



CHAIR OF PEACE: PROPOSAL FOR IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKS

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ABSTRACT

The objective was to evaluate the curricula developed by the Social Communication and Journalism programmes in order to propose virtual resources that would enhance the implementation of the Chair of Peace. A qualitative approach, utilising focus groups in four universities, revealed that the implementation of the Chair is being conducted with traditional pedagogical resources. It is recommended that the Chair be developed with the incorporation of virtual resources that facilitate the construction of learning. It can be concluded that the Chair is being developed with face-to-face resources. Therefore, it is important to use virtual resources to strengthen its execution.

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1. Introduction

The university is traditionally conceived as an educational and social institution, established as a mediator between society and the critical reflection that scientists make of it. In this sense, its primary function is to enable those who graduate from its classrooms to generate solutions for social transformation processes. From this perspective, the training of professionals in the field of Social Communication and Journalism at the university level is comprised of a set of general and specific competencies. These competencies are designed to develop a training profile that is focused on the dissemination and visualisation of information in accordance with ethical principles.

In this context, Colombia is in need of robust responses to the various challenges it is facing. Among these challenges is the training of citizenship and reconciliation competencies that can facilitate dialogue between individuals on a daily basis. In this context, the 2016 Peace Accords, signed between the national government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), gave the population a sense of an end to the conflict. However, recent years have seen a series of social demonstrations and public order incidents in urban and rural areas, which suggest that this may not be the case. In this context, the government of Juan Manuel Santos Calderón (2010-2018) enacted Law 1732 in 2014, which mandates the establishment of the Chair of Peace in all educational institutions nationwide, and Decree 1038 in 2015, which regulates the Chair of Peace. In accordance with the aforementioned regulations, educational institutions at the kindergarten, school and university levels were required to integrate the Chair of Peace into their respective curricula, in a manner that was consistent with their specific characteristics, methodologies and existing curricula.

In light of the aforementioned considerations and context, the Social Communication and Journalism programmes, from their distinct perspectives and conceptions of communication, assumed the responsibility of providing guidance on the implementation of the Chair of Peace from an educational, curricular, pedagogical, and didactic standpoint. This article, therefore, reviews the curricular approaches that the Social Communication and Journalism programmes have devised in the implementation of the Chair of Peace.

1.1. Chair of Peace

The Colombian education system has historically placed a strong emphasis on the provision of knowledge-oriented education as a fundamental pillar of peacebuilding. This interest is reflected in initiatives such as Law 1732 of 2014, which establishes the Chair of Peace in the country's educational institutions. The development of the Chair of Peace should be imbued with a strong pedagogical component. In accordance with the aforementioned legislation, the Chair of Peace is designed to "create and consolidate a space for learning, reflection and dialogue on the culture of peace and sustainable development" (para. 2). It is widely acknowledged that education is the optimal means of facilitating social and political transformation. However, the Chair of Peace, which is regarded as a public policy initiative, is of paramount importance in achieving this goal. It is perceived as an academic and research space that fosters pedagogical, didactic, and curricular work, with the objective of promoting dialogue, citizenship, and coexistence at all educational levels within the country (Cediel et al., 2019).

In such consideration, education for peace in the post-conflict context with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia - Popular Army (FARC-EP) and the resurgence of armed groups, should then be a goal of the country in which all institutional, academic and productive forces converge to achieve the formation of skills and knowledge proposed by the Chair in: Culture of Peace, Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (Acevedo, 2018). In light of these considerations, it is crucial to provide guidance to students navigating the complexities of a rapidly evolving world. This guidance should encompass a critical analysis of Colombia's internal armed conflict, which has been a defining feature of the country's history since the mid-twentieth century, and the process of reconstruction of the social fabric. In other words, the educational sphere should be utilized as a space for dialogue and conflict resolution, based on respect for others, the creation of a new society in Colombia, and other aspects implicit in the Chair of Peace project, which we perceive in this study as a strategy for sowing an education and a culture of peace.

