

Editorial

Teaching in the “post-conflict” era in Colombia

Jaime Gómez Díaz^{*}, Fredy Quiroz Guzmán^{**}, Yosimar Rojas Torres^{***},
Carlos Alberto Gómez Díaz^{****}

Forma de citar este artículo en APA:

Gómez Díaz, J., Quiroz Guzmán, F., Rojas Torres, Y., & Gómez Díaz, C. A. (2024). Teaching in the “post-conflict” era in Colombia [Editorial]. *Revista Colombiana de Ciencias Sociales*, 15(2), 426-428. <https://doi.org/10.21501/22161201.4348>

Dear Editor:

It would certainly be a pleasure for teachers working in “post-conflict” zones in Colombia to say that war is a matter of the past, however, the reality is different and the connotation that the word “post-conflict” should remain in quotation marks. In this sense, although in 2016 the national government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People’s Army (FARC-EP) signed a peace agreement, the truth is that massacres, forced recruitment, sexual violence, and extortion are still part of the daily news.

Likewise, the protagonists of the education sector are no strangers to this problem, and children, adolescents, and teachers see their rights continually violated. Concerning the latter, teachers -as part of civil society and agents of change- find in the exercise of their work a risk factor for their lives, as they stimulate the academic discussion of those rights that attend society, which generates opinions in favor or against by some of the armed actors. To the above, teachers working in conflicts zones become active actors in the conflict (Alexander-Monroy et al., 2021; Romero-Amaya, 2021).

^{*} M.Sc en Salud pública. M.Sc en Ciencias de la educación (c). Institución Educativa los Morales (Tierralta-Córdoba). <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1988-5991>, Scholar: https://scholar.google.es/citations?user=vcdZ4_UAAAAJ&hl=es, contacto: eduardogomezdz@hotmai.com

^{**} M.Sc en enseñanza de las matemáticas, Doctor en Ciencias de la educación (c). Institución Educativa Campobello (Tierralta-Córdoba). <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3973-6504>. Scholar: https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=_9raYHMAAAAJ&hl=es, Contacto: fquiroz2190@gmail.com

^{***} M.Sc en Gestión de la tecnología educativa, Doctor en Ciencias de la educación (c). Institución Educativa San José (Ovejas-Sucre). Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=blluuYAAAAJ&hl=es>, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4857-1112>, contacto: yosimarrojasrojas@hotmai.com

^{****} Doctor en Filosofía. Institución Educativa Nuestra Señora del Carmen (Chinú-Córdoba). <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0524-834X>, contacto: carlos_7dios@hotmail.com

However, the dynamics of the war in each of the territories are not homogeneous, so the survival practices adopted by teachers in different areas of the country vary according to their perception of security. Thus, in an area where the war has intensified, the first thing teachers do is to limit the academic content they teach, in response to possible threats or warnings they may receive from any of the armed actors. It should be noted that this situation is reinforced to the extent that the teacher realizes that government institutions have little presence in the territories, or that they are allied with illegal groups (Cortés Salcedo et al., 2016; Ramírez Villegas & Londoño Calero, 2020).

On the other hand, in areas where the war has given some truce, the teachers feel confident to take a critical position on the conflict patterns, sometimes acting as an agent that stimulates possible solutions, and directly influencing the community where they are working (Agudelo Torres et al., 2021). Nevertheless, in any case, the life of the teachers is always at risk, since, six years after the signing of the peace agreement, there are still school surroundings with landmines (Jaramillo- Gutierrez et al., 2021), schools are still under crossfire and the military, paramilitary or dissidents continue to use schools as meeting places or trenches (Mosquera & Rodríguez Lozano, 2020).

About the working conditions of teachers in “post-conflict” zones, it is noted that there is little emotional assistance and limited tools to carry out their work. Regarding the former, teachers must face the emotional burden generated by their students’ problems, which range from domestic and sexual violence to suicide attempts (Echavarría & Cremin, 2019). Regarding to the second, the lack of connectivity in some areas of the country isolates rural teachers professionally and plunges them even further into frustration, with the aggravating factor that it is the same political decisions of the state and systematized corruption that led educators to this situation.

It is therefore necessary to recognize the important work of teachers in “post-conflict” zones, to watch over them and monitor their mental and emotional health, as well as to provide them with all the necessary tools to be able to exercise their profession. Undoubtedly, restoring hope to children and adolescents through the emancipating work of teachers requires them to be motivated. Teachers are an essential element in the exercise of the right to education, without them this right cannot become effective, because although the educational establishment exists and the students are willing, without the professional who teaches and guide them, education is not viable (García-Yepes, 2020; Ramírez Villegas & Londoño Calero, 2020).

References

- Agudelo Torres, J. F., Clavijo Zapata, S. J., & Vanegas Rojas, M. (2021). Cultura escolar en zonas de conflicto armado: del ámbito individual al trabajo colaborativo. *Revista Colombiana de Educación*, 1(84). <https://doi.org/10.17227/rce.num84-11318>
- Alexander-Monroy, J., Pineda-Patrón, J. M., Betancur-Giraldo, H., & Olivera-Paniagua, D. (2021). Experiencias pedagógicas para la memoria histórica y la construcción de la paz. Repensando la escuela rural en medio del conflicto armado colombiano. *Encuentros*, 19(2), 74–90. <http://ojs.uac.edu.co/index.php/encuentros/article/view/2707/2432>
- Cortés Salcedo, A., Pérez, T. H., & Guerra, L. F. (2016). La escuela colombiana: entre la nuda vida y la biopotencia. *Revista Colombiana de Educación*, 1(71), 383–397. <https://doi.org/10.17227/01203916.71rce383.397>
- Echavarría, J., & Cremin, H. (2019). Education for territorial peace in Colombia: what role for transnational peace? *Journal of Peace Education*, 16(3), 316–338. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2019.1697068>
- García-Yepes, K. (2020). Papel del docente y de la escuela en el fortalecimiento de los proyectos de vida alternativos (PVA). *Revista Colombiana de Educación*, 1(79), 109–133. <https://doi.org/10.17227/RCE.NUM79-7453>
- Jaramillo-Gutierrez, C. A., Londoño-Pineda, A. A., & Vélez Rojas, O. A. (2021). Non-conventional anti-personnel landmines and sustainable livelihoods in Colombian rural areas. *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict: Pathways toward Terrorism and Genocide*, 14(3), 247–258. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2020.1853192>
- Mosquera, C. E., & Rodríguez Lozano, M. N. (2020). Políticas de memoria en la escuela en América Latina. El caso de Colombia frente a su conflicto armado. *Revista Colombiana de Ciencias Sociales*, 11(1), 267–286.
- Ramírez Villegas, S. R., & Londoño Calero, S. L. (2020). La escuela y el niño como víctima del conflicto armado en Tumaco, Colombia. *Jangwa Pana*, 19(2), 245–260. <https://doi.org/10.21676/16574923.3610>
- Romero-Amaya, D. (2021). Historical Narratives and Civic Subjectification in the Aftermath of Conflict. In *Historical Justice and History Education* (pp. 107-129). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.