

REVISTA
**DIÁLOGO
EDUCACIONAL**

periodicos.pucpr.br/dialogoeducacional



When dignity does not fit the syllabus: an analysis of the early teachers training in Brazil

Cuando la dignidad no cabe en el programa: un análisis de la formación inicial de pedagogas/os en Brasil

Quando a dignidade não cabe na ementa: uma análise da formação inicial de pedagogas/os no Brasil

Eliana Batista Souza ^[a] 

Contagem, MG, Brasil

Universidade de Coimbra (UC), Faculdade de Psicologia e de Ciências da Educação/ Universidade Federal do Ceará (UFC), Faculdade de Educação

Carlos Francisco de Sousa Reis ^[b] 

Coimbra, Portugal

Universidade de Coimbra (UC), Faculdade de Psicologia e de Ciências da Educação

Luís Távora Ribeiro Furtado ^[c] 

Fortaleza, CE, Brasil

Universidade Federal do Ceará (UFC), Faculdade de Educação

How to cite: SOUZA, E. B.; REIS, C. F. de S.; RIBEIRO, L. T. F. When dignity does not fit the syllabus: an analysis of the early teachers training in Brazil. *Revista Diálogo Educacional*, Curitiba, PUCPRESS, v. 25, n. 86, p. 1342-1356, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.7213/1981-416X.25.086.DS12EN>

^[a] PhD in Education Sciences and Brazilian Education, e-mail: afroeliana@gmail.com

^[b] PhD in Education Sciences, e-mail: csreis@uc.pt

^[c] PhD in Sociology, e-mail: luistavora@uol.com.br

Abstract

This paper presents a content analysis of 220 Course Pedagogical Projects (CPPs) from public and private institutions to examine the incorporation of Human Rights Education (HRE) in the curricula of Pedagogy courses in Brazil. The findings indicate that HRE persists in a marginalized state, frequently addressed in a fragmented, elective, and non-interdisciplinary manner, exhibiting an absence of centrality in the realm of teacher training. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, drawing on critical and decolonial theoretical frameworks. The analysis reveals that equality, liberty, and identity are the most frequently cited principles, while key dimensions such as ethno-racial, gender, affective-sexual, and more-than-human relations are rarely addressed. These patterns are interpreted as symptoms of a formation project that remains grounded in a universal myth of humanity that suppresses other ways of being and knowing. The paper proposes decolonial HRE as an ethical and insurgent practice, advocating for a teacher training that values dignity as a relational, political, and planetary principle.

Keywords: Teacher training. Human Rights Education. Pedagogy. Decoloniality. Curriculum.

Resumo

Este artigo apresenta uma análise da presença/ausência de indicadores da Educação em Direitos Humanos (EDH) nos currículos dos cursos de Pedagogia no Brasil, a partir da análise de conteúdo de 220 Projetos Pedagógicos de Curso (PPCs) de instituições públicas e privadas. Os resultados revelam que a EDH permanece marginalizada, com abordagens fragmentadas, pontuais e frequentemente eletivas, sem articulação interdisciplinar e sem centralidade na formação docente. A investigação adota uma abordagem qualiquantitativa e fundamenta-se em referenciais críticos e decoloniais, apontando que os princípios de igualdade, liberdade e identidade são os mais recorrentes, enquanto dimensões como relações étnico-raciais, de gênero, afetivo-sexuais e mais-que-humanas são escassamente abordadas. O estudo interpreta esses dados como expressão de um projeto de formação ainda ancorado em um mito universal de humanidade, que silencia outras formas de existência e conhecimento. Ao propor a EDH decolonial como prática ética e insurgente, o artigo defende uma formação que valorize a dignidade em sua dimensão relacional, política e planetária.

Palavras-chave: Formação docente. Educação em Direitos Humanos. Pedagogia. Decolonialidade. Currículo.

Resumen

Este artículo emplea un análisis de contenido de 220 proyectos pedagógicos de curso (PPC) de instituciones públicas y privadas para examinar la incorporación de la educación en derechos humanos (EDH) en los planes de estudio de la pedagogía en Brasil. Los resultados indican que la EDH persiste en un estado marginado, abordada con frecuencia de manera fragmentada, optativa y no interdisciplinaria, lo que revela una falta de centralidad en la formación docente. La investigación emplea un enfoque de métodos mixtos, basándose en marcos teóricos críticos y descoloniales. El análisis revela que los principios más citados son la igualdad, la libertad y la identidad, mientras que dimensiones clave como las relaciones étnico-raciales, de género, afectivo-sexuales y más allá de lo humano rara vez se abordan. Estos patrones se interpretan como síntomas de un proyecto formativo que sigue basado en un mito universal de la humanidad que suprime otras formas de ser y de conocer. El artículo propone la EDH descolonial como una práctica ética y subversiva, y defiende una formación docente que valore la dignidad como principio relacional, político y planetario.

Palabras clave: formación docente. Educación en derechos humanos. Pedagogía. Descolonialidad. Currículo.

Introduction

Education, in its political, ethical, and aesthetic dimensions, is permeated by choices that disclose projects of society, disputes over memory and worldview. Whatever is taught, whatever is silenced, whatever is splintered in the educational circles are not mere pedagogical accidents, but expressions of rationality that regulate whatever can or cannot be acknowledged as valuable knowledge. (Acosta, 2013; Apple, 2000, 2006; Apple; Buras, 2008; Guerra; Macedo, 2024; Sacristán, 2013; Silva, 2011).