In this context, Lozano et al. (2018) emphasise the participatory and youthful nature of educational initiatives aimed at the Chair of Peace training, which should be regarded as "formative processes and reflective dialogue around a culture of peace based on knowledge, scenarios, conflicts and daily

practices of peace and coexistence" (p. 23). Such reflections prompt the consideration of an education that fosters the development of the characteristics of a true educational community through training in citizenship competences (Otálora, 2018). It is argued that these are the competences that will enable the individual to relate harmoniously with the world.

From this perspective, the fostering of social integration, attitudinal, aptitudinal and emotional competences is essential for the development of peace and citizenship. These competences must be applied in daily life to resolve conflicts (Garcés-Prettel, 2020).

Finally, metacognitive competences oriented towards critical thinking are essential for the Chair of Peace, as they enable the development of a critical and self-regulatory spirit, the basis for addressing conflicts by peaceful means (Toro et al., 2021). Similarly, García (2020) emphasises the importance of the school culture in fostering social skills, such as communication, negotiation and mediation, which are essential for achieving peace. These skills must be integrated into the school's Institutional Educational Project (PEI) and practised on a daily basis, rather than being merely presented as a separate entity.

Peace education is therefore a crucial factor in the construction of a society without violence. In the contemporary educational context, schools are tasked with the responsibility of instilling values, respect, and tolerance in their students. This entails a series of ongoing initiatives to address discriminatory and intolerant attitudes. Additionally, as the pursuit of peace necessitates an understanding of education from a socio-affective perspective (Jares, 1999), it is imperative that educators adopt a holistic approach to education for peace. Educating for peace is a specific form of values education that involves the promotion of certain values, such as justice, cooperation, solidarity, the development of personal autonomy, creativity and decision-making (Salamanca et al., 2016, p.35).

In this context, peace education requires the development of new pedagogical and/or didactic resources that facilitate the acquisition of enhanced citizenship training and a heightened commitment to society. It is also evident that the application of new technologies has led to the emergence of novel demands, with teachers currently encouraging the development of the Chair of Peace in learning scenarios where they implement strategies derived from theories such as meaningful learning, learning by discovery, collaborative learning or autonomous learning, among other pedagogical resources.

Finally, it is possible to point out that, beyond the norm and the conceptual discourse constructed from different academic scenarios, the commitments outlined by the Chair of Peace take shape insofar as they promote not only knowledge but also actions of coexistence and peaceful conflict resolution. This transformation of social contexts, which are widely permeated by a culture of intolerance and violence, is particularly evident in the country's experience of armed conflict since the last century and its ongoing manifestations.

1.2. The University as a Training Scenario

The social movements that emerged in France in the wake of May '68 and subsequently spread across the globe were increasingly vocal in their demands regarding the role of higher education in the context of societal change. The Bologna Declaration of 1999 represents the response of European countries to the cultural and political dynamics emerging at that time from the world's social and economic processes. The Bologna Declaration of 1999 represents a commitment by 29 ministers of education in Europe to concentrate internal efforts on enhancing the relevance of higher education to the times with regard to social and citizenship competences, among other issues, in which university education should be provided. Training that engages both students and teachers.

In addition, it is important to consider the insights of Brunner (2008), a scholar of education and education policies in Latin America. He highlights the challenges faced by Latin American countries in achieving unified objectives, given the distinct circumstances and ongoing debates in this region regarding education in general and higher education in particular. The political, social and economic dynamics that are distinct from those in Europe, as well as the trajectory towards private institutions rather than public ones, are increasingly hindering the possibilities of unification that facilitate mobility, exchange and the systematic evolution of the university on this continent.

This paper will examine some of the debates that have arisen in the context of the Bologna Declaration and how other countries around the world are adopting this Declaration in order to update their higher education policies. The aim is to demonstrate how the Declaration can be used to train

students in the social and citizenship competences that are so necessary in contexts such as Colombia. As Montero (2010) notes, the Bologna Declaration enables countries, states, and universities to consider "a range of approaches, including those related to teaching methodologies, the structure of teaching, the assurance of learning processes, quality, and the facilitation of student and faculty mobility" (p. 23).

