

Peace Imaginaries Of The Students Of The University Of Pamplona

Luis Ramiro Portilla Flórez¹, Edgard Aurelio González Bautista², Aurora Gelvez López³

¹Bachelor of Economic and Social Sciences Master in Educational Management
Universidad de Pamplona, Colombia. ORCID : 0000-0003-1787-9691

²Degree in child pedagogy, Master in Music, Specialist in methodology for artistic education, Master in education, Doctor in Education Universidad de Pamplona, Colombia.,
ORCID: 0000-0003-3126-3658

³Degree in Economic and Social Sciences Specialist in Political Culture and Education
Master in Peace Development and Conflict Resolution Universidad de Pamplona,
Colombia. ORCID: 0000-0002-5168-580X

Abstract

This study focuses on the imaginaries of undergraduate students of the University of Pamplona regarding peace, for which a qualitative approach was used to understand and describe the peace imaginaries of the young participants, through narratives that reflect their feelings, experiences and expectations. In this case, it is given in the social imaginary of the students and according to what Castoriadis (1999) states that the imagination has a very powerful and creative force of the real and the socio-historical that contributes to the construction, maintenance and order of society.

Keywords: Peace Imaginaries, Peace, University Students, University Students.

1. Introduction

During the last decades, in different socio-political contexts and geographical regions, the construction of peace has become a priority and a great challenge for today's societies and therefore higher education institutions play a significant and leading role in the construction of a better society. Therefore, at the University of Pamplona, it is necessary to reflect on peace from the academic, research and social projection areas, given its commitment to regional development, comprehensive training, learning and democracy.

Peace as a collective construction, which is determined by a context and therefore by its reality, undoubtedly determines important particularities in its development; therefore, the

participation of institutions and the State is fundamental when talking about peacebuilding. In this sense, the University emerges as an institution of great transcendence in society, since it trains the suitable professionals that society expects, who acquire comprehensive training framed under the needs and priorities of society from the various disciplines of study; therefore, talking about peace must be compatible with talking about today's reality.

It is unavoidable to question the commitment and application of aspects related to peacebuilding in higher education, starting from the nature and meaning of the academic programs and their formation, whose importance allows to recognize and refer to the impact generated in these programs, which in turn makes it possible to recognize the values, attitudes, behaviors, and understandings that the professionals in training at the University of Pamplona have about peace, given that peace depends on people's attitudes towards themselves.

This research work refers to the peace imaginaries that undergraduate students of the University of Pamplona have as an accurate and appropriate proposal to diagnose and describe how peace is incorporated into the professional training of young people, taking into account the various impacts, but also contributions that can generate the professional fields in the search for sustainable development.

Peace as a topic of study is of great importance and value, since in recent years academic research of this order has begun to investigate and raise several important elements and whose research reflections allow the analysis and proposal of alternatives that reflect on the role of higher education in vocational training and turn the many possibilities and contributions that can benefit society.

2. Objectives

2.1 General Objective

Understanding the peace imaginaries of young university students.

2.2 Specific objectives

- To describe the peace imaginaries of young university students.
- To establish the relationship between the students' peace imaginaries and the training processes developed in the socio-humanistic courses.
- To analyze the relationship between the theoretical postures of peace and the students' imaginaries of peace.

3. Methodology

3.1 General methodological route

The methodology of this work is qualitative because it tries to make a global approximation of the social situations. This project is based on a descriptive and interpretative analysis. This approach was chosen because it gives the possibility of exploring significant aspects from the imaginaries of the students of the University of Pamplona, a situation more difficult to explore from a quantitative approach.

The importance of this type of research is to be able to describe situations, phenomena and events as they are presented, valuing reality and allowing to interpret and understand the subject and not submit the explanation of the individual's behavior to that positivist vision of considering social facts as things, but values the importance of reality as it happens. It studies reality in its natural context, as it happens, trying to make sense of or interpret phenomena according to the meanings they have for the people involved.

