p. 154) [Author´s translation]. And finally, from which the approach for this investigative work is based, positive peace. This recognizes the absence of war, and also includes many other factors from which "social harmony, equality, justice and, therefore, the radical transformation of society are pursued" (Hernández, Luna, Cadena., 2017, p. 153) [Author´s translation]. Thus, to be able to speak of peace, the psychological, structural, sexual, and economic aspects, among others, are important within this approach.

According to this perspective, the emergence of war should be prevented, as well as eliminating the conditions that may cause it, such as excessive authority by the armed forces, discrimination, violence and gender subordination, labor exploitation, poverty and oppression. Understanding that "the peace of slaves" can never be a good peace since it will always be a peace that has war embedded within it" (Quesada, 2016, p. 8). That is, as long as unequal and unjust conditions exist, there will be a high probability of war conflict and people will not really be at peace.

Methodology

The research was carried out from the analytical-interpretive approach and the methodology of educational ethnography was used. Although ethnography has been developing and consolidating not only as a technique but also as a research methodology over the years, the branch of educational ethnography is much more recent, and has been defined as the "study and analysis of institutions and educational processes using the ethnographic method. Or more specifically, the description and interpretation of the culture of an educational institution" (Yuni, Ciucci, Urbano, 2014, p. 112). [Author´s translation]

Likewise, this study comprised field diary, the interview and participant observation as data collection instruments. These were used in this research together with two surveys that allowed, primarily, an initial approach to the students' knowledge to be made, and subsequently, the identification of changes at the end of the workshops in the conceptions about the addressed concepts. The pedagogical process and the training proposal were built from critical pedagogy and critical education in human rights.

The work was carried out at headquarters 'A' of the Carlos Albán Holguín school, taking into account the problems that arise in the area mentioned above, and the possibility of contributing to the mitigation of some of these, as well as to their analysis of the human rights. The group assigned by the school was class 805[1], made up of 35 students between 13 and 16 years of age; 19 of them men and 16 women. Of these, two students presented difficulty in following instructions and performing activities, without knowledge of what disability they had, and without receiving any information in this regard from the school either. These two students withdrew from the school before the end of the workshops, and two new students arrived for the last session.

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1. The approval of the school was obtained to carry out the workshops. A support teacher from the institution was assigned, and of the courses with which he had class, 805 was chosen because it had more hours assigned to the teacher and this not interfere with the study plan.

Table 1. Participating population

	Age				Country of Origin		Disability Condition
	13	14	15	16	Colombia	Venezuela	
Women	3	9	4	0	15	1	0
Men	1	12	5	1	19	0	2
Total	4	21	9	1	34	1	2

10 sessions of 2 hours were carried out. The first exercise was a diagnosis and characterization, based on the recognition of the participants and their knowledge. They were asked to answer an open questionnaire of five questions: what do you know or believe that human rights are? What are conflict situations? What do you believe or know that peace is? How can you participate in school, at home or the your neighborhood to generate peace? And is it possible to build peace from school? Finding that in many cases they claimed not to have knowledge or clarity about it. Each answer to each question was analyzed, locating the similar answers for each question, in some cases with differences in writing, but which in essence pointed to the same idea. Thus categorizing the answers to systematize each point of the questionnaire was possible. Subsequently, the students were organized into work groups of four students, in which they discussed how they would like to share the reflections and knowledge that would be built throughout the sessions with more people.

For the next session, work groups were organized that spoke about participation (definition, forms, mechanisms and spaces) and reflected on the role of students in spaces of participation. For the third session, they began to talk about conflict, understanding that it is not only war or armed confrontation, but that it can be seen in various aspects of life. Several flipcharts were placed on the walls of the room where the students wrote examples, thoughts or definitions of the form of conflict that the flipchart carried (interpersonal conflict, political/ideological conflict, religious conflict and armed conflict) giving way to the analysis from the perspectives of each student. Then, a topic was chosen for debate, in which half of the course was in favor and the other half against. Each

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group prepared some arguments and elected three representatives who would argue to win the debate.

The fourth session focused on human rights. Students were asked to form groups of three, each group was given a balloon on which they wrote after it was inflated it – except for a group that had skewer sticks. The instruction to the last group was to pop as many balloons as possible in five minutes while the others tried to protect them. This exercise opened the conversation to theoretical positions on human rights, and then to reflection from critical theory. It highlights the integrality of rights, which are necessary to ensure good living conditions for the community, it requires defended in their entirety and not being separate.

The fifth session was focused on the matter of peace. By groups students received a definition of peace, they discussed whether they thought it was appropriate or not, and then wrote a story that reflected its definition. At the end, the stories were exchanged for the other groups to try to identify what was the definition in each story. The sixth session was devoted to the planning of initiatives to share knowledge on human rights and peace with the rest of the educational community.

