

Students' Perspectives on Social Science Education at School: Toward a Restorative Pedagogy

Perspectivas de los estudiantes sobre la enseñanza de las ciencias sociales en la escuela: hacia una pedagogía restaurativa

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Abstract

This study, aiming to foster a restorative pedagogy, explores perspectives on secondary social science education among students from

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Simón Bolívar University in the city of Cúcuta. The article gathers sources analyzing Colombia's educational problems in the area of citizenship competencies and social sciences to help understand this epistemological field. Additionally, the restorative effect of students' education was studied quantitatively based on their recognition of the social science curriculum. An exploratory qualitative research methodology was followed, and analytical categories were established to interpret results and, subsequently, draw conclusions.

Keywords

Social sciences; education, curriculum; restorative pedagogy; guarantees of non-repetition.

Resumen

Este estudio, que busca promover una pedagogía restaurativa, explora las perspectivas de la educación secundaria en ciencias sociales entre los estudiantes de la Universidad Simón Bolívar de la ciudad de Cúcuta. El artículo recopila fuentes que analizan las problemáticas educativas de Colombia en el área de competencias ciudadanas y ciencias sociales para ayudar a comprender este campo epistemológico. Adicionalmente, se estudió cuantitativamente el efecto restaurador de la educación de los estudiantes a partir de su reconocimiento del currículo de ciencias sociales. Se siguió una metodología de investigación cualitativa exploratoria y se establecieron categorías analíticas para interpretar los resultados y, posteriormente, extraer conclusiones.

Palabras clave

Ciencias sociales; educación, currículo; pedagogía restaurativa; garantías de no repetición.

Introducción

The pedagogical approaches prevalent in the Colombian educational system have not been able to respond to the historical implications of violence in the country. This is evidenced by the fact that despite substantial changes in how the population is educated, the issue of war persists within the social fabric. Views

regarding the issue are divided. Those continuously analyzing the relationship between the illegal economy and culture posit that it will be difficult to transform the context if the Colombian state does not generate the necessary economic conditions for improving citizens' living conditions. Meanwhile, others have discussed the implications of the continued ideological struggle over power in the country from a perspective that limits the understanding of historical features manifesting in the current dynamics of the territory. Such an interpretative division of reality hinders the systematic analysis of the main problems affecting the state's social fabric, progressively delving into the systematic and constant reconfiguration of the dynamics of the persistent armed conflict in the country.

Although the country's educators have explored scenarios to validate pedagogical approaches and their relationship with the study of history, they have been unable to arrive at a workable path. Social science education includes the incidental elements that point to the main problems experienced by Colombia throughout its history as a republic. However, in a nation that continues suffering from barbarism and war, mediation in the classroom has not had the desired impact despite the richness of its school curriculum. Educational processes must be strengthened to foster restorative education in Colombian schools through the social science curriculum design.

The blurred boundaries of fields of disciplinary knowledge in Colombian school curriculums have both positive and negative effects. On the one hand, the social sciences problem is approached as an epistemic whole that affects students' development of a series of competencies via the application of the curriculum. On the other hand, certain aspects that are necessary for the transformation of Colombian school curriculums are underestimated because of a superficial understanding of the country's historical-political events that led to the humanitarian crisis and the systematic violation of human rights after the end of the 1940s. Although it must be recognized that the social science pedagogy to which students are exposed at school poses a complex scenario, its prospective restorative responsibility and purpose cannot be limited to the fulfillment of standards because a social response is necessary in a country that remains submerged in barbarism and war.

Along these lines, this study analyzes the view of the students at Simón Bolívar University in the city of Cúcuta regarding their secondary school social science education, with the purpose of developing a restorative pedagogy. To this end, sources that analyze the educational problem in Colombia related to citizenship

competencies and social sciences were gathered to examine this epistemological field. Additionally, the restorative effect of students' educational process was studied quantitatively based on their recognition of the social science curriculum. It was essential to gather a group of students to voluntarily answer a survey in which they could evaluate the social science curriculum in terms of a systematic understanding of the country's historical problems as an incidental aspect to evaluate the restorative purpose of education. Based on this, an analysis was made so as to place the social sciences in the context of the Colombian social commitment for the organization of peace, restorative justice, and guarantees of non-repetition.

Social Science Curriculum in Colombia

Analyzing social science education in Colombian schools is not a simple task, given that the curriculum configuration of the subject area covers multiple unspecified variables between denominations and the state educational guidelines. On the one hand, a series of standardized guidelines that have an impact on the mediation processes within each area of knowledge has been implemented. On the other hand, each of these areas of knowledge contains a complex universe to be absorbed by the students who are educated under different denominations. Particularly, the social sciences have their own standardized elements to be executed within the classroom as per the guidelines of the Ministry of National Education (Mineducación) and cover a wide range of specific knowledge that must be absorbed by students in schools, including history, geography, citizenship competencies, economics, political constitution, and more. In this regard, Zuleta (2001) states that educational processes are the vaguest, most confusing, and profuse aspect of Colombian education. It is an extraordinary salad of diverse subjects (geography, geometry, "national legend," etc.) consumed by students for six years until the Colombian State Test, or ICFES test, fortunately, releases them all from such a heavy load of information and confusion (p. 9).

This generalized view of the Colombian education system and the specific view of each of its educational fields has hindered the citizenship, as well as historical and restorative, responsibility of the social sciences because it became a heavy and undelimited field in Colombian school curriculums. Students are not interested in reconstructing narratives leading to the understanding of their identity as subjects with rights who belong to the nation.