3.2 Stage and participants

The University of Pamplona is the setting for this research, located in Pamplona Norte de Santander. 15 narratives were taken from undergraduate students who attend the course on Citizen Formation and Culture of Peace.

3.3 Data collection techniques and instruments

To determine the imaginary constructions of peace, a semi-structured interview was used, directed to students of the University of Pamplona at the undergraduate level of the different faculties, where the purpose is to know the imaginary they have of peace, the importance of the context to develop this idea, the manifestations they perceive about peace within the institution, the importance of professional training in the construction of peace.

3.4 Analysis process

Once the information was collected, I organize and select it taking as a reference the objectives proposed in the research, for which classification of information obtained in level or levels of importance of what was collected through the interview is estimated, proposing descriptive categories of analysis of the information obtained. In this process of this analysis, a reconstructive matrix is designed which serves to organize the information into categories and to carry out the interpretative process. This matrix contemplated the following elements: the thematic axis, emerging codes, cultural categories, and core categories.

4. Results

From the definition of the emerging codes and categories, the process of triangulation of the core category, the existing theory and the researcher's vision is initiated. The results obtained are presented:

THEMATIC AXIS	EMERGING CODE	CULTURAL CATEGORIES	CORE CATEGORIES
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<p>Idea of peace</p>	<p>Harmony Coexistence A dream Living without violence A duty and a right Equal conditions A process Acceptance of differences</p>	<p>“It is a value that allows living together in society in a pleasant way, where respect, solidarity and concern for others are practiced, this makes it possible to enjoy a pleasant environment is also the set of values that give the result of peace”.</p>	<p>The axiological value of peace.</p>
<p>Contexts that have influenced his idea of peace</p>	<p>Social reality Family School Region Education</p>	<p>“Where I come from, peace is something that does not exist, everyone does what they want, whether it is public order or civilian, my land has always lived in war between the state and illegal groups”.</p>	<p>Influence of social reality on the notion of peace.</p>
<p>Perception of the subject of peace at the University of Pamplona</p>	<p>No talk of peace No peaceful environment</p>	<p>“A bit forgotten, they limit themselves to rights and duties and fight and fight and fight and demonstrate for compliance but they do not dialogue from the beginning but after the violence “I do not hear of peace in the university”.</p>	<p>Very little is known about the subject.</p>

<p>How peace manifests itself at the University of Pamplona</p>	<p>It manifests itself with integrations Marches Protests</p>	<p>“When the views and purposes of students are sometimes taken into account when reaching agreements for the betterment of higher education.”</p>	<p>It is reflected in some academic and student activities.</p>
<p>Elements required to achieve peace</p>	<p>Practice of values awareness Acceptance Respect Tolerance Dialogue</p>	<p>“The practice of values that foster us as human beings a being that thinks for its welfare and the welfare of society and thus employing dialogue being heard and listening well to avoid problems.”</p>	<p>The practice of values as an important element to consolidate peace.</p>
<p>How do you envision a peaceful society</p>	<p>No deaths Very peaceful No violence Citizen culture Working in groups Economic progress Human development prevails Something divine Harmonious society</p>	<p>“It would be a free society where people can express their opinion without any fear a society where coexistence is better where there is no discrimination or inequality.”</p>	<p>Absence of all types of violence and social harmony.</p>
<p>What responsibility does your professional training have in peace building?</p>	<p>Training people Transforming society Formation of autonomous beings Guidelines for dealing with conflict Contribute to a more humane society.</p>	<p>“My professional training has the great responsibility to educate to form and create better people who have an understanding and use it to transform society and achieve in it a total respect for oneself and others.”</p>	<p>To form autonomous people for the transformation of society.</p>

Table 1. Findings

Source: Own elaboration

4.1 Peace imaginary:

In this category, the idea of peace is associated with peace as a value that allows living together in society and at the same time practice a series of values “It is a value that allows us to live together in society in a pleasant way, where respect, solidarity and concern for others are practiced, this makes us enjoy a pleasant environment is also the set of values that result in peace” (Student of Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education). This conception is associated more with peace as a human value related to harmony and tranquility, oriented more to individual and interpersonal peace.