In the seventh session the origin of human rights was discussed. Many of the contributions referred to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but it started to identify that the constitution of rights has had a lot to do with mobilizations or societal requirements that ended in social struggles.

In the eighth session, to continue with the topic of peace, each student was asked to write in only one word something they considered fundamental for peace, then they were divided into groups of four and tried to give a definition of peace from the words they had; they had to imagine that they landed on a desert island along with 96 other people they did not know, so they had to organize three agreements that would allow coexistence in peace. Finally, each group socialized their work by reviewing the concepts of peace. Students were able to discuss and reflect on the importance of creating agreements that truly measure coexistence, and that allow for equity and participation for all and reduce potential conflicts that may arise.

At the ninth session, sheets of paper were given to the groups, each one drew a human body silhouette in which they identified people's needs: food, health, education, housing, family, from there they began to write the rights that person should have to achieve living well and in dignity around the silhouette. Then, each group shared their reflections with others.

For the last session, the final initiatives and activities were presented, some students were interviewed and a final survey was conducted with three multiple choice questions. What are human rights?: a. Things people need to live well, all together and that have been achieved by the struggle of the people; b. Are they

privileges given by the government to some people; c. Are they a list of things that involve people's duties. What is peace? a. Not having wars or fighting; b. people living well, in harmony, in tranquility, with rights and without war; c. a treaty. What is conflict? a. War and fighting; b. People with disagreements and discussions; c. both options.

Results

To the first question of the first questionnaire: What do you think or know human rights are?", the most common response was "I don't know" (16.7%) followed by "Duty of the State" (13.9%), and a perhaps unclear response "rights we have" (13.9%). When talking about the responses, a lack of confidence about what was said was noted.

Identifying that there is no dialogue or training on the subject at school was possible. There is maybe only reference to human rights in a few classes, but nothing in depth or in context. It made understanding their importance difficult for students. The systematization table for the first questionnaire is presented below.

Table 2. Systematization of questionnaire responses No. 1

Student	1. What do you think or know about human rights?	2. What are conflict situations?	3. What do you believe or know peace to be?	4. How can you participate at school, at home, or in your neighborhood in generating peace?	5. Is building peace from school possible?
1	They must be fulfilled by citizens	Time of problem	No wars, protest to be well	-	Yes, dedication and effort
2	Men and women. To be happy. What we want	-	Reconciliation of all	Treating us in a good way	Yes, mutual help
3	Guideline that reports the rights we have	Time of problem	Treaty to end a war	Not generating conflict	Yes, non-conflict commitment

Student	1. What do you think or know about human rights?	2. What are conflict situations?	3. What do you believe or know peace to be?	4. How can you participate at school, at home, or in your neighborhood in generating peace?	5. Is building peace from school possible?
4	To enforce duties and values	Gossip	Everyone's duty	Not generating conflict	Yes
5	Fundamentals to human beings	Fights, threats, disagreements that become worst	Action to be quiet	Respect, speak well, do not wish bad things	Yes
6	Rules to comply with	-	-	-	-
7	-	-	No wars	-	Fights
8	The State makes it mandatory to help the integrity of people	Intolerance, corruption, disrespect and mistrust	Place where there are no conflicts, corruption and coordination	Encourage not to fight, to steal. The law to be better and present	Yes
9	The duty of the State	Corruption, disrespect, migration, intolerance	Labor of peacefulness	No gossip, to get along with everyone	Yes
10	The State does it mandatory to help the integrity of people	Intolerance, corruption, disrespect and mistrust	Harmony and peacefulness, without problems	Respect for others, to tolerate likes and economic situation	Yes, to obey and be quiet
11	It must be fulfi-lled by citizens	War, displacement	No wars	Solving problems without rudeness	Yes
12	-	-	No wars, no fights	-	Yes
13	To do what you want and to enforce what you want	Fights	No fights	No fights, no gos-sip, to participate in neighborhood activities	Yes, to talk to each other
14	Rights we have	No to think about what they say and treat each other badly	End of conflict and to have harmony	Equality	Yes
15	-	-	Respect for others	-	Yes

