

Addressing the violation of human rights in everyday life

Abstract

The article proposes that human rights educators not only focus on considering the human rights violations that were committed in Latin America during dictatorships and authoritarian regimes, but also those that are perpetrated on a daily basis, in everyday life, in daily life in a series of times and places. The examples of these violations are multiple and take place in diverse areas; work, homes, schools etc. Different attitudes and behaviors are related and cause violations of human rights in everyday life: threats, violence, discrimination, poverty, etc. The article concludes by listing some pedagogical principles to address human rights violations in everyday life: participation, dialogue, criticality, etc.¹

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Introduction

Human rights educators begin our educational task essentially by analyzing and clarifying the violations of human rights that were committed in the dictatorial, authoritarian, and totalitarian regimes in our countries. In our educational work, we focus on understanding the relationship that exists between the violation of human rights and the deterioration and impairment of democracy. We showed that by definition in dictatorial regimes human rights are violated. We have stated that, we cannot fully ensure a “Never Again” that is, that the State will not violate human rights again. We transmit from democratic discourse to democratic action. Rodino⁵ is categorical in stating that “human rights are inseparable from democracy, as the only political regime that, by definition, can respect them”.

During this period we have met with colleagues from Chile as well as from Latin America and North America. We have published articles and books on human rights education (see bibliographic review) and created national and Latin American and Caribbean networks.

We have concluded that there is an urgent need to increase the number of human rights educators, as well as considerably expand the number of learners we must serve.

The Proposal that I wish to make is that, although we must continue in the educational work that we have done so far, I suggest that we also attend to and assume the violations of human rights that are committed today, on a daily basis, in our society. daily life, in our frequent tasks, in daily living.

In other words, as human rights educators we must address, and also take charge of, the violations of rights that are committed in daily actions: at work, in homes, in schools, in hospitals, in public and private offices, in places of recreation and sports, in clubs and circles, in the community, etc.¹⁻⁶

It can be observed and confirmed that today, unfortunately, most human rights are constantly violated in various ways in our daily lives. Not far but very close to us. Indeed, there are countless places and areas where human rights are violated in our daily actions; sometimes we do not even realize that they have been transgressed and we accept as natural, justifiable and understandable that some of our rights are violated.⁷

I think that human rights educators must take charge of these violations. That is, it is necessary to address them, understand their origins and investigate the causes that lead to them and the consequences they entail, examining how these violations are linked,

for example, to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, with the Convention on the Rights of the Child or other international instruments on human rights.

There are situations that are manifestly unfair and violate rights in everyday life, for example, when:

- I. Medical service is denied or poor care is given to a person for no reason;
- II. They want to charge a “fee” to enroll our sons or daughters in public school, knowing that they have the right to a free education;
- III. You find out that your partner earns much less than your male colleagues for doing exactly the same job;
- IV. Helpless people are denied access to food, water, and medicines;
- V. Bribery is used to obtain royalties;
- VI. Humiliating language is used with children;
- VII. An adult woman is being abused by her spouse;
- VIII. A child or adolescent is mistreated either with punishments, rude and hurtful words, humiliated or beaten;
- IX. Is used forced labor;
- X. There is a lack of protection for women, impunity for aggressors and significant gender discrimination that contribute to perpetuating this serious violation of fundamental rights;
- XI. Political persecution or torture is carried out, as well as arbitrary arrests and the limitation of freedoms of expression and association with the aim of silencing a part of the population that denounces the violation of rights in government decisions.
- XII. Etc.

Furthermore, it should be noted that there are very diverse forms and attitudes that are related to and cause violations of human rights in everyday life. As an example, the following can be mentioned:

- I. The threats, humiliations, insults, mistreatment, offenses, intimidation, blackmail, that some people experience in their daily lives, are linked to violations of human rights. When a child or adolescent is mistreated, whether with punishments, rude and hurtful words, humiliated or beaten, their right to physical and psychological integrity is clearly being violated.

- II. The frequent and daily discrimination that certain people suffer, receiving unequal treatment for the sole fact of having traits and characteristics different from the rest of the population (skin color, gender, social, economic, health, legal, religious, etc.) is, without a doubt, a violation of their dignity and fundamental rights. Discrimination based on stereotypes and prejudices is deeply rooted in our societies and conditions many of our social relationships and our daily activities, and above all, it is denying the right to equality. One of the most manifest and recurrent discriminations in the social environment is that exercised against women, for the mere fact of being women.
- III. Everyday violence of all kinds (gender, physical, psychological, domestic, racial, work, media, etc.) is very common in our environment. Violence can be present in any environment: in the home, in the public, in the workplace, on the street, in transportation, in educational institutions, etc. It can be argued that “the more violence, the more violation of rights and that human rights mitigate violence. Thus, for example, gender-based violence reflects and reinforces inequalities between men and women and compromises the validity of human rights.