However, the Mineducación (2006) defines the meaning of social sciences from a holistic and propaedeutic approach that determines its educational purpose by stating that

It is a reflection that is not only focused on the interpretation and understanding of social facts but that, through systematic study and research, seeks to provide social knowledge to guide the search for the welfare of humanity and the peaceful coexistence of different members of society. (p. 100)

Additionally, the social sciences' social commitment is also highlighted here: "Given that society's knowledge becomes meaningful when it is used for the resolution of problems in daily life, education in social sciences is always linked to citizen action" (p. 101).

Nonetheless, knowledge internalization processes within the social science curriculum require a new epistemological and disciplinary field to generate reinforcement among school students and the potentially restorative purpose of processes within educational institutions. Here, social sciences serve as a means to shape citizens who recognize the constitutive elements of Colombian citizenship through classroom education. This implies delving into the rules governing interpersonal and social relations in communities and validating substantial elements of the country's history aligned to the non-repetition of war based on the recognition of problems that led to its emergence. Although strategies aimed at the recognition of truth, justice, citizenship competencies, and the constitutional purpose by the Colombian citizen have been outlined through processes of pedagogical mediation, the sociopolitical scenarios of human relations show a serious rupture between the purpose of the social sciences and the systematic violation of human rights.

In this sense, it is worth mentioning the conclusions of Castellanos (2021) based on curriculum analysis and review of the social sciences in Colombia since 1980, stating that

The curricular construction that is taught in schools has very little to do with disciplinary or scientific fields, given that, what is ultimately transmitted to the student is a series of discursive trainings appearing to be taken from the discipline but that are actually part of the political field, as schools have an intentionality and daily dynamics whose pur-

pose is the cultural transmission of each society, that is, its production and reproduction of social relations, in this case mediated by the implications of the curricular deregulation proposed by the Mineducación (p. 140).

Accordingly, although according to the principles of integration and transversality, the social science curriculum seeks to change how contextualized knowledge is approached, it is clear that its main purpose is to promote social action and transformation, based on the shaping of Colombian citizens. However, the discursive conditions in which these curriculum proposals have been symbolically consolidated and constructed cannot be fully understood, given that their extreme epistemological and disciplinary *ornatus* hinders the possibility that the social sciences at the school level can take advantage of and delve into actions at the pedagogical level that allow for the implementation of a peacebuilding society.

Another fundamental aspect to consider regarding the curriculum is evaluation, as the teaching and learning process culminates in how a process of observance and self-analysis of what has been learned can be achieved, delimiting the evidence and results of the learning acquired throughout the course of education. Thus, the social science curriculum should provide students with the necessary competencies to respond to the country's social, cultural, and political realities, not just to the standardized evaluation criteria for the measurement of learning rates that were institutionalized as the ultimate goal of school processes by the Colombian Institute for the Promotion of Higher Education. Mena (2018) states that the evaluation of social sciences and citizenship competencies focuses on whether students are able to search for information and operate with the information they have and whether they can interpret, explain, argue, and imagine the results of processes (p. 89). However, these results are not palpable in the relationship between subjectivity, its context, and its responsibility with its country, given that evaluative processes have focused on a systematic methodology of standardized questions that have their own solutions, where students cannot demonstrate the strength of their epistemological skills in the field of social sciences and its historical responsibility for the non-repetition of war.

Methodology, Sample, Categorization, and Data Collected

This article is the result of an exploratory study with a sample of 50 students, 52% of whom were between 17 and 20 years old, and most of whom were stu-

dents enrolled in the Department of Social and Human Sciences of Simón Bolívar University. Of these, 62% were in socioeconomic strata 2 and 3 and attended public secondary schools. They were given a survey with the objective of understanding their position regarding their school and educational process during secondary school education in the field of social sciences, so as to approach the social sciences from a restorative pedagogy perspective. Exploratory studies are used when the purpose is to examine an understudied topic (Hernández et al., 2014, p. 91). In this sense, the nature of exploratory research focuses on exploring and becoming familiar with a particular topic or issue to gain an initial understanding of it. The following categories of analysis were established: Colombian history, social sciences, conflict, and restorative pedagogy; this allowed for the collection of descriptive and in-depth data for analysis.

Colombian History

In consolidating a curriculum proposal for the social sciences, it is imperative to recognize components that affect the shaping of citizens. On this point, knowledge of Colombian history is a key element to understand current social realities based on the systematic review of the main events happening in the country for forging a critical attitude that allows students to rethink and improve the living conditions of the population in general. Colombian history encompasses a rich and complex narrative that has shaped the country as we know it today. Various aspects impact the identity of the students who are educated under the Colombian social science curriculum, although these do not delve deeply into Colombian history and the periods that are analyzed: from pre-Columbian times, going through Spanish colonization, independence, the Republican Era, and up till the present day. The study of Colombian history aids us to understand the roots of the current social and political dynamics, value cultural diversity, and recognize the challenges and opportunities faced by the country in its quest for a fair and equitable society. In this sense, Colombian history corresponds to a decisive thread of what is taught in educational institutions in the area of social sciences because these contents not only present general culture but also develop critical and systemic thinking in students, allowing for the reorientation of citizens' thinking against what they experience in daily life. This aspect has no impact at the ideological or political levels, as such, but seeks that students become agents who transform reality based on their dreams, knowledge, skills, and actions. The most relevant findings of the survey conducted in this category are presented below.