The vision of peace in this category is structured under the axiological value of peace, as a fundamental aspect in the consolidation of many aspects, peace as an imperative value of any society, in this sense, the idea of peacebuilding as stated by (Ruiz, 2013) is “Perhaps the most complex element of a value such as peace is that it can lend itself to multiple interpretations; starting from the understanding and experience of each individual, to reach a collective construction on relatively common elements”, (p. 44). 44), despite being a desirable good, some societies live in a constant situation of conflict.

Another description raised by the students is the relationship between the idea of peace as a duty and a right “Peace is a right and a duty that we must have as people since each one is responsible for having peace and providing it to others” which infers in presenting this imaginary as something that we have and must have, based on the fact that we are subjects of rights and duties.

In this sense, this imaginary of peace can be related to what is legally stated in Article 22 of the Political Constitution of Colombia as a duty and a right of free compliance and based on what (Rubio, 1993) describes as important for those countries where war has been felt more harshly are the most interested in incorporating in their constitutions the right to peace as a value of restraint and guidance. In this sense, it allows understanding that the young participants envision this imaginary from a legal point of view.

Continuing with the descriptions given, “My idea of peace is that people can live in peace, without wars that only bring death. That we can live together, be good neighbors and citizens” this is the relationship of what is proposed as that negative peace in which peace is seen as the absence of violence, and which allows relating this conception with what for the Greeks was peace as the absence of war, as something rational and arises from relating with other citizens.

It can be concluded that the most representative findings of the idea of peace that the students envision are the practice and experience of the values refer to peace as a value, the legal value

of peace as a tool that allows respecting and guaranteeing peace and associating a state of peace with the absence of violence.

4.2 Scenarios and contexts influencing the idea of peace.

As scenarios that allow building a vision of peace in young students, the social reality of which some have been direct or indirect victims, “Where I am from, peace is something that does not exist, everyone does what they want whether it is public order or a civilian environment, my land has always lived in the war of the state and groups outside the law” In this aspect, the social reality is highlighted as an element that influences the idea that one has about peace, in the sense that Colombia has been immersed in an internal conflict that for many years has plagued the civilian population.

The Colombian conflict has several particularities that have made it different from other conflicts experienced in other parts of the world, the fact that it is one of the longest and with multiple actors, with irremediable effects on the vast majority of the civilian population, The fact that it is one of the longest and involves multiple actors, with irremediable effects on the vast majority of the civilian population, makes it possible to weave an idea of peace based on aspects that are experienced in the Colombian reality and the role played by the various actors in the conflict, allowing the reading of the various conceptions of the idea of peace.

Let us remember that the Colombian conflict is more marked in some regions than in others, this leads to different descriptions of the imaginary peace, however, the conflict appears as something permanent and unforgettable in the imagination of the students “from what I have seen and read, peace is something inserted. There has been so much struggle to achieve it, so many peace processes, tables of conversation in which they spend a lot of money but nothing of peace and the people are dying of hunger”, which makes the conception of peace linked to the conflict, it is wanting peace but not knowing how it becomes impossible because the memory weighs more heavily.

From another conception expressed by the students, there is the influence of education in the idea of peace they express, as well as the family as the first educating social institution, “when I was in the peace dialogue projects and the environments in which peace projects were carried out were “the mediators” from there emerged thousands of concepts about peace”, which allows us to highlight important scenarios in what they imagine about peace “Just the fact of doing education is an influence to form peace. There is a context where everything starts and it is the family nucleus, there lies the true meaning of making peace”.