ESP

Freedom of expression, in all its forms and manifestations, is a fundamental and inalienable right, inherent to all people. It is, furthermore, an essential requirement for the very existence of a democratic society. Censorship has been and continues to be a highly debated topic. The murder of journalists is an extreme expression of censorship. Some people believe that, in order to guarantee the safety of citizens, information should be censored. However, many other people - including me - affirm that this is a violation of people's rights.

Poverty is a human rights problem, it is the permanent denial of human rights. People living in poverty face enormous physical, economic, cultural and social obstacles to exercising their rights. The research carried out shows the harmful and lasting consequences that poverty and vulnerability have in the stage of development in which children and adolescents find themselves, where the absence of timely access to essential benefits that allow them to exercise their rights, strongly limits his career and his adult life. Permanent poverty has always been characterized by factors such as discrimination, unequal access to resources and social and cultural stigmatization. That is, poverty is the denial of human rights and human dignity that is present in the daily lives of the poor.

Migrations, especially emigrants who are in a situation of daily vulnerability, are subject to various human rights violations: denial of civil and political rights, arbitrary detention, torture or absence of due judicial process, as well as the violation of economic rights, social and cultural, such as the rights to health, housing or education. The denial of rights to migrants is often closely linked to discriminatory laws and deep-seated prejudices and xenophobic attitudes. It is a daily violation of rights.

Violations of human rights in daily life are not only linked to provocations, poverty, migration, freedom of expression, violence, discrimination but also to certain other contextual conditions. For example, the right to move is violated when people who have motor difficulties in moving around their city or community and accessing means of transportation and these are not conditioned and enabled accordingly, it is a daily violation of human rights.

Likewise, natural disasters, environmental pollution, floods, forest fires, drought, earthquakes, etc. They put at risk the right to life,

personal integrity, work, health, food, water and property, education, housing, the right to a healthy environment, etc. There are guidelines that facilitate humanitarian action in emergency situations, including natural disaster situations. Furthermore, not caring about reducing the risk of natural disasters constitutes in itself a violation of human rights.

For its part, Human rights are closely related to climate change for its devastating effect not only on the environment, but on our well-being. In addition to threatening our very existence, climate change is having a harmful impact on our right to life, health, food, water, housing and livelihoods.

Now, the question that must be asked is how the violations committed in everyday life are pedagogically addressed. I think that we should rescue some of the pedagogical principles that we have used in our educational work until now and adapt them to address the transgressions linked to those that are perpetrated in daily life. Among these pedagogical principles the following can be mentioned.

Stake

A principle that we must take into account is that of the critical participation of the participants. Participation is a fundamental characteristic of human rights education. Promoting the participation of the members of a group is motivating them to take an active part in all the activities, so that they stop being spectators and become protagonists. The ideal is for it to be a collective rather than individual participation. Without a doubt, the level and proposal of participation that will be required for children, adolescents or adults will be different. With children, it is recommended to use recreational methods (games), with adolescents and adults, activities that experience rape. In this perspective, it is important to incorporate the previous experiences and knowledge that the participants bring; their perspectives and visions. In this way, a social-participatory pedagogy is favored.

Reality

Another principle is to start from reality, that is, the characteristics, needs, interests and problems of the people with whom we work, as well as their life experience, their possibilities and limitations, and the characteristics of the socio-economic context. economic and cultural environment in which they operate. Starting from the reality of the participants means, then, addressing educational activities, incorporating their experiences and prior knowledge. Furthermore, it means perceiving transgressions in reality itself. Realistic pedagogy.

Dialogue

A fundamental principle of human rights education is the development of horizontal communication between participants. For there to be horizontal communication, it is necessary for people to recognize themselves as different but equal in dignity and rights. Dialogue is a privileged means to achieve this, to dialogue is to recognize and affirm the equality of human beings. In fact, dialogue requires the recognition of the different other - without any adjectives - as a legitimate other, accepting the diversity and historical, cultural and social uniqueness of each of the dialogue partners. They challenge each other not with the purpose of competing, of winning, of inferiorizing; On the contrary, they become intimate to know the other and thus know themselves. Dialogical pedagogy.

Criticality

Criticality is that attitude that allows giving a fair option; judge ideas, people and facts, with balance and depth. Criticality is equal to

common sense or “common sense” and is opposite to superficiality, obstinacy, passion and intolerance. The criticality referred to the violation of human rights on a daily basis aims to consciously make true statements taking into account why and makes them, the limits of these statements and the risks it runs. Critical pedagogy.

I would like to finish by insisting that we rights educators must, in our pedagogical work with diverse groups, pay attention to and analyze the violations that are committed on a daily basis. This is as important as addressing the transgressions that were perpetrated during dictatorial and authoritarian regimes.

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Conflicts of interest

The author declares there is no conflict of interest.

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