In Brazil, the teacher training formally began in 1827 after Lei das Primeiras Letras (Law of First Letters), but it was only established with normal schools settled as of 1834. Since then, we have seen the creation of the Institutes of Education (1932); the creation of the 3:1 model, in which three years were focused on the study of particular subjects, and one year focused on the educational training; the extinction of normal schools by Civilian Military Government and the institution of Secondary-Level Teaching Training Courses, with fragmented curricula and short-termed licensures. After redemocratization, with the new Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB) (Brazil, 1996), the aim was to reorganize the educational training through Superior Institutes of Education and Superior Normal Schools (Ribeiro, 2010; Saviani, 2011; Tanuri, 2000). In 2006, the Pedagogy courses got new Guidelines (Brazil, 2006) and started training professionals for Elementary School teaching, for early years of Secondary School, and Educational Management. All of it points to a history characterized by discontinuous, shattered, and often improvised policies, which weakens the working class of education in terms of professional identity, social appreciation and acknowledgement (Gatti, 2012; Gatti et al., 2019).

On the other hand, whenever we observe the range of Pedagogy courses currently, we recognize their potency: the trainer and trained professionals in this field have the power to mobilize the training for the new generations. Since the State is obliged to offer formal Education and to maintain the attendance of children and teenagers aged 4 to 17 (Brazil, 2013), pedagogues occupy strategic positions. Therefore, they are agents who shape values, relationships and possible perspective for the next generations.

From this perspective, it is vital to pay attention to their training. It is necessary that they build a solid foundation in knowledge and human values, as well as an investigative spirit to support their professional development, since not everything fits the curriculum. Once it is impossible to encompass in only one course all the required knowledges for the educational practice in an always changing world, the Human Rights Education (HRE) assumes a central role in the Teacher Training. More than a particular content, HRE represents an ethical and political perspective which goes through Pedagogical Practice, strengthening principles such as social justice, equity and respect for human dignity. By promoting critical and decolonial thought, the appreciation of diversities and sensitivity to the inequalities, the HRE contributes to the next pedagogues for being ready not only to deal with challenges of the profession, but to investigate and change them in a committed way with the building of a democratic, plural, and planetary awareness education.

With this in mind, this paper, which is based on a PhD dissertation, has analyzed the presence — or the absence — of Human Rights Education in the curricula of Pedagogy courses in Brazil, from the content analysis of 220 Course Pedagogical Projects (CPPs) from public and private institutions, aiming to comprehend how HRE principles are encompassed in their curricula.

This paper has been based on different approaches to Human Rights Education, acknowledging the diversity of perspectives present in the literature, but presuming that the critical and decolonial HRE is the one with the highest potential to contribute to the training of the planetary citizens. In this

direction, the dialogue was made with authors like María Lugones, Vera Lúcia Candau, Catherine Walsh, Antonio Manuel Barreto, Michalinos Zembylas, Michael Apple, Tomás Tadeu Silva, Denise Moura De Jesus Guerra, Roberto Sidnei Macedo, among others, whose contributions allow us to comprehend the crossing among affection, coloniality, syllabus, and teacher training.

By adopting a critical and decolonial attitude facing the silences that shape curricula, this study proposes to point out the limitations of depoliticized training and to stand up for the central role of the HRE as a practice committed to the more-than-human being dignity. After all, when dignity does not fit the syllabus, whatever is taught loses its transformative potential.

The pluriversity of Human Rights Education

Human Rights Education consists of a plural field, marked by epistemological e political disputes that are expressed in different ways of comprehending, teaching, and practicing the principles of Human Rights. In its normative and liberal aspect, the HRE is in general distinguished by international treaties and is guided by principles of legality, citizenship, and civility. It is focused on the transmission of universal values — such as freedom, equality, and tolerance — and on the education of individuals about their rights in the current legal system. This approach, although relevant, tends to abstract the social conflicts and historicity of struggles for dignity, often operating with an ideal of individuals detached from their concrete conditions of existence, which it is therefore a colonization tool.

Other perspectives have become consolidated based on criticism of this neutrality, among them the critical approach and the decolonial approach to HRE. Both of them share the understanding that Human Rights are neither granted nor neutral, but historically constructed in contexts marked by inequalities, disputes, and resistance. However, there are important nuances between these two tendencies that deserve attention.

Critical HRE emphasizes the socially constructed nature of rights and aims to denaturalize the power relations that sustain inequalities (Candau et al., 2016; Magendzo, 2016). Based on emancipatory pedagogical traditions as well as critical social theories, this approach prioritizes the problematization of injustices, active listening, and the development of political awareness. It focuses on training individuals able to intervene in the world with ethical responsibility, critical thinking, and a commitment to social transformation.

On the other hand, Decolonial HRE, though sharing this transformative horizon, proposes deeper displacements by questioning its own epistemological and ontological foundations of the modern project of Human Rights. (Barreto, 2012; Zembylas, 2017a). Walsh (2008, 2017, 2014) points out that, differently from the Critical Education — which is still based on Western paradigms of reason, awareness, and emancipation —, decolonial education emerges from other ways of life, knowledge, and struggle, rooted in non-Eurocentric, collective, and relational cosmologies. For the Ecuadorian intellectual, decoloniality implies not only a critical view, but an active break with hegemonic systems of thought and the colonial models of education that are still ongoing.

This approach is deeply influenced by thinkers like Quijano (2005), who conceived the concept of coloniality of power by highlighting the articulations among race, labor, and knowledge in the establishment of modernity; Mignolo (2014), who develops the idea of epistemic disobedience and proposes a geopolitics of knowledge in order to make subaltern knowledge visible; Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel (2007), who report epistemic racism and propose the decoloniality of knowledge; and Maldonado-Torres (2007), who introduces the notion of coloniality of being, raising awareness about the existential effects of coloniality on bodies and subjectivity of racialized peoples.