Figure 1. *Influence of teaching social sciences in the recognition of Colombia's historical problems.*

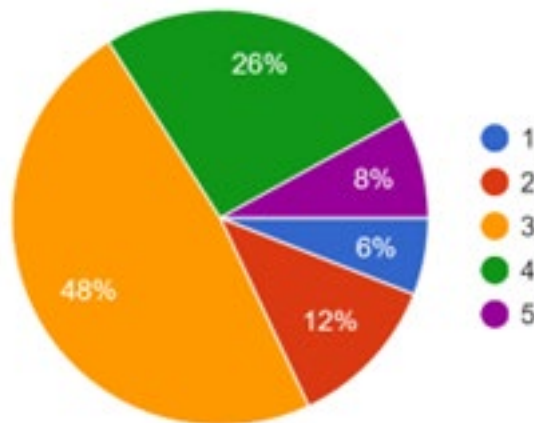
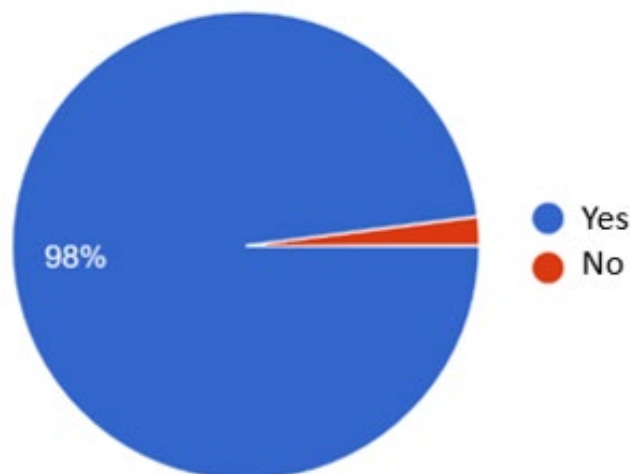


Figure 1 shows that 86% of the participants recognize the importance of the contents addressed and learned in their secondary education, based on their current understanding and recognition of the country's historical problems. This suggests that the social sciences play a decisive role in the shaping of citizens because only 14% of the population does not find that the work carried out through this approach by educational institutions is relevant.

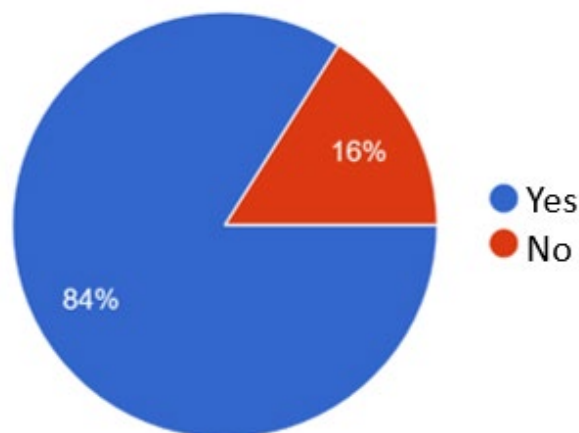
Figure 2. *Updating and adjusting the social sciences curriculum to the country's reality.*



Note:

Figure 2 shows that 98% of the participants believe it is necessary to update the social science curriculum. This involves adjusting and designing curriculum contents to reflect the reality of the country. Students recognize that educational institutions make it possible to consolidate critical and reflective thinking processes, allowing for a better understanding of social dynamics. These are focused on learning the causes and origins of the barbarism prevailing in the country for over half a century, with the purpose of reorienting students toward non-repetition based on an ethical commitment to peacebuilding. In this sense, it is recognized that the social science curriculum should be used to inform and structure relevant aspects of Colombian history, such as the armed conflict, systematic violation of human rights, major war crimes, causes resulting in barbarism in the country, and responsibility for the atrocities committed, considering that the analysis of the conflict should be addressed from a differential approach considering the breach of identity of direct and indirect victims of the conflict, which prevents the evaluation of the importance of the restorative process (Llinás & Aníbal, 2022, p. 169). The study of history, thus, can be fostered by through a social, political, economic, and cultural overview of the country for seeking alternatives that allow students to contribute to the non-repetition of war.

Figure 3. *Attitude toward peacebuilding with greater in-depth knowledge of Colombian history.*



Note:

When the study participants were asked about their attitude toward peacebuilding, many gaps were identified in their understanding not only of the process but also of the aspects that resulted in the armed conflict to be solved. In this regard, 84% of students said that if they had received more contextualized and updated

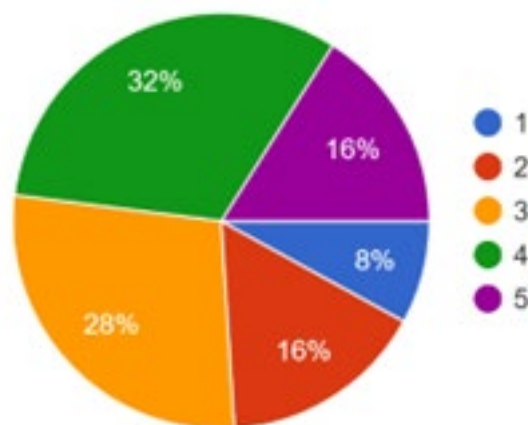
education on Colombian history, specifically regarding the origin and causes of the armed conflict and the country's social evolution, their current attitude would be stronger in terms of acceptance of peace and restorative justice policies, based on the recognition of what has happened during the war; further, they would have a more consolidated and critical idea of the Colombian social reality.

Social Sciences

The social sciences as a fundamental category in this article are understood according to the basic standards for social sciences competences; that is, "the study of sciences should no longer be a space in which data is accumulated mechanically but rather one of dialogue that allows for the construction of new meanings" (EBP of the Mineducación, 2004, p. 98). This enables the restructuring of ideas and actions in view of social changes due to the multiple events experienced as a society. Thus, "it is a reflection that is not only focused on the interpretation and understanding of social facts, but that, through systematic study and research, seeks to provide social knowledge to guide the search for the welfare of humanity and the peaceful coexistence of its different members" (EBP of the Mineducación, 2004, p. 100).

