

Human Rights: Experiences and Educational Practices

Marizabel Vasquez Bedoya

Phd Student - Universidad Nacional de la Plata (Argentina)

Spanish Teacher - Portsmouth Public Schools

Abstract

Human rights, therefore, are indispensable freedoms that accrue to every human being, irrespective of citizenship, ethnic background, or other characteristics. It is true that all these rights are known globally, but the chances of people realizing and enjoying them can differ significantly depending on the region and specific society. These gaps in knowledge are considered in this research article by discussing the various, differentiated experiences in regard to human rights, more specifically by pointing to incidents of human rights' abuse and improvement across different regions. Moreover, the given article explores the centrality of education in raising awareness and cherishing human rights. HRE, as a part of educational practices, can raise awareness, foster empathy, and, thereby, actively contribute to individuals' ability to stand up for themselves and others.

Therefore, through teaching and learning human rights, the incorporation of human rights topics in education curriculum, teaching critical thinking, and establishing values for empathy, HRE seeks to transform society into one that respects and protects the human rights of every individual. This paper explores the historical past, various problems in present society, as well as the experience of HRE implementation that occurred in different countries at different times, its outcomes, and perspectives for further transformations in society. In the last place, the author presents the recommendations that can help improve HRE, discussing the role of international support, advocacy, and efficient teacher training. This way, HRE helps build a desirable future for humanity's generations to come by preparing them for the combating of human rights issues.

Keywords: human rights, experience, educational practices, educational community, curricular design, and structure.

Introduction

Human rights are inalienable rights, that is, rights that every human person has, irrespective of his or her color, race, gender, nationality, or religious beliefs, or any other status that one may possess; these rights are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. Such things as the right to existence, that of free movement and security; freedom from horrific pain and slavery; right to an impartial trial; religious, philosophical, and political belief; and right to learn an appropriate employment. They are the foundation of the justice and equality across the world as they strive to enable people to live decent lives.

Despite the fact that human rights are widely promoted and recognized today, the implementation and protection of these rights are still relatively unsystematic and unstable concerning regional and social contexts. Political instability and conflict, economic inequalities, culture and bearer bias, and racism are some of the reasons for this diversity. Therefore, thousands of people and groups remain subjected to extensive human rights abuses while a few are provided with progressive gains in human rights. Education becomes a noteworthy resource with respect to this. They were not only, and not even mainly, a right in themselves, but also and especially the way to ensure that people, and the groups of people, got the force and the tools to exercise their other rights. This empowerment process is especially presided over by Human Rights Education (HRE). Consequently, one can promote a culture of Human Rights through education by raising the awareness level in people and preparing them for the implementation of their rights and duties through critical thinking skills, and through empathy and solidarity. To that extent, this research article aims

to examine different perspectives concerning rights as a human being through identifying historical and current practices regarding execution and protection of such rights. Thus, with the help of case descriptions and quantitative research data, the article seeks to consider the contemporary global human rights situation. Moreover, it assesses the effectiveness of the different approaches and actions in enhancing human right education focusing on the best practices obtained with a brief analysis of the issues that arise in this field. The article is structured as follows: the following subtopic offers a background to human rights discussing historical development from early human societies to the present day. Afterwards the article surveys the state of human rights and abuses, the former and the latter patterns described for various areas. Then the part concerning the role of educational practices, and particularly HRE, in the cause and protection of human rights is investigated. The last part explores the realities of how different strategies and practices are realized in organizations and presents solutions for minimizing the identified difficulties. By incorporating human rights into curricula around the world and overcoming the present difficulties, we could help the world become a place where human rights are valued and preserved. This article seeks to do this by giving information and the best strategies for improving human rights education and promoting justice and equality in the world.

Summary:

The research titled “Human Rights: Experience and Educational Practices” aimed to understand the experience of human rights (HR) in the educational practices of the members of the Carlos Pérez Mejía Institution (IECPM), headquarters 2 Rosalía Suárez of the municipality of Bello, in the fourth and fifth grades of primary basic education. Under a qualitative research approach and the participatory action research method. The sample for thematic development was made up of 42 students, six parents, and three teachers. There was also a co-research group from the IECPM made up of five students, two parents, two teachers, and the coordinator, who were directly permeated by the object of research.