Thus, Decolonial Human Rights Education displaces the focus from normativity to (re)existence, from abstraction to embodiment, from neutrality to ethical and insurgent engagement. It values memory, ancestry, affections, and spiritualities as legitimate realms of human education, not reducible to technical-rational parameters. In this regard, Lugones (2008) highlights that coloniality of gender and sexuality is inseparable from colonial oppression, which demands us to consider HRE out of bodies and territories that have historically been denied as humanlike.

In this sense, works such as those by Zembylas (2016, 2017a, 2017b) and Barreto (2023, 2012, 2013) have immensely contributed to recontextualize Human Rights Education, by emphasizing that, since rights are undertaken in the affective, contradictory and social life-situated arrangements; HRE cannot be considered out of the density of bonds, wounds, and silences that cross the schooling spaces. By establishing the historical recontextualization of Human Rights, Decolonial HRE institutes the enlargement of the concept of dignity, that is, humanity.

The concept of dignity as a Human Right foundation suffered from meaningful displacements throughout history (Manrique, 2009; Rabenhorst, 2005; Siqueira; Coutinho, 2017), proving to be a social, cultural, and political construct, which defines who is fully acknowledged as a human being and therefore worthy of rights. In Greco-Roman Antiquity, dignity was a privilege restricted to free and honorable men; women, enslaved people, and foreigners were excluded. In the Middle Ages, it became associated with the idea of divine creation, inaugurating a theological comprehension of dignity. Along with Modernity, authors like Kant connected it to rationality and autonomy, which maintained exclusionary criteria, by establishing dignity as something to be conquered by means of certain abilities. This actualist conception (Bragato, 2014) has still persevered in views that rank humanity based on biomedical, legal, and moral criteria.

In contrast, ethical and egalitarian perspectives — like ethical personalism (Bragato, 2014) — affirm that every human being has dignity regardless of their conditions. However, the usage of dignity as a criterion of exclusion or inclusion discloses its centrality in the definition of who is seen as subject of Human Rights. Expressions like “Human Rights for Right humans” throw open this selective usage, conditioning access to rights into a moral ideal of humanity. Beyond that, the colonial metaphors that structure international discourses about rights with discursive elaborations like the ones of savages, victims, and saviors (Khoja-Moolji, 2017; Mutua, 2002) disclose how dignity continues to be unequally diffused and marked by logics of power.

Additionally, claiming the Living Well (*Buen Vivir*) (Acosta, 2016; Escobar, 2018), present in Decolonial HRE, also contributes to overcome the boundaries of the human being as a universal and abstract subject, historically constructed out of a euro-centered, male, white, Christian, straight, and property owner ideal. Inspired by Andean people’s cosmovisions, *Buen Vivir* proposes an ethic of relational care, where well-being is not restricted to the individual but encompasses the collectivity the balance with nature as living and interdependent subjects. According to Acosta (2015), it is an alternative to development, rooted in ancestral knowledge and supported by the acknowledgement of nature rights. Escobar (2018), on the other hand, comprehends *Buen Vivir* as an expression of an ontological turnaround which breaks with modern Western logic by proposing plural ways of existence focused on radical interdependence between humankind and nature.

This relationship of interdependence between all beings and nature can be known as a more-than-human relationship (Martusewicz, 2014a, 2014b, 2018) and can be situated as an ethical and political aspect of planetary citizenship, seen as a way of citizenship which is not based on the collaboration with the traditional political realms, but which is the relational and responsible belonging to a network of interdependent existences, that is, a kind of citizenship which moves from the restricted

realm of the law-state bonds towards an ethics of care related to life in its wholeness. In its conception, planetary citizenship involves acknowledging that subjects have responsibilities that go beyond the boundaries of their own countries, calling on them to an ethical, sensitive, and political action in defense of the multiple forms of existence that compose the planet (Moraes, 2021; Moraes; Arraut; Arraut, 2021; Moraes; Oliveira, 2021). This responsibility is not limited to individual action, but it is set as a collective position facing the threats to the dignity of all the beings. It is an active commitment to socio-Environmental Justice, Equity, And Sustainability. It Is A Form Of Citizenship Which Comprehends The Planet As A Common Home (Brandão, 2008; Francisco, 2015), Thus Broadening The Boundaries Of Justice, Embodying Affective, Ecological, And Relational Aspects That Break Anthropocentric And Colonial Paradigms.

By acknowledging that humans, territories, waters, forests, animals, and ancestral knowledge collectively compose conditions of life, decolonial HRE challenges normative curricula to incorporate other ways of knowing, feeling, and caring. Therefore, training educators committed to more-than-human rights is also educating individuals able to listen to the silent ones of history and earth, holding them accountable to build a common world where justice is not privilege, but daily and pluriverse practice.

According to hooks (2020), taking accountability does not imply denying the importance of institutions to promote justice, but on the other hand it is reinforcing the need for an ethical commitment which precedes and crosses any formal structure. Being responsible, in this sense, is being able to respond to one's own actions consciously, honestly, and common-good engagedly. This conception removes responsibility from the exclusively legal field and in inserting it in the realm of human relationships and of daily practice, in an ethic of care which invite us to reconsider the foundations of justice, not as something that can be performed only by the State, but as something that is part of a collective project of transformation, in which each individual actively engages oneself with repairing historical violences and with building bounds based on dignity and love — a kind of love which is action and not feeling, which means the willingness to compromise over one's own well-being and that of others, cultivating “care, affection, responsibility, commitment, and action” (Hooks, 2020, p. 39).