The following are findings regarding the study participants' knowledge and relevance of social science education.

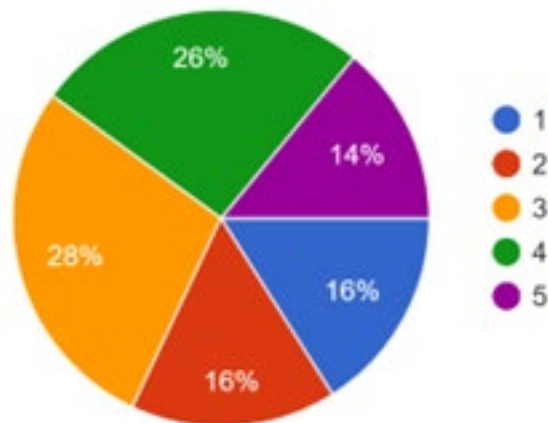
Figure 4. *Social sciences and their influence on the understanding of the dynamics of war and barbarism.*



Note:

Figure 4 shows that 76% of the participants confirmed that the learning developed in the area of the social sciences in educational institutions is decisive for the understanding of the dynamics of war and barbarism. This means that a knowledge of history allows people to understand and establish critical positions regarding Colombian social reality. The sample shows some traits of knowledge of the social and political dynamics anchored to the armed conflict. However, given that systematic human rights violations continue to persist, such data still raise doubts regarding the effectiveness of the social science curriculum in Colombian schools.

Figure 5. *Social sciences and critical thinking on the Colombian armed conflict.*

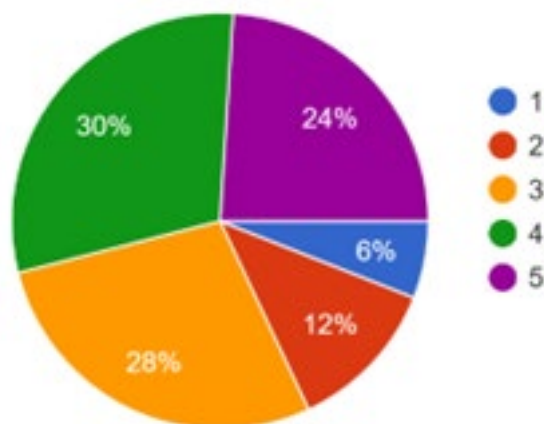


Note:

Conflict is a condition that cannot disappear or be ignored, since it is the path that empowers individuals, groups, and societies (Llinás & Aníbal, 2022, p. 161), under the assumption that it is part of the social dynamics that are constantly configured in the intersubjective, institutional, political, and cultural relationships of Colombian society. Thus, social science education is crucial in the development of critical thinking regarding the relationship between education and its possible response to war. This is demonstrated by the fact that 68% of the participants consider the learning happening in their social sciences classes at school to be important in the development of their critical thinking faculties, in the hopes of achieving educational responses to the dynamics of war.

Figure 6 shows that only 18% of the participants do not consider what they have learned in social science classes to be important in the construction of the social fabric, thus demonstrating the relevance of the contents taught and how these are taught in the area of social sciences. Thus, it is important to rethink the curriculum

Figure 6. *Social sciences and the social fabric.*



Note:

with a focus on restorative pedagogy as a measure of comprehensive reparation, given that despite the contents and their approach, it is not aimed at guaranteeing the non-repetition of barbarism from the critical recognition of the origin and causes of war.

Conflict

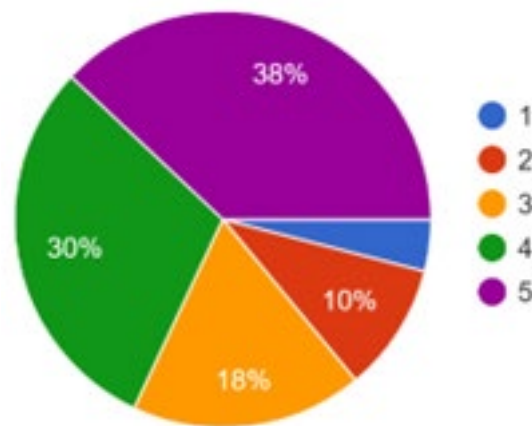
Conflict is an inevitable part of human existence and refers to the discrepancies, tensions, or disagreements that arise when people's needs, interests, or values conflict with each other. This can manifest at different levels, from personal conflicts to international disputes of a violent and disproportionate nature. In Colombia's history, there have been a series of disputes and disagreements that have triggered periods of violence and belligerence to the point of constituting a non-international armed conflict, as established by international humanitarian law.

Meanwhile, it is imperative to recognize that within school settings, although there have been some actions within the framework of war, conflict does not imply violence or aggression in a systematic way; rather, it represents an opportunity for growth, problem solving, and positive change, which entails an entirely prospective and restorative sense. Therefore, it is through conflict that new ideas, perspectives, and creative solutions can emerge to improve the quality of life in the classroom. However, if inadequately managed, conflict can generate divisions, resentment, and emotional damage, which can escalate and disrupt the established order. Therefore, the nature of conflict can be understood as a natural phenom-

enon in any given society, that is, it is a social fact inherent to life in society (Silva, 2008, p. 29).