At a theoretical level, Habermas's theory of communicative action and critical pedagogy from Giroux's approach were taken into account, in addition to Abraham Magendzo's postulates on the curricular structure in relation to human rights. The fundamental findings were a conception of human rights based on exemplification, little inclusion of these rights in the formal curriculum, visualization of the coexistence manual as a coercive tool by students, teachers, and families, and an irregular and inconsistent experience of rights. humans among students.

About Human Rights

Thinking about how human rights are experienced by actors in the school context leads to conceptualizing and reflecting on the way in which this concept has been understood in society. It is important that subjects, students, and citizens know that human rights are properly different paradigms of freedom and dignity, that there is a history that supports them, and that on December 10, 1948, a Universal Declaration was established that contains them, in addition to the protection mechanisms and obligations that they entail. That is to say, we must give all its importance to the discourse of human rights, which implies pedagogical and educational work, even more so when different authors propose education as the most viable strategy to vindicate them. Such is the case of Abraham Magendzo (1991, 2002), who in his study “School and Human Rights” reveals the great responsibility that teachers must assume with the support of the educational system to create a culture of human rights within society. Pointing towards the opening and expansion of the system from a critical paradigm that knows how to confront the multiple tensions, conflicts, and contradictions that education around this topic witnesses today.

The author considers human rights education as an important component of the processes of modernization of education, which must have a transversal character to all areas of the curriculum, incorporating it from the perspective of citizenship training, training for life, and training for democratic life through values such as respect for life, freedom, justice, solidarity, honesty, equality, peaceful coexistence, and citizen responsibility, among others. Along the same lines, the author maintains that thanks to the universal and imperative nature of the subject of human rights, this, more than a content, becomes a task that education cannot avoid, since the meaning that these have acquired in contemporary society has been the result of their systematic violation. It is necessary to include them in daily practices so that interpersonal relationships are their reflection, therefore family, school, and state are directly responsible for the

experience in and for human rights (Magendzo, 1991). In the same sense, Peter McLaren maintains: The educational institution must aim at the creation of an active citizenry, related to the ideals of politicization, for the sake of progress, in conditions of promoting equality and social justice, for renewed forms of political life, critical, purposeful students against the various social phenomena, with an objective vision of the situations, informed from history, with political bases, documented, coherent, entrepreneurs who contribute to the construction of society, generating in the classroom an environment of exchange and culturalization, which converts them into agents of transformation and hope (1997: p. 254).

Human rights education is, meanwhile, an opportunity to enrich educational practices because there is nothing closer to education than caring about social transformation and the dignity of people.

Tools to transform words into actions: living human rights

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The importance of the method

Considering participatory action research (PAR) as a research method, Fals Borda (2010) states that classes and groups will progressively transform their environment through experience. He refers particularly to intellectuals who, in an attitude of commitment and willingness to dialogue, recognize and are recognized as interlocutors in the treatment of problems that require, for their solution, to be studied, discussed, and resolved in a reflective and transformative practice of a collective nature. This research method makes the events of communities a process of knowledge construction, which contributes to similar contexts anywhere in the world. The PAR entails an experience that transforms the relationships between researcher and researcher, which gives priority to the production of knowledge from the dialogue between the actors of the investigated context, which is reflected in the deconstruction and construction of knowledge by generating

transformative proposals that impact its reality.

In the IECPM, transformation is conceived as a necessity, changes in subjectivities are created through dialogue and interaction between the actors of the educational community with their peers, researchers, and the co-research group, and thanks to these transformations in the experiences, consistent with human rights, ensure that community members verbalize all their concerns regarding the experience and practice of human rights in their immediate context; It is corroborated that teachers and teaching managers constantly evaluate and analyze how their educational practices are experienced in relation to Human Rights and their significance outside the classroom, when projecting themselves in the educational community, through the promotion and transformation of who belong to it.

On the other hand, the expression by parents and students of the need to explicitly know the coexistence manual and the structure and curricular design of the academic areas and classroom projects in order to be able to interact with them and adopt them into your daily life speaks of the intention to transform educational practices and the training exercise into something joint between family and school, in coherence with the purposes of the state and in favor of a comprehensive training of students within the institution.

Experiences at school: findings

Thus, the experience is built through the relationships established by the subjects among themselves and with their context, being subjected to change and transformation according to the specificities of the environment. Culture shapes and is shaped by human experience. As Habermas rightly names it in his theory of communicative action, it is through language that action is shaped, and in this same way, customs are built, culture is generated, lifestyles are established, and thoughts are founded (Habermas, 1982)..Magendzo (2010), in the same vein as Habermas, notes that experience is a constitutive part of cultures, which are transformed according to the imaginaries of the majority of the population, which also incorporates affectivity, behaviors, feelings, actions, values, and experiences that develop around human rights.