In other words, decolonial HRE invites us to construct new grammars of rights which decentralize hegemonic epistemologies and acknowledge multiple human existences, reassuring dignity as a non-negotiable and non-hierarchical principle. As a critical approach, it helps denaturalizing relationships of power and training politically engaged subjects. The normative and liberal perspectives then are anchored in legality and training of subjects of law. Although these conceptions can seem sometimes controversial, they can be intersectional (Candau; Sacavino, 2010). In this sense, distinctively, they all provide elements that contribute to the analysis of how HRE is embodied — or silenced — in the curricula of Pedagogy courses in Brazil.

Methodology

This paper results from PhD research focused on analyzing the presence of Human Rights Education (HRE) in the curricula of Pedagogy courses in Brazil. The inquiry has adopted a qualitative-quantitative approach, focused on Course Pedagogical Projects (CPPs), understood as institutional documents that express concepts of training, epistemology principles, and political choices in the field of Education.

The research corpus consisted of 220 CPPs of Pedagogy licentiate courses offered by public and private institutions in different regions of the country, and its most recent version was available online from 2021 to 2023. The documents were collected by searching websites of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), based on the criteria of public accessibility and updating. Only CPPs that presented

at least the following elements: title of the curriculum components, goals, syllabus, basic and complementary bibliography were included.

Data analysis happened in two complementary steps. The first, the qualitative one, consisted of analyzing the content of the documents, guided by categories based on the theoretical framework of the research. The categories encompassed the Guiding Principles of HRE (Equality, Freedom, Peace, Identity, and Guiding Documents); the cores of Historical Recontextualization of Rights, namely: Ethnic-Racial Relations, Gender Relations, Affective-Sexual Relations, More-Than-Human Relationships, Ethic of Emotions; and Curricular Organization (Transversal, Interdisciplinary, Disciplinary, Workshop, Lecture, Project). This step was conducted with the utilization of MAXQDA software (Verbi Software, 2024), making encoding, mapping, and interpreting textual occurrences present in the CPPs possible.

In the second step, the quantitative-descriptive one, variables associated with the presence or absence of indicators of HRE identified in the qualitative analysis were systematized. SPSS software (IBM CORP, 2023) was used to calculate frequencies, median, percentiles, and the application of statistical tests – in special the chi-squared test – with the goal of identifying patterns, associations, and possible recurrences in the data, reassuring the dialogue between quantitative tendencies and qualitative interpretations.

The triangulation of these steps has allowed a wide and articulated reading of the data, disclosing both structural silences and peripheral recurrences of HRE in the curricula. The methodology choice of a qualitative-quantitative approach is justified by the need to comprehend not only the frequency of HRE appearances in the documents, but also the meanings and ways of being (or not) meaningfully embodied to the teacher training.

Since it was an exclusively documentary study, there was no data collection with human participants. However, all the institutions analyzed were kept confidential in compliance with ethical standards of institutional protectional and anonymity.

Analysis

An analysis of the presence of Human Rights (HR) in the curricula of Pedagogy courses in Brazil has disclosed that the theme is presented in peripheral condition, without being consolidated as a structural dimension of teacher training. The bibliographies, especially the basic ones, presented minimal mentions, and even in the mandatory components, the approach was fragmented, not very interdisciplinary, and lacked consistent articulation with critical and decolonial perspectives. Particular components on Human Rights Education, when existing, mostly appeared as elective disciplines, reinforcing their marginalization.

The statistical results, which can be verified in Table 1, reinforce this comprehension:

Table 1 – Distribution of indicators of HRE in the Curriculum Components in CPPs

Indicator	Mean	Median	Mode	Variance	Sum	P25	P50	P75
Explicitates themes concerning Human Rights in Basic Bibliography of the Curriculum Components	0.1	0	0	0.09	22	0	0	0
Explicitates themes concerning Human Rights in Complementary Bibliography of the Curriculum Components	0.11	0	0	0.098	24	0	0	0
Explicitates themes concerning Human Rights in designation of the Curriculum Components	0.02	0	0	0.022	5	0	0	0
themes concerning Human Rights in Syllabus of the Curriculum Components	0.1	0	0	0.087	21	0	0	0

Explicitating HR or HRD in Basic Bibliography of the Curriculum Components	0.0455	0	0	0.062	10	0	0	0
Explicitating HR or HRD in Complementary Bibliography of the Curriculum Components	0.3864	0	0.2	0.247	85	0	0	1
Explicitating HR or HRD in designation of the Curriculum Components	0.1455	0	0	0.225	32	0	0	0
Explicitating HR or HRD in syllabus of the Curriculum Components	0.0955	0	0	0.123	21	0	0	0
Reports as elective disciplinary curriculum component	0.15	0	0	0.128	33	0	0	0
Reports as mandatory disciplinary curriculum component	0.99	1	1	0.009	218	1	1	1
Reports as optative disciplinary curriculum component	0.32	0	0	0.220	71	0	0	1
Reports as elective interdisciplinary curriculum component	0.01	0	0	0.009	2	0	0	0
Reports as mandatory interdisciplinary curriculum component	0.04	0	0	0.039	9	0	0	0
Reports as optative interdisciplinary curriculum component	0.01	0	0	0.009	2	0	0	0
Reports as workshop content	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reports as lecture content	0	0	0	0.005	1	0	0	0
Reports as element in project	0.05	0	0	0.044	10	0	0	0

Caption: percentiles (P25, P50, and P75)

Source: Elaborated by the author

Related to the principles demonstrated in the course Syllabus, the statistics goes as follows:

Table 2 – Main descriptive Statistics of the principles of HRE¹

Principle	Mean	Median	Mode	P25	P75
Equality	12.52	12	15	7	16
Freedom	5.04	5	6	3*	7*
Identity	4.83	5	5	3*	7*
Peace	0.45	0	0	0	1
Guiding Documents (HR/HRE)	0.25	0	0	0	0
Ethnic-Racial Relation	4.50	4	5	2	6
Gender Relation	1.26	1	1	1	1
More-Than-Human Relations	2.07	2	0	1	3
Affective-Sexual Relations	0.72	1	0	1	1
Ethics of Emotions	0.18	0	0	0	0

Caption: Percentiles (P25 e P75)

Source: Elaborated by the author

We can understand that Equality presents the biggest mean (12.52) and median (12), as well as a high mode (15), and also high 25 and 75 percentiles (7 and 16), which indicates the frequent presence of this principle in most courses. Then Freedom and Identity appear in second and third places, with approximate means (5.04 and 4.83) and similar patterns in percentiles, disclosing moderate presence.