This view of conflict allows for a broader interpretation than a simple dispute or disagreement between parties because considering conflict as a part of society's dynamic structure allows us to recognize in it a social value of learning and transformation, given that conflict resolution, from social spheres, requires commitment toward transforming everyday structures. Thus, "the main social function of conflict is the promotion of social change" (Silva, 2008, p. 39).

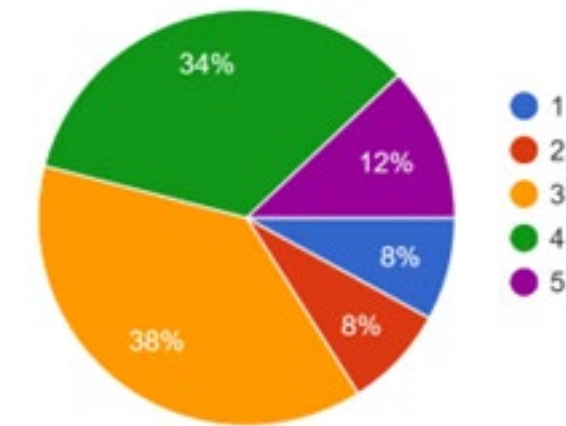
Figure 7. *Influence of teaching social sciences in the recognition of Colombia's historical problems.*



Note:

In discussing the issue of approaches for studying the country's historical problems in the social sciences, it becomes possible to transform the culture toward peace, justice, and non-repetition of war. In this connection, 86% of the participants confirm that if the conception and imaginary of peace, justice, and non-repetition could be transformed, it would be possible to confirm the need to approach the conflict from an educational perspective that allows for an understanding that through education in social sciences it is possible to unlearn old patterns of violence to learn a culture of peace and social harmony (Llinás & Aníbal, 2022, p. 169). Therefore, it becomes imperative to re-create a curriculum to determine the causes behind the events of Colombian history, for them to be analyzed from a critical stance where education can become a field for reconciliation and non-repetition.

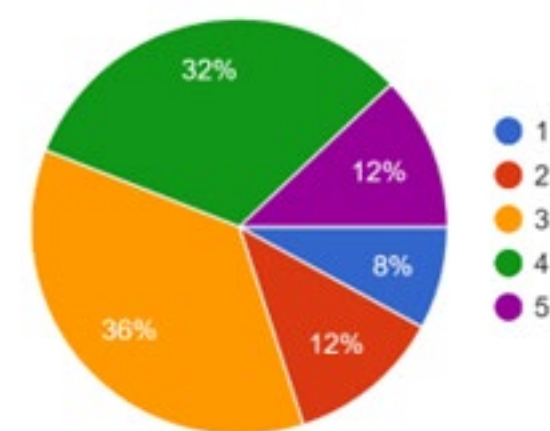
Figure 8. *Social sciences, peace, and restorative justice.*



Note:

It is important to establish that although conflicts exist at the school level and can become a pedagogical opportunity to delve into reconciliation and peace, there is a lack of analysis of the armed conflict from different approaches that allow a deep and nuanced understanding of the issue through the school educational processes. This is reflected in the participants' stance, considering that 84% of the participants recognized that what they have learned in the area of social sciences determines the understanding they have built about peace and restorative justice.

Figure 9. *Social sciences and the Colombian history of war*



Note:

Figure 9 shows that according to 80% of the participants, the social sciences can be a determining factor in the understanding and knowledge of the historical milestones of the war in Colombia, given that it delves into a critical view of what has happened within the country in political, social, economic, and cultural scenarios.

Restorative Pedagogy

Restorative pedagogy is proposed as an educational approach seeking to promote the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the construction of positive relationships in school settings. Unlike traditional methods of punitive discipline, restorative pedagogy is based on the idea that open dialogue, mutual respect, and accountability are crucial to foster a healthy and safe learning environment. It is focused on damage reparations, reconciliation, and the inclusion of all parties involved in a collaborative decision-making process. Through restorative circles and practices, students and teachers have the opportunity to share their experiences, express their needs, and work together to find fair and sustainable solutions.

Table 1. *Frequency Table: Restorative pedagogy as part of the social science curriculum*

Question	Yes	No
Should social sciences in school respond to the crucial social, political, historical, cultural, and constitutional issues of Colombia, allowing citizens to contribute to the construction of peace and guarantee the non-repetition of war?	48	2
Is there a relationship between justice and culture, when citizens understand the historical problems of their country based on their social science curriculum?	45	5
If social sciences at school had a restorative approach, could our society build a path toward peace based on the recognition of the causes and consequences of war?	46	4
Based on your school education process, do you believe that what you have learned in the area of social sciences contributes significantly to your understanding of the historical problems of the Colombian nation that have given rise to war and barbarism?	12	38
Based on your school education process, do you believe that what you have learned in the area of social sciences contributes significantly to your citizenship practices that result in the consolidation of peace?	17	33
Do you think it would be appropriate to update the social science curriculum to create an impact on Colombian citizens in terms of their attitude toward the construction of peace based on the recognition of the country's problems?	47	3

Table 1 presents two important elements of social science course contents that suggest the need to adjust the curriculum based on a restorative approach. The first element is related to high school-level learning of social sciences and how it failed to contribute significantly to understanding Colombian history and, therefore, to the transformation of citizenship practices based on restorative justice. The second element involves the curriculum adjustments necessary to respond to the current Colombian social reality, which includes topics related to citizen competences, reparation measures, resilient practices, justice, and restorative pedagogy.