These structural changes of both the institutions and their actors are related to the empowerment of the individuals involved and to the circumstances in which the social contexts of the 1990s are involved and which have increased to the present day. Another perspective is that of Latin America, as expressed by Freire (1987). In this view, higher education should not be a mere depository of data and meaningless information, but rather a transformative process that challenges the status quo and encourages critical thinking. Freire advocates for education that is discerning, aware, and knowledgeable of the context, with the capacity to intervene and transform it. In other words, higher education must cease to function as an isolated entity and instead become integrated into the social sphere, with each discipline or field playing a role in this integration. This integration should not be limited to the role of a laboratory for experimentation, as was the case at the beginning of the 20th century with the Chicago School (Torres, 2022). Instead, it should provide answers and present viable and comprehensible solutions that facilitate transformation from the social micro to the macro level.

Nevertheless, the Bologna Declaration did provide clear references in terms of the objectives of higher education training, which helped to delineate the contours of educational policies at the end of the 20th century and which are currently being implemented in higher education. Regarding the aforementioned training in citizenship competences, this is particularly evident. However, this training is not about increasing the quantity of content or subjects, or worse, sacrificing specific content in order to meet the state's requirements for training in citizenship (García-Noguera et al., 2024).

The Bologna Declaration proposes a transformation of education, with a focus on the teaching-learning process. This transformation aims to align education with the needs of future generations, societies, and collective communities. The Declaration emphasizes the importance of dynamic interactions between teachers and students, as well as the references and contexts in which knowledge is shared. These interactions and understandings of reality are essential for the development of citizenship competencies. This then leads to the conclusion that an education in citizenship competencies is related to a Chair of Peace, with these logics and practices.

1.3. Curricular Proposals for Social Communication Programmes

Colombia, as indicated by the National System of Educational Institutions (SNIES), offers 132 programmes at various levels of training across a range of disciplines, including social sciences, journalism and information, arts and humanities, and journalism, communication and reporting.

In this context, the Social Communication and Journalism programmes facilitate the development of students' professional and disciplinary competencies in conceptual and research foundations, expression, production, social interaction and the exercise of citizenship. It is in this final competence where a distinction can be made, as in communication programmes, these subjects are integrated with those of professional ethics and communication legislation, among others, and with the philosophical foundations of the institutions that are common to all programmes. In Colombia, the Colombian Association of Faculties and University Programmes in Communication (AFACOM) (2019) reports that 62 university programmes in Social Communication are associated and organised by geographical areas, based on research into communication professions and transformations in the world of work. Seven are located in the southwest, 11 in Antioquia, six in the coffee-growing region, 21 in the centre, six in the east and 11 in the Caribbean.

In this context, it can be observed that the programmes selected for analysis in this research, namely Universidad Panamericana (Bogotá), Universidad Mariana (Pasto, Nariño), Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia, UNAD (Caribbean region) and Universidad Santo Tomás (Bogotá), adopt a critical and ethical approach to contextualisation in their training profiles, regarding the development of competences. Regarding the training of social communicators, Table 1 illustrates the similarities and differences between the institutions, which are shaped by the social context.

Table 1. Participating universities, number of lecturers, training profiles and related academic areas