Student	1. What do you think or know about human rights?	2. What are conflict situations?	3. What do you believe or know peace to be?	4. How can you participate at school, at home, or in your neighborhood in generating peace?	5. Is building peace from school possible?
16	Rights we have	-	-	-	-
17	Rules to comply with	Discrimination, racism, to criticize	Respect for others	Charity actions, to help poverty and animals, respect	Yes
18	Duties	Discussions that turn into physical acts	To live in peace, without fear	Respecting others' opinion and being kind	Yes
19	Rules to comply	Discrimination, racism, fights	Respect for others, don't make conflicts and live in harmony	Respect for others and share with the community	Yes
20	Respect people's decisions and opinions	Fights	Reconciliation of all	To talk not to fight	-
21	To have the same as others	Fights	No wars	Not generating conflict	Yes, non-conflict commitment
22	-	-	To be well with the people and the world	Creating activities, talking, proposing ideas	Yes
23	The duty of the State	Fights	End of conflict and harmony	Honesty, sincerity, love	Yes, with campaigns
24	-	Fights	Treaty to end a war	Not generating conflict	Yes
24	-	Fights	Treaty to end a war	Not generating conflict	Yes
25	Rights we have	Discussions	Good relationship	Mutual arrangement	Yes
26	The duty of the State	Fights, corruption, migration	Peacefulness without using weapons	-	Yes, with training
27	To protect and to enforce duties	Fights, mistreatment	To govern for others fairly	Giving us value and being united	Yes, there are peace builders
28	To protect so-ciety with laws	There is no peace in a society	Constitution Law for no more conflicts	Union, hear to other people's opinions	Yes, companionship

Student	1. What do you think or know about human rights?	2. What are conflict situations?	3. What do you believe or know peace to be?	4. How can you participate at school, at home, or in your neighborhood in generating peace?	5. Is building peace from school possible?
29	Rights we have	Protests, wars, fights, conflicts	No wars, no fights	No Israeli fighting (constant conflict), no drugs, no bullying	Yes, it is difficult
30	To people's satisfaction	War	Someone's at peace.	No fights	Yes
31	-	Fights, mistreatment	Respect for others	Respect and be a model	Yes
32	Rights we have	Fights	No racism	No gossip	Yes, self-knowing without judging
33	To know whether or not if you can do something	Problems	No war	No fights, assault, disagreements	Yes, no violence, no fighting
34	They must be respected	-	No fights	To be a model of not fighting, love and friendship. No evil	Yes, to be a model
35	The duty of the State	There is not assertive communication	Everyone wants, few come true	Assertive communication	Yes
36	The duty of the State	There is no equality or hearing	End of conflict and harmony	To take human rights into account always with respect and equality	Yes

The third question inquired about the students' knowledge regarding peace, and the relationship with the absence of war, with 19.4% as the most recurrent answer. Respect for other people was 11.1%, as well as other peaceful and harmonic situations. Only two students reported not knowing the meaning of peace. This evidenced a negative position toward peace for most of the students, along with just understanding conflict as fighting and war without considering other aspects or ways in which the conflict might arise. With respect to the answers regarding conflict, 22.2% (eight students) claimed that they did not know what conflict was, and 16.7% stated that it was wars and fighting.

During the last session, the students presented activities with the purpose of fostering discussion and reflection on these issues among the educational

community. Some chose traditional games such as "hot potato", others recreated a radio interview, and some others made billboards, cards and handicrafts to reflect their ideas and recommendations to address the subject issues.

These initiatives illustrated learning during the sessions. The importance of human rights and its relationship with peace achievement were observed as well. The need to learn about human rights and defend them to improve the living conditions of the entire community were also highlighted. One of the students stated that "one can help people when informing them about the ways to have their rights like other people" (personal interview, July 26, 2019).

Finally, a multiple choice questionnaire was applied in order to identify the changes in the students' conceptions of human rights and peace. They had the possibility of not answering if they disagreed with any of the options or did not know. Thus, according to the question on human rights, the majority of the students considered that they referred to all things for living well and have been achieved through people's struggles. Contrary to the first questionnaire in which the majority of the students said they did not know what they were.

Figure 1. This shows the first part's results of the second questionnaire applied to students

Concept on Human Rights
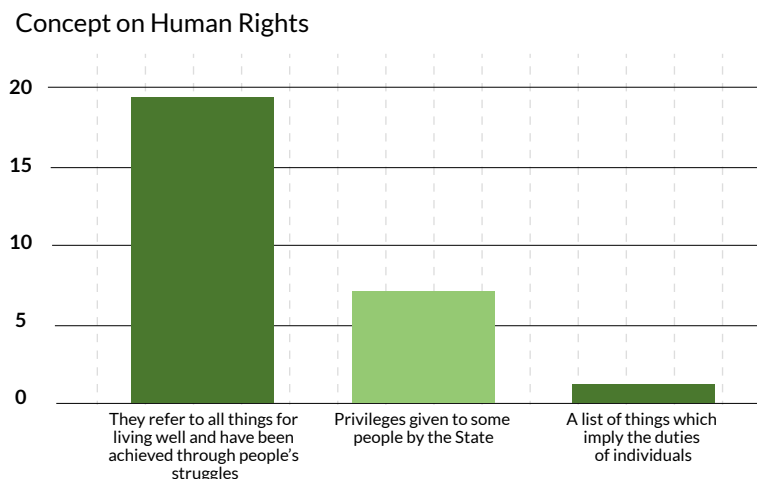
On the other hand, when asked about the concept of peace, most of the students considered that it implied people living well, in harmony, peacefully with rights and without war. When discussing and analyzing this answer, the

students suggested the need for all of these factors combined to certainly talk about being at peace; otherwise it was not really achieved. This corresponds to positive peace, considering aspects covered by human rights for living well as essential for peace.