Accordingly, the integration of restorative pedagogy into the social science curriculum of educational institutions can be a significant reparation and transformation measure. Restorative pedagogy is based on the principles of inclusion, participation, and shared accountability, with the purpose of promoting justice, peaceful conflict resolution, and building healthier communities. By integrating restorative pedagogy into the social science curriculum, students are given the opportunity to explore and understand the fundamentals of social justice, equity, and human rights from a practical and applied perspective. Thus, students learn through dialogue, critical reflection, and problem solving and develop empathy, effective communication, and ethical decision-making skills.

Toward a Restorative Pedagogy

Educational processes addressing citizenship competencies in Colombia became blurry with the passing of generations. Colombia went from being a founder of nations to writing chapters about the most complex tragicomic events of humanity. This starts from the systematic development of necropolitics to the delaying effects in culture due to the violence that has been assimilated, accepted, and considered decisive for the country's daily life.

This space of reflection could easily become an epiphanic field for the weaving of stratagems and ideologemes regarding the geopolitical relations of the Colombian people in terms of its notable absence of governance or a path of political denunciation of the privilege of sterile academics that has little echo in society as such. However, the reflections included in this article will have a space and a curriculum per se. Focus is placed on the purpose of teaching social sciences, its relation with cultural transformation, the construction of a collective historical memory from the story of those who have been victims of barbarism, and the development of a path toward the construction of a pedagogical and curricular proposal that considers

the restorative potential of social sciences for society. All this can be synthesized in a brainstorming of ideas that can give rise to an innovative proposal for the teaching of social sciences in the country based on Colombia's true reality.

After the execution of the Peace Agreements between the Juan Manuel Santos government and the FARC-EP in 2016, a new panorama has emerged for the understanding of the teaching and didactics of social sciences. Inevitably, citizenship competencies, history, political economy, and other components of the area need to be reoriented toward the consolidation of a restorative justice process having a social and cultural influence on the rejection and non-repetition of barbarism. In this context, the aim is to analyze the methodological, pedagogical, and didactic drawbacks of the social sciences in Colombia, which have led to the impossibility of creating an ethical citizenship that can culturally transform the Colombian reality from a restorative approach with guarantees of non-repetition and historical memory.

In view of this challenge, the proposed path is to juxtapose social science curriculum assertively with the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation, and Non-Repetition. This enables the creation of classrooms that serve as a methodological field that can contribute to the transformation of a nation at war into the definitive silence of rifles, with schools committed to memory, truth, justice, and the end of barbarism. Adorno (1998) thought education should provide an answer and a way out of the genocide that took place in Auschwitz, with the validation of the commitment to make education centers and spaces a bulwark for people's life and freedom. The German philosopher Adorno (1998) stated,

The premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz never happens again. Its priority before any other requirement is such that I believe I need not and should not justify it. I cannot understand why it has been given so little concern until now. To justify it would be monstrous in the face of the monstrosity that took place. Yet, the fact that one is so barely conscious of this demand and the questions it raises shows that the monstrosity has not penetrated people's minds deeply, itself a symptom of the continuing potential for its recurrence as far as peoples' conscious and unconscious is concerned. Every debate about the ideals of education is trivial and inconsequential compared to this single ideal: Auschwitz, never again (p. 79).

Adorno's argument throws light on a path that the Colombian nation has refused to take. Over the decades, the country's history has been written with the reopening of a chapter of its own that brings to light the negative and thanatological legacy of Auschwitz. There are plenty of nominal analogies in history and in the territory: El salado, Mapiripam, El nogal, Mitú, Segovia, la Rochela, La gabarra, Puerto Triunfo, Palmarito, National University, Puerto Asís, Las Bananeras, Bojayá... Lost places, people, landscapes, and humanity. It is clear that while Frankfurt's critical philosophy prioritized the drawing of a line between, before, and after the extermination, in Colombia its reproduction has been constant and latent to this day.

The question is, what are enabling conditions that can make the Colombian school a place for memory, citizenship ethics, and non-repetition of barbarism?

A possible answer to this question is that educational processes in Colombia must aim for the construction of a new horizon where the narratives and stories from the victims of the Non-International Armed Conflict (CICR, 2023) allow us to recognize barbarism as a scenario that cannot happen again, where the social science curriculum is the epitaph of historical bleeding and the light for a new nation. As Ricoeur (2000) states, "the future and the past exist only in relation to a present, allowing us to think of it not as a timeless category, but in a dialectical relationship between before and after an event" (p. 55), which affects the organization of a school proposal that ratifies a present with memory as the fundamental stronghold for education.

The social science curriculum in Colombia has been arranged from a cross-cutting field that impacts the fostering of holistic knowledge for the student, based on the traceability of geography, history, economics, politics, and sociology, among others. There is no doubt that its structure goes from complex concepts to the sense of the intelligible. In this regard, the Mineducación (2004) states that

Although it is hard to reach a consensus on the object of study of sciences, given their open, historical, and cultural nature, we dare to state that their object is the reflection on society. It not only focuses on the interpretation and understanding of social facts but, through systematic study and research, seeks to provide social knowledge to guide the search for the welfare of humanity and the peaceful coexistence of its different members. (p. 5)

It also states that “it is important to point out that such basic knowledge, built through the conceptual and methodological development of the social disciplines [...], is not the only relevant knowledge in this sense”. Today, in the context of the social sciences, it is recognized that cultural knowledge circulates in human communities and is endowed with meaning and significance that, like the knowledge produced in the academic settings, is of vital importance for the understanding of reality (p. 5).