From these visions, the role played by large social institutions regarding what can be consolidated on peace has been fundamental, understanding that education in societies like ours becomes the best tool and education thought in dialogue favors the understanding of social reality, therefore, in consequence with what Vicenc, 2006 states, educating for peace

consists in analyzing the world around us, going through a process of reflective practice emanating from values and launching individuals to a transforming commitment.

In this sense and as has been analyzed, social reality, education and the family reveal the imaginary of young people's scenarios that have helped in the configuration of what they consider peace.

4.3 Perception and vision of peace at the University of Pamplona

Regarding the issue of peace at the University of Pamplona, some positions argue “A little forgotten, they limit themselves to rights and duties and fight and fight and fight and make demonstrations for compliance, but they do not dialogue from the beginning but after the violence “I do not hear of peace at the university”, which allows inferring that there is not a strong sample of what can be the construction of peace in the institution.

Education should include several aspects among which stands out the promotion of a culture of peace as a transversal exercise to avoid falling into the unidisciplinary because it is through education as stated by (Vicenc, 2006) an important means to eliminate suspicion, ignorance, stereotypes, images of the enemy and, at the same time promote the ideals of peace, tolerance and non-violence, mutual appreciation among individuals, groups, and nations” (p. 374).

Likewise, regarding the experiences they have had at the university in peace-building processes, they state that only in some courses of their training “Well, so far I have never seen that at the university they talk or do anything about this topic, the only time I have heard about peace is in the classroom and that is because I am studying law”.

However, as can be seen in the students' imaginary, they link the importance of incorporating activities and methodologies that make peacebuilding visible, and that the courses that within their contents develop topics related to citizenship, democracy, human rights and conflict mediation have an impact on their professional training.

4.4 Elements to achieve peace

Regarding the elements that students describe as important to consolidate peace, aspects such as respect, tolerance, dialogue, and acceptance, they emphasize “The practice of values that encourage us as human beings to think for our welfare and the welfare of society and thus using dialogue to be listened to and listen well to avoid problems”.

Under this perspective the practice of values is consolidated as an important element to consolidate peace, the conceptualization of peace can be presented concerning the values that are held depending on the priorities of each individual so “Perhaps peace is like happiness, justice, health and other human ideals, something that any person or culture desires and reveres, but few manage to achieve” (Ruiz, 2013).

Continuing with the imaginary configurations of elements that can build peace is “Mutual respect, improvement of basic conditions, health, education, etc., and finally, not to extend myself, many opportunities either for reconciliation or to achieve a goal in life (employment, obtaining necessary goods, etc.)”. In this order, the students consider the importance of a balanced society.

From this vision, what is illustrated is a society where peace with social justice is given, not only the absence of direct violence but that complement of the absence of structural violence, it is this peace that is related to what is just in this sense is described by Calera (1993).

“Peace is a certain social harmony, which is not the fruit of love, charity or friendship. Peace is the result of fulfilling the demands of justice, that is, the just order, the social order in which all parties are in their rightful place, have their due, no more and no less, that is to say, what is just” (p. 162).

Consequently, this category refers to social justice as an important element to consider a peaceful society, that is, if problems such as inequality, justice, hunger, unemployment, poverty, and discrimination, among others, are mitigated, it is possible to speak of peace, that is, to think of that positive peace that is alien to the structural violence inherent to the social structures that support social inequality.

Another aspect to highlight is that “to achieve peace, it is necessary that people leave behind their interests and think about the social aspect, that those in power realize that they are there to serve and not to be served by the people” is to understand not only an individual but also a collective commitment, to defend what belongs to all and not just to a few.

According to what the students said, it is not an only individual responsibility, the fight for a state of peace implies that from the positions of representation the collective interests are defended, always the common good must prevail over particular interests, and the exercise of power should not imply the affectation of the less favored, the implemented policies must take care of the social as an element lacking in these times.

About this imaginary, it can be highlighted that among the elements that are understood as important for a peaceful society are: the practice of values as the ethical basis for peace, social justice as an aspect that complements negative peace, and finally the commitment from the individual and collective in the construction of peace.