In contrast, dimensions such as Peace (mean 0.45), Guiding Documents (HR/HRE) (mean 0.25), and Ethics of Emotions (mean 0.18) have occurrence almost null, with median and mode equal to zero, which shows an extremely residual insertion.

¹ (*) Percentiles of Freedom and Identity rounded-up to rounds (≈ 3 and ≈ 7), according to the text description “lies between three and about seven”.

The Ethnic-Racial Relations (mean 4.50) appear more expressively than Gender Relations (1.26), More-Than-Human Relation (2.07), and Affective-Sexual Relations (0.72), indicating that, even in historically marginalized dimensions, there are internal hierarchies of visibility.

Overall, Table 2 discloses that HRE, when it is present, tends to prioritize the principles indicated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, leaving critical, relational, and affective-political dimensions in the background, since its low occurrence restricts a teacher training committed to plurality and social justice.

However, although Equality has a mean of 12.52, this value is far away from the possible sum, suggesting that even the most recurrent principle is not consolidated as structuring axis of training. The percentiles ($P_{25} = 7$; $P_{75} = 16$) show that only a quarter of the CPPs overcome 16 occurrences, while another quarter does not reach seven occurrences, disclosing variance and absence of uniformity.

Beyond that, the recurrence of Equality, associated with low presence of indicators bound to ethnic-racial, gender, and affective issues, suggests that it is at a large extent a formal concept of equality — one that ignores historical, social, and territorial inequalities (CREUZ, 2025; PIOVESAN, 2005). This pattern can indicate a pedagogical position that, under the appearance of neutrality, contributes to making historically marginalized subjects invisible.

Another important subject matter to highlight is that Laws n. 10.639/2003 and n. 11.645/2008, which are keys to the anti-racist approach, were mentioned only in a few plans, disclosing an insufficient implementation. Gender issues have also remained incipient, even facing the feminization of the profession, and the absence of the contents focused on Affective-Sexual Relations and Ethics of Emotions impacts the construction of a human education anchored to the plurality of knowledge, affections, and ways of existence.

This general low recurrence points out that HRE occupies a peripheral and fragmented place, working more as a rhetorical reference than as an effective commitment. The prevalence of generic principles, like Equality at the expense of critical and relational dimensions, suggests an alignment with abstract and formal conceptions of Human Rights, which contributes to maintaining curricula that are not so challenging to historical structures of oppression.

The chi-squared test, in turn, as it is presented on Table 3, identified statistically significant associations ($p < 0.001$) among variables like Gender Relations ($\chi^2 = 438.473$; $df = 7$), Mandatory Curriculum Component ($\chi^2 = 376.809$; $df = 2$) and different theme dimensions, indicating that the distribution of indicators does not occur randomly. Variables like Equality ($\chi^2 = 129.582$; $df = 33$) and Ethnic-Racial Relations ($\chi^2 = 170.845$; $df = 16$) have also presented solid associations. Although most Pearson Correlation Coefficients disclose trivial effects, the sum of results confirms the concentration of HRE in a few shapes and its almost total absence in activities like workshops and lectures, where hypothesis of the theme presence could not be confirmed. This means that how indicators of Human Rights Education (HRE) appear in curricula is not by chance, but follow patterns associated with certain variables. For example, the strong statistical association found for Gender Relations and for the presence of HRE in Mandatory Curriculum Components shows that, when the theme appears, tends to be concentrated on specific shapes, instead of distributing widely and transversely. The same is true for Equality and Ethnic-Racial Relations, which, although they are more often in their category, are not spread across multiple kinds of training activities. Beyond that, the fact that most of Pearson correlations are trivial reinforces that such associations are punctual and restrict, confirming the concentration of HRE in a few modalities, especially in disciplinary curriculum components, and their almost absence of interdisciplinary and diversified approaches.

Table 3 – Results of Chi-squared Test

Variable	χ^2	gl	p-value
Equality	129.582	33	< 0.001
Freedom	210.100	16	< 0.001
Identity	93.855	13	< 0.001
Peace	101.245	2	< 0.001
Ethnic-Racial Relations	170.845	16	< 0.001
Gender Relations	438.473	7	< 0.001
Mandatory Curriculum Component	376.809	2	< 0.001
Elective Curriculum Component	270.009	2	< 0.001
Disciplinary Work	194.436	1	< 0.001
Project	181.818	1	< 0.001

Caption: Values of chi-squared test (χ^2), degrees of freedom (df), and significance level (p-value) for the associations among analyzed variables.