This knowledge is constructed and reconstructed, contextualized and recontextualized in the individual and collective experience that subjects have in their daily lives, in their family, in their community, and in school, so knowledge transcends experience. In this regard, Magendzo (2010) maintains that knowledge of human rights fundamentally emerges when one perceives and becomes aware of the conflicts that are generated and the reality that encloses them in different contexts, being constructed from the experiences of the subjects and personal experiences of the knowledge and application of the same. Regarding the experiences at school, through the observation of educational practices, it is perceived that the teachers of the public educational institution in which the research was carried out use teaching strategies that enable the experience of human rights in the schools. classes, such as diagnostic activities, participation in the construction of concepts and ideas, and the emphasis placed in classes on listening, respect, and recognition of others in narratives and/or descriptions of significant aspects or experiences in life.

However, explicit aspects concerning values or human rights are not evident within the content written by the children in their notebooks. These practices have been implicit and inherent to the work of teachers and students in the institution. In the same way, the directors of the institution carry out practices that strengthen the manifestations of peace, harmony, and conciliation led by the teachers, and although not all students are permeated by these, it is clear that institutional life, due to the humanistic approach of the PEI, its mission, and vision, transforms its realities into coherence with human rights. Students, in general, are sensitive, have empathy with each other and with their teachers, and are receptive, open, and willing to respond to the demands of their significant adults. Furthermore, it is observed that the latter deal with institutional issues such as important dates, events, rules, rights, and duties, among others, during the activities that take place before entering the classroom and during break, which results in a harmonious institutional climate. based on values and promoters of the experience of human rights, and although there is ambivalence due to the disagreement of some students regarding the treatment among classmates, it is possible to see that those who are dissatisfied (according to the testimony of the coordinator of the institution) have been aggressors of their peers at some point, which is why they do not experience human rights in their daily lives and have refused to recognize that these are implemented within the institution, in the curricular structures, and in the coexistence manual. It is noteworthy that in the community, opinions, values, friendship, purposes, agreements, and disagreements are shared, among countless other feelings and

experiences that help write the history of the educational institution and change society based on the experience of human rights.

To address and prioritize this aspect in the relationships that are woven between the different actors of the educational community in favor of assertive communication, in addition to constantly raising students' awareness about tolerance and respect, educational practices are developed based on human rights. Regarding the real curriculum and the conceptualization of human rights, in the documentary review of the curricular structures of the areas, the components that refer transversally to human rights and seek their experience and development are explicitly presented in the Project of Human Rights. Life: Some teachers believe that rights are immersed in the area of social sciences as one of the main guarantors of this conceptual learning, as expressed by teacher Diana: "The institution has had an interdisciplinary view for Human Rights Education (HRE); perhaps the area of social sciences has a greater approach due to its integrative nature in this area of knowledge." (Diana, IECPM, ED); for their part, the students state that human rights are worked on directly in their life project. As Valentina, Martina, Felipe, and Sergio (IECPM, EE) coincidentally maintain, "we work on human rights as a life project."

Case Studies of Effective Human Rights Education (HRE)

Thus, human rights education (HRE) plays an important role in creating a human rights culture. HRE entails a process of providing information on rights, enhancing people's ability to reason, and creating and fostering solidarity. There are many countries that have efficiently implemented HRE programs and, hence, can be followed by other nations. In this section, there is a detailed description of the cases of Sweden, India, and Costa Rica regarding their approaches and experiences in the management of HRE initiatives.

Sweden

Sweden is widely recognized as one of the leading countries with a liberal approach to education that incorporates human rights education at every stage. Thus, the main trends of the Swedish approach to HRE are called the curricular approach, the focus on democratically significant values, and the conception of social justice.

Comprehensive Curriculum Integration:

In Sweden, human rights are included in schools in social and natural sciences lessons, history, social studies, and civics. Thus, students get a more rounded viewpoint of the rights of a human since it incorporates aspects from different disciplines.

Democratic School Environment:

The Swedish schooling system advocates for democratic learning where students are provided with opportunities to participate in decision-making. Not only does classroom practice inform students of their rights, but it also affords the learners the chance to live in democracy.