Figure 2. This shows the results of the second questionnaire applied to students
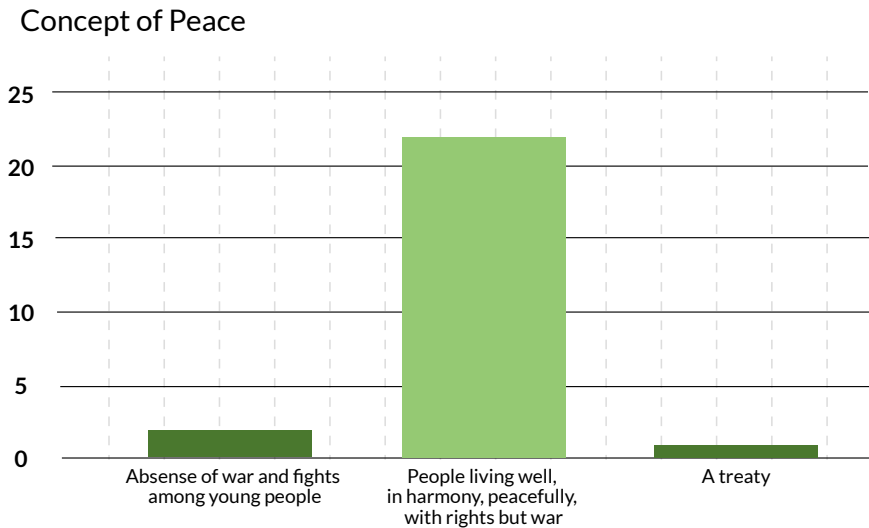
Conclusions

Prior to this study, several studies on human rights education as a central axis from a critical pedagogy were reviewed and findings showed meaningful and appropriate proposals for their developmental contexts, and some proposals were mentioned previously. This review did not show a clear proposal on critical education in human rights and peacebuilding[2], which motivated conducting this study with the eighth-grade students of the Carlos Albán Holguín school.

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2. It refers to positive peace.

At first, within the framework of critical pedagogies, students' prior knowledge was examined and different notions or ignorance regarding human rights and peace were observed. Similarly, despite the fact that the school's website comprises the proposal for Peace Education Performances of the Ministry of National Education, in practice students do not thoroughly manage these concepts to be able to generate critical reflections.

The pedagogical proposal that was developed in ten class sessions of the didactic unit began with the student's prior knowledge. They debated and analyzed definitions and theoretical perspectives through activities that also fostered active participation for knowledge building.

Changing the common classroom seating arrangement, generating discussion and doing different activities were well-received. Although at first active participation was difficult as they did not feel sure they knew the "right answers," little by little, they allowed themselves to consider their thoughts and knowledge without feeling judged or graded all the time. Teamwork was of utmost importance to freely dialogue and to accomplish the activities.

From the first sessions, class teams were organized with the purpose of developing a final project regarding the notions built on human rights and peace to be considered within the educational community. In this way, they showed the need to guarantee and defend human rights together – and not individually – in order to achieve a dignified life for the entire population, placing themselves as enablers for the defense and dissemination of the peace concepts. It was concluded that peace is not just the absence of armed conflict, but implies a good life, therefore, it is directly related to the protection of human rights.

These activities intended to inform and also to reflect the context of these issues, so that these concepts would make sense in people's daily lives instead of being a document isolated from reality itself.

Involving other professionals is considered appropriate for human rights education from the pedagogical and critical theory perspective, and as Inéride Álvarez (2012) suggests, human rights are the result of struggles for freedom which have been undertaken throughout history by individuals in search of a changing society. These correspond to concrete realities in addition to their identification with human rights' dialectical capacity for transformation.

It can be affirmed, in response to this study's general objective, that human rights education from critical theory in the classroom and through developing workshops and contextualized activities that enable dialogue, debate and proposals to replicate and build knowledge can be achievable. This raises both knowledge and the defense of rights in all the participating scenarios.

According to the previous information, a notion of peace is created and far from only being understood as the absence of war, is based on the confluence

of factors that allow for well-being. The guarantee of human rights allows for a dignified life for communities, thus decreasing structural violence and other types of violence as well as conflicts that affect everyone's good life.

This means peace is not external to the school's reality, the neighborhoods and the community, but rather, the need to guarantee human rights for decent living conditions has implications in individual's immediate reality. If so, these reflections allow students to seek the reconstruction of the social fabric and community organization intended to improve the living conditions of all people in the different places where they participate.

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