Source: Elaborated by the author

Discussions

Quantitative analyses, when articulated to qualitative analysis, disclose a preoccupying situation: Human Rights Education is treated peripherally and circumscribed to restrict curricular spaces, with statistically meaningful presence of only a few principles. Descriptive and inferential measurements confirm that, even in cases where there is a mention — as in Equality principle —, this presence is fragmented, not very interdisciplinary, and detached from critical and decolonial dimensions. The almost whole absence of subject matters like Ethics of Emotions and Affective-Sexual Relations, highlighted by numerical data, reinforces already identified silences in qualitative analysis. This triangulation not only demonstrates low quantitative incidence but also discloses an invisibility pattern which combines documental gaps, and political e epistemological devaluation, configuring a curriculum which privileges a normative formality at the expense of a teacher training committed to relational, political, and more-than-human dignity.

In this sense, Reis and Simões (2021) analyze that, since the New Education Movement, there has been an Educational Movement which is projected onto school a hope for change based on illusion — that is denominated “fantasy of unattainable thing, that is, a manifested dynamic in the idealization of school. To a certain extent, it is possible to say that Human Rights Education is our “unattainable thing”: it is anchored in a projection of transformation of the world.

The establishment of the “unattainable thing”, according to the authors, is explained by the principle of Freudian pleasure. In this sense, human beings tend to inertia and reject whatever threatens their principle of pleasure, searching for comforting and emotionally safe narratives — often expressed in myths.

According to Roland Barthes (1984), the myth acts as a system of signification that transforms historical and political constructions into natural truths, removing their critical content. In this logic, the myth of the universal human — male, Caucasian, European, Christian, heterosexual, and property owner — has been operating as a norm that defines which lives are fully acknowledged and protected, and which ones can be dehumanized, discarded, or tutored.

This picture of humankind, forged in the context of Western Modernity, that remains in contemporaneity, consists of a form of coloniality of power, in which social classification is based on racial, gender, sexuality, and civilizational hierarchies (LUGONES, 2020; QUIJANO, 2005). That being said otherwise, modernity has produced a particular concept of humankind, constituted as universal, at the

expense of systematic exclusion in other ways of being and living through the foundational myth of Western modernity, which delimits the contours of dignity and entitlement to rights.

According to Lorde (2012), desire and pleasure have also been captured by this colonial imaginary, which regulates ways of feeling and shape subjectivities. In this context, desires have become conditioned by norms that define what is legitimate and what must be repressed. Convergently, Fanon (2015) have demonstrated how internalization of these Eurocentric norms deeply affects racialized subjects. The phenomenon that had been denominated “epidermalization of inferiority” refers to the process of objectification of non-white bodies, that proceed to looking for pleasure and acknowledgement by adhering to colonial standards of appreciation. This produces identitarian fragmentations and internal conflicts, because desire is crossed by mechanisms of psychic domination.

It is important to underline that the effects of colonialism have not exclusively fallen on subaltern subjects. As Sgarro has highlighted (2025), racialized society conveys White/positive and non-white/negative binarism on both of the unconscious of the colonized and that of the colonizers. According to Fanon (2010), these effects can be faced through collective practices of resistance, comprehend as therapeutic gestures to restore dignity and autonomy of individuals.

It is in this context that Human Rights Education — especially in its critical and decolonial aspects — has presented itself as a practice of resistance facing a world system based on dehumanizing the Other. Through historically valorization of cultural, linguistic, marginalized, and epistemological expressions, HRE can act like an instrument to affirm silenced identities and restore denied dignities. By acknowledging that humanity is relational, situated, and plural construct, it proposes denaturalization of human hierarchies and openness to multiple existences.

Resuming to Freud (2021), to the extent that the subject faces the demands of outer world, the “principle of reality” imposes the need to reorganize or postpone gratification, thus allowing the possibility of subjective transformation — including among privileged subjects. Then, HRE can operate in this gap, promoting a reconfiguration of pleasure and the sensitivity guided by values like love, respect, care, commitment, and shared responsibility — principles which, for hooks (2021), base the notion of community.

In this way, even situated in the threshold between hope and illusion, Human Rights Education can be comprehended as a movement that tenses up and displaces hegemonic structures, both in subject and collective spheres. Linked to an ethical-political commitment with social justice, the acknowledgement of differences and historical reparation, it is not reduced to a simple “act of faith” before inertia of the principle of pleasure. Contrariwise, it is configured as an insurgent gesture against the processes of dehumanization and as a space possible to reinvent the sensible.

Thus, even though HRE is limited by structural myths and psychic barriers that make transformation difficult, it — especially Decolonial HRE — remains as our “unprecedented viable” (Freire, 1992, 2013): a tangible area of possibilities to reframe not only professional training but also human training — collective, affective, and planetary — of educators committed to build other worlds.

Final remarks

The developed investigation has shown that the presence of Human Rights in the curricula of Pedagogy courses in Brazil remains peripheral, fragmented, and detached from a critical and decolonial view. The analysis of the courses project has disclosed that, even in the mandatory components, Human Rights are not configured as structuring axis of teacher training, being addressed in an isolated, restricted and sometimes merely normative way. The recurrence of principles like Equality, dissociated from intersectionalities and structuring inequalities that have crossed individuals, signals an allegedly neutral pedagogical stance which contributes to the reproduction of hierarchies of humanity forged by colonial modernity.

Theoretical discussions have allowed us to comprehend that marginalizing Human Rights Education in curricula is not random or punctual, but symptomatic of a system that is anchored in structural myths. The myth of universal human, naturalized as a subject of rights, sustains a model of education that silences other ways of existence and knowledge. At the same time, the desire for transformation attributed to HRE — comprehended sometimes as an “unattainable thing” — discloses the tension between hope and psychic inertia in the face of the contradictions of reality. In this scenario, we have reaffirmed that Decolonial HRE must be comprehended as an insurgent practice, focused on deconstructing myths, on valorizing silenced identities, and on creating new possibilities of ethical, political, and affective existence.