Focus on Social Justice:

Regarding the subject of inequality and discrimination, Swedish HRE programs work on it. Teachers expose various case scenarios and/or events happening around the world in order to relay the applicability of human rights to the everyday realities of the learners.

Impact:

Such actions of promoting HRE in the context of the Swedish education system have promoted awareness and knowledge of human rights among the students. Studies found that students in Sweden are able to identify and respect the rights of other individuals and, as such, act as responsible citizens in today's society.

India

India is used as the setting for this paper because the context of HRE is vast and complicated due to the reasons explained below. In this case, a number of NGOs have been involved in the dissemination of human rights education across the nation.

NGO-Led Initiatives:

With regards to HRE, several NGOs, including the Human Rights Education Programme (HREP), offer schools this service. They establish a series of programs and come up with a special curriculum that prepares teachers for these and also prepares a series of exercises, workshops, and seminars for students.

Community Engagement:

The component of raising awareness among parents and the local community is characteristic of many HRE programs realized in the Indian context. This makes sure that human rights education is not only limited to the classroom but also covers all the aspects shown above.

Focus on Marginalized Groups:

The HRE implementations in India focus on the marginalized section of society, which includes women, Dalits, and tribal people. These programs include fighting caste discrimination, female subjugation, and child labor, which is to help the most affected groups of people.

Impact:

The analysis of the impact of HRE programs in India showed that students have improved their knowledge and changed their attitude towards human rights. Some of the findings include the improvement of the rights consciousness of students and their ability and preparedness to combat prejudice in their societies.

Costa Rica

Whereas Costa Rica is internationally recognized for its advocacy for peace and human rights, which calls for efficient HRE policies. Human rights remain a vital aspect of the nation's education policy, as demonstrated by the integration of HRE education in learning institutions.

National Education Policy:

The Ministry of Education in Costa Rica has ensured that human rights education has become part of the country's curriculum. This policy requires that human rights topics be taught in the various subjects so that all students get to study HRE.

Peace Education:

Thus, Costa Rica pays special attention to the issue of peace education as one of the priorities of HRE. Several subjects and lessons are given in schools; for instance, conflict management, peace, and non-violence, as well as social justice, are promoted, therefore achieving the goal of human rights.

Teacher Training Programs:

Currently, the Costa Rican authorities pay special attention to spare and efficient teacher training programs that target HRE. These programs prepare teachers for what they need to know and do in order to be able to teach human rights education well.

Impact:

It is evident that, through the HRE initiatives being offered in Costa Rica, students are now knowledgeable and active. According to research carried out, learners from Costa Rica developed good perceptions of human rights as well as the support of peace and justice within their society. These case studies—the experiences in Sweden, India, and Costa Rica—show that while methods of including human rights education are multiform and far-reaching, the outcomes are all positive. These countries have thus created a culture of human rights and social justice by incorporating HRE into national curricula, participating in NGOs, and focusing on teacher training. These examples are important to raise the standard of other countries that are willing to initiate or develop their HRE programs.

Conclusion

In this qualitative research, the author focuses on the essence of enhancing human rights education (HRE) in order to close the gaps around the world in depicting the implementation and enforcement of human rights. In this manner, it shows that human rights abuses, be they ethno cleansings, racism, or political oppression,

still remain a reality, albeit not as vicious as in the pre-Vienna conference period. It also highlights successes such as the abolishment of apartheid in South Africa and the struggle of the LGBTQ+ community across the globe in their bid for recognition of their rights. The case studies from Sweden, India, and Costa Rica reveal the best practices in HRE such as teaching integration, community engagement, and faculty development, which have facilitated the creation of the culture of human rights and social justice.

Notwithstanding the positive findings with regards to HRE, the article established that the following factors inhibit the effectiveness of HRE: lack of adequate resources, political resistance, and the necessity to produce better-qualified personnel in education. In its opinion, it proposes to enhance international support and funding, lobby for the integration of HRE into a country's education framework, and support consistent teacher training programs. Besides, it embraces parents and local communities in order to spread the outcome of HRE, not only in the educational sphere. According to the author of the article, further effort should be made in the strategic development of HRE, which would enable future generations to deal with human rights issues and improve society for the better. This paper sought to discuss the current issues surrounding human rights education, and by extending human rights education throughout the globe and overcoming the current difficulties, people will be able to strive for a future where human rights will be effectively respected and safeguarded.

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