4.5 Peaceful society

Regarding the imaginary of what a peaceful society can be, the young students illustrate a society where there are aspects related to equality, harmony, and absence of violence, for this they refer to expressions such as: “It would be a free society where people can express their opinion without any fear, a society where coexistence is better where there is no discrimination or inequality” “It would be a society where all participants would have jobs,

poverty would not exist, education at all levels would be acquired by all regardless of race and social class, health and social relations would improve”.

In this aspect, the absence of all types of violence can be highlighted by resorting to Galtung's definition of peace, where he highlights on one hand peace as the reduction of all types of violence, whether direct, structural or cultural and on the other hand peace is what one has when one can transform conflicts without resorting to violence, in the words of (Fisas, 1998). The absence of war can be called negative peace, the absence of violence would be equivalent to positive peace in the sense of social justice and harmony, satisfaction of basic needs (...), autonomy, dialogue, solidarity, integration and equity” (p. 21).

In another narrative, the theme of development is highlighted as fundamental: “A society where human development prevails, the true spirit of progress is in ideology only the people and the State”, undoubtedly this statement marks an important reference for those societies where the human is the most important.

It is noteworthy that when we talk about human development there must be conditions that allow the development of its dimensions, it is to think of a society where there are spaces to enhance these human capabilities and carry out a productive and creative life according to the needs because the purpose is human welfare, for which Riquelme (2011) describes it:

From the economic point of view, it means the active participation, and in conditions of equality, of all men and communities in the national and international economic process; from the social point of view it means the evolution towards solidary societies with a good level of education; from the political point of view it entails the consolidation of democratic regimes capable of ensuring freedom and peace (p. 9).

To achieve this, there is the vision of a society that needs peace, but there is also the imaginary of the difficulty to achieve it, “If peace were achieved, it would be something magnificent, there would be no wars or deaths, but it is something impossible to achieve” within this perception there is also the negative side or the impossibility of a state of peace “I believe that a society will never have peace, there will always be people with different thoughts who will want to change society in their way”.

These perceptions refer to the difficulty to put an end to violence, undoubtedly in the students' imaginary is marked by the history of Colombia which always presents scenes of pain, death, and suffering hence the difficulty to imagine a society with some kind of peace, this perception is generally linked to the context remembering that the violence exercised by any actor was crueler and harsher in some areas than in others.

In general, terms, what the students imagine for a peaceful society is in the first instance the sum of positive peace and negative peace, in the second moment the real implementation of human development policies as that human freedom for full development and finally and not

so encouraging the difficulty to visualize a peaceful society given the history of violence lived for many years.

4.6 Responsibility for peacebuilding

Based on the responsibility they have from their professional training in peacebuilding, the young participants focus mainly on the commitments to transform society, training for autonomy, conflict management, and contributing to a more humane society: “My professional training has the great responsibility to educate, train and create better people who have an understanding and use it to transform society and achieve in it a total respect for oneself and others” (Posada & Jaramillo, 2009).

Under this perspective, responsibility is determined within the framework of civic and socio-humanistic education as a fundamental element of integral education and as described by Posada & Jaramillo (2009).

Civic education or citizenship training is permanent; it is required by democracy, it is demanded by global society and, finally, and most importantly, it is still needed by the human person. Moreover, civic education must be valid for all people, that is, it must have the character of universality, for which it must have as its foundation the universal values of the human being that, on the other hand, also underlie democracy (p. 135).

As a great responsibility, the importance of conflict resolution is also highlighted “The responsibility from my profession is to offer assertiveness guidelines in the face of conflicts”, which implies that young students, from their training, can generate guidelines that help in the resolution of conflicts.

Now, the transformation of conflict for the construction of a better society also arises as an imaginary of this great responsibility. In this sense, the importance of each of the careers in the construction of a more just and supportive society is emphasized, “education on conflict and for peace is an education to positively overcome the tensions and contradictions that our society lives, which are not few” (Fisas, 1998, p. 368).