Therefore, we have defended that HRE assumes commitment to human training which is not limited to the reproduction of universal norms, but which acts towards listening, responsibilities, and historical reparation. It implies challenging the curriculum, reviewing epistemologies of reference, promoting interdisciplinary practices, and affirming dignity as an unnegotiable principle not only for human subjects, but also for all the beings that cohabit our existences. HRE, comprehended this way, is no longer a mere content and becomes a political horizon of transformation, able to reenchant the sensible and to build worlds where justice is not a privilege, but a shared condition of life.

References

- ACOSTA, A. El Buen Vivir como alternativa al desarrollo. Algunas reflexiones económicas y no tan económicas. *Política y Sociedad*, v. 52, n. 2, p. 299–330, 7 jul. 2015.
- ACOSTA, J. M. O currículo interpretado: Ou o que as escolas, os professores e as professoras ensinam? Em: SACRISTÁN, J. G. (Ed.). *Saberes e incertezas sobre o currículo*. Porto Alegre: Penso, 2013.
- APPLE, M. W. *Política cultural e educação*. São Paulo: Cortez, 2000.
- APPLE, M. W. *Ideologia e currículo*. Porto Alegre: ARTMED, 2006.
- APPLE, M. W.; BURAS, K. L. (EDS.). *Currículo, poder e lutas educacionais com a palavra, os subalternos*. Porto Alegre, RS: Artmed, 2008.
- BARRETO, J. M. Teoria dos Direitos Humanos como solidariedade. *Revista da Faculdade de Direito da Universidade Federal de Uberlândia*, v. 51, n. 1, p. 17–25, 3 ago. 2023.
- BARRETO, J.-M. Decolonial Strategies and Dialogue in the Human Rights Field: A Manifesto. *Transnational Legal Theory*, v. 3, n. 1, p. 1–29, 5 nov. 2012.
- BARRETO, J.-M. (ED.). *Human rights from a Third World perspective: critique, history and international law*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013.
- BRAGATO, F. F. Para além do discurso eurocêntrico dos Direitos Humanos: Contribuições da descolonialidade. *Novos Estudos Jurídicos*, v. 19, n. 1, p. 201–230, 1 abr. 2014.
- BRANDÃO, C. R. *Minha Casa, O Mundo*. São Paulo: Ideias e Letras, 2008.
- BRASIL. Lei no 10.639, de 9 de janeiro de 2003. 2003.

BRASIL. Resolução CNE/CP no 1, de 15 de maio de 2006. 2006.

BRASIL. Lei no 11.645, de 10 março de 2008. 2008.

BRASIL. Lei no 12796, de 4 de abril de 2013. 2013.

CANDAU, V. M. et al. Educação em Direitos Humanos e Formação de Professores(as). São Paulo: Cortez Editora e Livraria Ltda, 2016.

CANDAU, V. M.; SCAVINO, S. B. Educação em Direitos Humanos: Concepções e metodologia. Em: FERREIRA, L. DE F. G.; ZENAIDE, M. N. T.; DIAS, A. A. (Eds.). Direitos Humanos na educação superior: subsídios para a Educação em Direitos Humanos na pedagogia. João Pessoa: Editora Universitária da UFPB, 2010.

CASTRO-GÓMEZ, S.; GROSGOUEL, R. (EDS.). El giro decolonial: reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global. Bogotá, D.C: Siglo del Hombre Editores: Universidad Central, Instituto de Estudios Sociales Contemporáneos, IESCO-UC: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Instituto de Estudios Sociales y Culturales, Pensar, 2007.

CREUZ, D. A. Por que descolonizar o Direito da Antidiscriminação? Uma crítica à racionalidade liberal-colonial do direito à igualdade. Revista Direito e Práxis, v. 16, 21 fev. 2025.

ESCOBAR, A. Designs for the pluriverse: radical interdependence, autonomy, and the making of worlds. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018.

FANON, F. Les damnés de la terre. 9. ed. Paris: La Découverte, 2010.

FANON, F. Peau noire, masques blancs. Paris: Éditions Points, 2015.

FRANCISCO. Laudato si', 24 maio 2015. Disponível em: <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/pt/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html>. Acesso em: 29 jul. 2024

FREUD, S. Além do princípio de prazer. Porto Alegre: Lpm Editores, 2021.

GATTI, B. A. Reconhecimento social e as políticas de carreira docente na educação básica. Cadernos de Pesquisa, v. 42, n. 145, p. 88–111, abr. 2012.

GATTI, B. A. et al. Professores do Brasil: novos cenários de formação. Brasília: UNESCO, 2019.

GUERRA, D. M. D. J.; MACEDO, R. S. Políticas antidocência e a docência curricular como reexistência formacional. Revista e-Curriculum, v. 22, p. e65705, 28 jun. 2024.

HOOKS, BELL. Tudo sobre o amor. São Paulo: Editora Elefante, 2020.

HOOKS, BELL. Ensinando comunidade: Uma pedagogia da esperança. Tradução: Kenia Cardoso. São Paulo, SP: Editora Elefante, 2021.

IBM CORP. SPSS. Armonk, NY: IBM CORP, 2023.