However, the assessments made by this regulatory body of Colombian education make the curriculum an unfinished and problematic space, given that whoever has the power and authority to prepare such curriculum can generate their own narrative, which can often be victimizing and not very restorative. At this point, it should be emphasized that educational processes must have an impact on the consolidation of a society that recognizes the problems that have historically affected the national territory. Alternatively, we verify the statements of Ortega (2015) that

A pedagogy of memory built from the otherness approach becomes a teaching proposal toward a citizenship that is able to recognize what we are as a society, marked by a recent history of pain, suffering, and violation but courageously resistant to oblivion. (p. 161)

Thus, the social science curriculum demands a change from new narratives and situations that take the edges of this subject and re-signify society as a whole. In view of this, the Commission for the Clarification of the Truth and the National Center for Historical Memory have outlined some pedagogical routes to try to address the social science curriculum in Colombian schools. However, although it may seem a rhetorical scenario sponsored by the need to end the war in Colombia, it is essential to recognize that education is—as Professor Zuleta would say—a combat field, although not a struggle that bleeds bodies and subtracts lives from the social fabric.

On the contrary, it is a struggle for life, for truth, and for the non-repetition of barbarism, so this reflection is far from complete. It, undoubtedly, requires the development of a pedagogical proposal that delves into the validation of a restorative education, where the curriculum, people, scientific instruments, and country, as a whole, recognize that violence and the violation of fundamental rights are not the path to follow. Without scrimping on the value of this, it is imperative to analyze the components and competencies designed for the teaching of social sci-

ences from a critical and proactive point of view. Furthermore, some sections of the commitments outlined in the Peace Agreement between the FARC-EP and the Juan Manuel Santos administration will be assumed, which allow for understanding education as a guarantee of reparation and non-repetition of barbarism, where education takes over its historical responsibility for the actions that started the armed conflict, which is nothing more than restorative pedagogy. This can be unquestionably defined as the methodological approach that permeates the teaching and learning process to look for a prospective treatment for the causes of violence in Colombia, ranging from education, the resignification of the curricular horizons of social sciences, the ethical recognition of the identity, and the design of ludic-didactic alternatives that delve into the guarantees of non-repetition of the war, with school being the territory for the consolidation of peace, justice, and truth.

As for restorative pedagogy, according to Albertí & Boqué (2015), the approach goes beyond a merely interventionist perspective to integrate restorative principles and values in any situation occurring in the school environment, developing a new relational model implying a change of paradigm, a change of mentality, and a change of system (p. 37). This raises the possibility of going a step forward and keeping restorative mediation but adjusting it to the curriculum as a way to prevent violence in the learning process, where it is imperative to acknowledge that one of the approaches that has been destined at the social level to the meaning of restorative justice and its potential applicability has been placed in the purely punitive nature, which blurs the sense of healing the social fabric. It can be said that an increase in the rates of discipline based on practices on the body and the limitation of rights leads to the strengthening of violence as a rejection of such measures, which is a mistake in practice and in the very meaning of justice.

Therefore, to be able to talk about a pedagogical approach that establishes measures and guarantees of non-repetition, the punitive aspect is secondary to the recognition of the truth and the history of the territory, from the possibility of delving into the cause and making visible alternatives that prevent the resurgence of the discrepancies that led to armed conflict. This way, the epicenter of restorative pedagogy lies within the curriculum of social sciences rather than in school coexistence devices, as it turns the student into an agent who promotes peace and justice through their role in the classroom.

Blood and Thorsbone (2006, cited by Albertí & Boqué, 2015) argue that the development of restorative philosophy in school settings requires a major shift in the

thinking and beliefs about the discipline, its purpose, and its practice. The shift from a punitive system to another one based on relational values needs a change from the heart and mind of professionals, students, mothers, fathers, and the community, in general (p. 37). In view of the foregoing, curriculum transformation must consider the voices and feelings of the educational community, the people's own narrative, the historicity of the territory, and the very meaning of the construction of spaces of thought where their interests and needs are seen in order to delve into their own responses to the reality of the country itself. Thus, the restorative approach required within the academic and disciplinary scenario must create an understanding of the social, political, economic, and cultural dynamics of the present time based on a systematic review of Colombian history. This is necessary to ensure that restorative criteria are not behind the convivial–punitive but rather that they foster a new ethical citizenship that responds to the main effects of violence and the violation of fundamental rights and war from school alternatives committed to writing new narratives in the key of justice, truth, and peace.

The structuring of a curriculum proposal based on restorative pedagogy requires a better understanding of restorative practices to streamline educational processes while teaching and learning. In this sense, Schmitz (2018) argues that “restorative practice” students refer to the restorative approach when they include terms such as relationships, dialogue, security, damage, reparation, and connection in their definitions (p. 28). This implies that the people that formulate the social science curriculum must acknowledge several elements that affect their attitudes with regard to the actions resulting from belligerence impacting one's personality, seeking to guarantee the resilience of a country that has written its history in unison with war. Further, Schmitz (2021) claims that although restorative practices have their origin in restorative justice, apart from being reactive, they are also and above all proactive and preventive, as they revolve around the potential of the community and forging and developing healthy and strong relationships, as well as sustaining them over time.

Thus, it is possible to dig into the need to create a new view of the social science curriculum that distances itself from the stratagems and ideologies that confront populations. Schmitz (2021) suggests that “the implementation and integration of the restorative approach within the educational community contributes to the understanding of the value of peace and building it, not only among its members but way beyond, all around it, with an impact on the society they live in” (párr. 12). This points to a prospective gap in Colombian education that may restrict the consolida-

tion of barbarism as the only way out of the country’s historical problems: inequality, access to land, dignified work, justice, truth, and guarantees of non-repetition that contribute to peacebuilding.