Consequently, one of the main strategies to think of a peaceful society is the ability and creativity to manage conflicts, which is not an easy task, especially when they are of a structural nature; however, if these minimums for conflict transformation are acquired from professional training, it means that we are educating for conflict, that is, an education to positively overcome the tensions and contradictions that our society suffers, therefore Johan Galtung in Vicenc (2006) emphasizes that “peace could be defined as the ability to manage conflicts in a non-violent and creative way” (p. 232).

From another point of view, responsibility is described as fundamental in “the formation of beings capable of making their own decisions, being autonomous and formed as good

people”, which highlights the great commitment to educate in ethical, critical and reflexive aspects.

“It is very important since I am studying a degree, it is from education where the formation of people who participate in society starts; for this reason, I would assume the position of encouraging children from a very young age so that they are the ones who change history and thus live the dreamed Colombia”.

Because of this imaginary of responsibility, it is important to highlight that the careers that are immersed in the teaching exercise feel the responsibility to educate in a series of aspects that are aimed at being more aware of a social reality that merits a critical, analytical and proactive capacity of the Colombian reality, that is, education and in particular higher education plays an important role in the present generations since they can help to glimpse the immediate and future reality and in this sense to assume the challenges of a society that speaks of a culture of peace and its challenges.

In summary, what stands out as important within professional training in peacebuilding are those manifestations that are related to helping a more humane society, educating for the transformation of conflicts and what has to do with education for autonomy and reflexive critical vision of reality.

5. Conclusions

The understanding of peace that is recreated in the imagination of the young students of the University of Pamplona is reflected from an axiological position when imagining peace, in the sense that the practice and experience of a series of values allow thinking of a scenario where the fundamental elements are given to achieve a glimpse of a peaceful society.

Regarding the imaginary of peace, the young participants reveal that social reality influences this conception, since their family, region, lived experiences and other scenarios of the Colombian reality help in the somewhat catastrophic configuration of what they perceive as peace, the history of the country has undoubtedly marked the imaginary of the citizens in the sense that the population that has suffered the most from the consequences of the conflict has been the civilian population, most of whom are direct and indirect victims.

Even though educational institutions have incorporated courses that guide citizenship training and the culture of peace, according to the student's perception it is not enough in the sense that it has not had a high impact and that therefore it is important to guide processes that transversalize the curriculum where the different problems and needs can be understood from a regional, national and global perspective, with a critical and investigative reflection that allows helping to consolidate processes of change and transformation.

It is inferred in the need to dimension citizen training and culture of peace from more participatory and dynamic environments and to involve the sense and objectives of the same,

since as it has been stated, the incorporation of themes and the orientation in the professional profile of what is the culture of peace is fundamental in social reality in need of change, as well as to direct processes in the mission of the University: teaching, research and social projection.

Among the representations that the participants describe as a state of peace is the importance of the annulment of all types of violence that alter in any way the possibilities of justice, equality, harmony, elements of a society that wants to consolidate peace, the absence of direct, indirect and structural violence, this is the vision associated with seeing social conflict as bad, which translates destruction, violence and negatively affects people.

6. Recommendations

Continue with research that addresses the imaginaries of peace from the perspective not only of students but of the educational community in general, that is to say, to describe the perspective of teachers and administrators and thus achieve a glimpse of latent imaginary perceptions and achieve transformations in all aspects of university life.

To implement strategies and policies on peacebuilding in educational practices at the University of Pamplona as a transversal exercise that allows the incorporation of topics related to peace, conflict, violence and post-conflict in the academic processes of each of the existing programs.

To demonstrate to the students of the University of Pamplona that courses such as citizen training and culture of peace are fundamental in the sense that they provide a series of tools that allow us to know, interpret and transform our society as subjects immersed in a changing and complex society, which merits a critical sense of it and the exercise of citizenship.

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