- KHOJA-MOOLJI, S. S. The Making of Humans and Their Others in and through Transnational Human Rights Advocacy: Exploring the Cases of Mukhtar Mai and Malala Yousafzai. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, v. 42, n. 2, p. 377–402, 2017.
- LORDE, A. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. New York: Potter/Ten Speed/Harmony/Rodale, 2012.
- LUGONES, M. Colonialidade e gênero. Em: HOLLANDA, H. B. DE (Ed.). *Pensamento feminista hoje: Perspectivas decoloniais*. Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Bazar do Tempo, 2020.
- MAGENDZO, A. La Educación en Derechos Humanos y la justicia social en educación. Em: RODINO, A. M. et al. (Eds.). *Cultura e Educação em Direitos Humanos na América Latina. Brasil: trajetórias, desafios e perspectivas*. João Pessoa: CCTA, 2016. p. 220–250.
- MALDONADO-TORRES, N. Sobre la colonialidad del ser: contribuciones al desarrollo de un concepto. Em: CASTRO-GÓMEZ, S.; GROSGOUEL, R. (Eds.). *El giro decolonial: reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global*. Bogotá, D.C: Siglo del Hombre Editores: Universidad Central, Instituto de Estudios Sociales Contemporáneos, IESCO-UC: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Instituto de Estudios Sociales y Culturales, Pensar, 2007. p. 127–168.
- MANRIQUE, R. G. La dignidade y sus menciones en la declaración. Em: CASADO, M. (Ed.). *Sobre la dignidad y los principios: análisis de la Declaración Universal sobre Bioética y Derechos Humanos de la UNESCO*. Cizur Menor: Civitas Thomson Reuters, 2009.
- MIGNOLO, W. D. Desobediencia epistémica: retórica de la modernidad, lógica de la colonialidad y gramática de la descolonialidad. [Segunda edición] ed. Buenos Aires, [Durham, N.C.]: [Ediciones del Signo]; Globalization and the Humanities Project, Duke University, 2014.
- MORAES, S. E. Prefácio. Tornando-nos humanos planetários. Em: OLIVEIRA, D. N. D. S.; MORAES, S. E. (Eds.). *Cidadania Planetária como significante flutuante: articulando significados na universidade e na escola*. Embu das Artes, SP: Alexa Cultural Ltda, 2021.
- MORAES, S. E.; ARRAUT, J. M.; ARRAUT, E. M. From Global to Planetary Citizenship A Proposal for Evolving Brazil. Em: BOSIO, E. (Ed.). *Conversations on global citizenship education: perspectives on research, teaching, and learning in higher education. Critical global citizenship education*. New York, NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2021. p. 45–61.
- MORAES, S. E.; OLIVEIRA, D. N. D. S. (EDS.). *Cidadania Planetária como significante flutuante: articulando significados na universidade e na escola*. Embu das Artes, SP: Alexa Cultural Ltda, 2021.
- MUTUA, M. *Human Rights: A Political and Cultural Critique*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.
- PIOVESAN, F. Ações afirmativas da perspectiva dos Direitos Humanos. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, v. 35, p. 43–55, abr. 2005.
- QUIJANO, A. Colonialidade do poder, eurocentrismo e América Latina. Em: *A colonialidade do saber: eurocentrismo e ciências sociais. Perspectivas latino-americanas*. Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2005. p. 227–278.

- RABENHORST, E. R. A dignidade do homem e os perigos da pós-humanidade. *Verba Juris - - Anuário da Pós-graduação em Direitos*, v. 4, n. 4, 2005.
- RIBEIRO, L. T. A formação docente no Brasil. Em: RIBEIRO, L. T. F.; RIBEIRO, M. A. DE P. (Eds.). *Temas Educacionais: Uma Coletânea de Artigos*. Fortaleza: Edições UFC, 2010.
- SACRISTÁN, J. G. O que significa o currículo? Em: SACRISTÁN, J. G. (Ed.). *Saberes e incertezas sobre o currículo*. Porto Alegre, RS: Penso, 2013.
- SAVIANI, D. Formação de professores no Brasil: dilemas e perspectivas. *Póesis Pedagógica*, v. 9, n. 1, p. 07–19, 17 set. 2011.
- SGARRO, T. *Frantz Fanon: Descolonizar lo humano*. Barcelona: Herder, Editorial S.A, 2025.
- SILVA, T. T. DA. *Documentos de identidade: uma introdução às teorias do currículo*. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2011.
- SIQUEIRA, A. C. B. DE; COUTINHO, A. L. C. Dignidade humana: uma perspectiva histórico-filosófica de reconhecimento e igualdade. *Problemata*, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7–23, 11 abr. 2017.
- TANURI, L. M. História da formação de professores. *Revista Brasileira de Educação*, n. 14, p. 61–193, 2000.
- VERBI SOFTWARE. *MAXQDA*. Berlin, German VERBI Software, 2024.
- WALSH, C. Interculturalidad, plurinacionalidad y decolonialidad: las insurgencias político- epistémicas de refundar el Estado. *Tabula Rasa*, 2008.
- WALSH, C. *Pedagogías decoloniales Prácticas insurgentes de resistir, (re)existir y (re)vivir*. Tomo II. Quito, Ecuador: Abya Yala, 2017.
- WALSH, C. E. *Pedagogías decoloniales caminando y preguntando: notas a Paulo Freire desde Abya Yala*. v. 1, 26 dez. 2014.
- ZEMBYLAS, M. Toward a Critical-Sentimental Orientation in Human Rights Education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, v. 48, n. 11, p. 1151–1167, 18 set. 2016.
- ZEMBYLAS, M. Re-contextualising human rights education: some decolonial strategies and pedagogical/curricular possibilities. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, v. 25, n. 4, p. 487–499, 2 out. 2017a.
- ZEMBYLAS, M. Cultivating Critical Sentimental Education in Human Rights Education. *International Journal of Human Rights Education*, v. 1, n. 1, 16 out. 2017b.

RECEBIDO: 30/04/2025

RECEIVED: 04/30/2025

APROVADO: 18/08/2025

APPROVED: 08/18/2025

Editor responsável: Alboni Marisa Dudeque Pianovski Vieira