Having said that, to consolidate a social science curriculum proposal based on restorative pedagogy, it is crucial to recognize its conceptual scope and the methodological structures of its implementation. According to Llinás & Aníbal (2022), restorative pedagogy is

a dynamic process, transforming the being, which is based on a set of interdisciplinary knowledge that through the scenario of educational practices with a restorative approach, achieves a culture of forgiveness, reconciliation, and restoration for the reconstruction of the social fabric in communities that have experienced armed conflicts (p. 172).

In this context, restorative pedagogy differs from other pedagogical approaches in terms of various aspects as presented below:

Table 2. *Other Traditional Pedagogical Approaches*

Restorative Pedagogy	Other Traditional Pedagogical Approaches
Emphasis placed on repairing harm, restoring relationships, and promoting social and emotional learning	Focused on punishment and exclusion
Based on the principles of restorative justice, whose goal is to address the fundamental causes of conflict and prevent further damage	Punitive; these tend to be reactive and do not address the underlying problems.
Focused on building positive relationships and creating a safe and inclusive learning environment	Build a culture of fear and distrust related to the learning process
Empowers students to take responsibility for their actions and make amends when necessary	Weaken students and give rise to resentment
Involves a collaborative and participatory process that includes every member of the school community	Hierarchical and authoritarian
A comprehensive approach that addresses the social, emotional, and academic needs of students	Only focused on academic performance

Conclusion

The literature review on restorative pedagogy shows very little development of the topic in educational settings; however, this approach is relevant for contexts framed within armed conflict. The few references in this study are based on conflict and restorative justice issues in a punitive context, leaving the fundamental

pedagogical role for guarantees of non-repetition behind. Nonetheless, several elements allow for guiding perception at the educational level, as it can be inferred that the theoretical hypotheses of restorative pedagogy are based on principles whose objective is to repair the damage caused, restoring relationships and promoting social and emotional learning. Restorative pedagogy gives prominence to building positive relations, building an environment of safe and inclusive learning, and training students to take responsibility for their actions and make amends when necessary.

Meanwhile, the social sciences are dedicated to understanding and analyzing human society and the interactions that occur within it. This subject area focuses on evaluating behaviors, institutions, relationships, and social phenomena from various perspectives, including sociology, geography, anthropology, economics, politics, and history. The social sciences seek to answer questions about how people relate to each other, how social structures are made up, how cultures develop, and how individuals are influenced by their social environment. Therefore, acknowledging the importance of studying this subject within schools is crucial because it provides a holistic understanding of the meaning of being human, its historicity, and the significant power relations that have triggered major human conflicts to the point of using violence as a path for their solution. It is imperative for the study of this subject area to focus on the non-repetition of barbarism and violence, generating a critical and systemic criterion for those who deal with it such that they are able to identify the causes that generate conflicts.

As for the social science curriculum in Colombia, a series of characteristics and reasons that must be considered regarding what is to be taught and the methods of teaching can be observed, including curriculum guidance through establishing learning goals; basic skill standards, that is, defining what and why social sciences should be taught under basic elementary and secondary education in Colombia; knowledge society, characterized by the production and intensive use of knowledge; the promotion of students' critical understanding of society and the culture they live in and their ability to be actively involved in it; an interdisciplinary approach, which allows for understanding the complexity of social and cultural phenomena from different perspectives; the Colombian reality approach, which influences the study and analysis of the problems and challenges faced by the country; and the interdisciplinary approach, which allows for understanding the complexity of social and cultural phenomena from different perspectives; the interdisciplinary approach, which helps understand the complexity of social and cultural phenom-

ena from different perspectives; the Colombian reality approach, which affects the study and analysis of the problems and challenges faced by the country; and, finally, the interdisciplinary approach and the critical understanding of the context we live in, which is vital for teaching social sciences in Colombia. Furthermore, the Colombian reality must be considered, and students should be encouraged to participate in the society and culture they live in.

If people are educated through a social science curriculum that responds to the country's epistemic and sociocultural challenges, where the historical context is systematically interlinked for the development of critical thinking skills, the sense of delving into each of its components is effectively fulfilled. If we consider our reflections so far, the social sciences require a systematic curriculum reform to have a direct impact on classrooms and school contexts in a country that is still at war, as it implies that, overall, students recognize and deepen their understanding of the main problems that the country has gone through over two centuries of republican history. Thus, based on those elements that can be taught in the classroom, a restorative effect would be achieved, as it implies the ethical-political commitment of each of the participants of the educational process in terms of generating processes of reparation and of actions without damage, which are validated in their resilient attitude toward actions that caused ruptures in the social fabric, from their critical attitude, and their actions to guarantee the non-repetition of barbarism, the consolidation of justice, and the construction of peace.

Therefore, the articulation of a restorative pedagogy in the social science curriculum fosters a collaborative and participatory approach in the classroom, where mutual respect is promoted and the diversity of opinions and experiences is highly valued. Students have the opportunity to play an active role in the knowledge construction process, during which they share their own points of view and experiences, thus contributing to an inclusive and enriching learning environment. From the comprehensive reparation perspective, restorative pedagogy in social sciences presents a space to address the causes of conflict, fostering dialogue and reconciliation and providing students with the opportunity of exploring and questioning existing social structures and inequalities to seek ways to generate positive changes in their communities. In short, curriculum adjustment to foster a restorative pedagogy in social sciences is a reparation measure by educational institutions, with potential to enable transformative learning processes based on justice and respect for life and society, in general. This gives students the necessary tools to understand and address social inequalities, promoting the construction of more

equitable and empathetic communities, recognizing their history, and convincing them to make changes in their living conditions.

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