University	AFACOM Region	Number of participating teachers	Training profile Elements	Subjects oriented to the field of education for the culture of peace
Universidad Panamericana	Centre	2	Graduates of the U. Compensar Social Communication programme are able to interpret, analyse and translate the communication needs of the contexts in which they find themselves, with a critical and prospective vision, in order to propose plans and projects aimed at formulating solutions, transformations and innovations, based on the creation, management and positioning of digital content and the development of communication processes in the media, business and social sectors of the country.	Constitution, peace and democracy.
Universidad Mariana	Southwest	2	Ethical, disciplinary, research, expressive, technological and managerial dimensions. Interpretation of the social environment in a critical manner and with a sense of responsibility and commitment Contributing to the search for truth and social transformation.	Citizenship skills
Universidad Nacional Abierta y a distancia	Caribbean	1	Understanding transformation as a process involving respect for human rights, with ethics and communicative equity as a guiding principle for social balance. Interpret and articulate multicontexts and regional dynamics from a socio-cultural perspective. Communication research as mediation for the production of knowledge and as a strategy for community empowerment. Plan, manage and produce communication products in accordance with the realities and communication and information needs of each context. Develop participatory communication strategies to improve the living conditions of communities.	Communication and citizenship
Universidad Santo Tomás	Centre	3	Communicator for peace will be a professional who critically addresses the context, promotes dialogic spaces and develops mediation and conciliation dynamics as methods for dealing with conflicts.	Reality Analysis in Peace Contexts Theory of Peace Praxis for Peace Communication for Peace in the Context of Development and Social Change Peace management and strategies Communication strategies for peace

Source. Own elaboration, 2024.

It is pertinent to note that the research conducted by AFACOM indicates that the programmes under examination exhibit a particular focus on the development of ethical and political capacity.

Respect for others and a sense of social integration; respect for the environment; responsibility at work; social responsibility; a professional with high ethical training and values, such as social responsibility, inclusive vision, critical capacity, respect for the problems facing today's society, a permanent search for the truth in order to respond to what is happening in the environment and professional ethics; who promotes the exercise of citizenship within the framework of a social state governed by the rule of law. A professional with an open and inclusive stance (AFACOM, 2019, p. 70).

Another noteworthy aspect of the research on communication professions is the employers' view that "curricula should be updated or refined to align with the challenges involved in implementing peace agreements, developing a robust domestic market, and addressing pressing international issues" (AFACOM, 2019, p. 189). This signifies that the curricula are designed to facilitate engagement with the nexus between communication and its social context, encompassing hitherto unexamined topics within the pedagogical sphere.

2. Methodology

A study was conducted within the qualitative approach to social research, "with the objective of developing original theoretical positions that will be consolidated in subsequent research by other social scientists" (Izacra, 2014, p.11). The study offers interpretations of phenomena that capture their uniqueness and particularity. The approach is characterised by an inductive style, an emphasis on individual meaning and the importance of interpreting the complexity of a situation (Creswell, 2014). The objective is to examine the process of implementing the Chair of Peace in order to identify the principal curricular commitments that the Social Communication and Journalism programmes have designed for its implementation in their curricula.

Furthermore, it is an in-depth case study, descriptive in scope, which seeks to characterise a phenomenon or object of analysis (Núñez et al., 2017). This is to specify important properties and characteristics of any phenomenon being analysed. It describes trends in a group or population (Hernández et al., 2014, p. 92). The unit of analysis is the faculty, which is the entity responsible for the operation of programmes within Colombian higher education institutions. In this context, the research focused on the Social Communication and Journalism programme, offered in Colombia by Universidad Panamericana, Universidad Mariana, Universidad Nacional Abierta y a distancia, and Universidad Santo Tomás.

In its development, the curricular design of the Chair of Peace was taken into account as a category of analysis, and its operationalisation took into account the subcategories: training profile, contents, pedagogical strategies, and evaluation of learning. The development of the study was informed by fieldwork conducted through focus group interviews with members of the academic community, including teachers and managers (Rodas & Pacheco, 2020).

It is also noteworthy that the data were gathered through an interview guide comprising 14 open-ended questions, which were validated through the assessment of expert peers (Hernández et al., 2014). Subsequently, the data was summarised, coded and categorically systematised for processing. Regarding the coding process, an inductive approach was employed (Hernández et al., 2014), whereby the data were observed and subsequently reduced according to their relevance to the research question. Each coded text was assigned an alphanumeric code that facilitated the systematic organisation of the technique used, the university, the focus group, and the participant. It is also noteworthy that the data were analysed using a triangulation approach.

3. Results

In order to develop the categories and subcategories assumed in the study, eight focus groups were held, with two per participating university. The results are presented in detail below, with consideration given to the subcategories.

3.1. Training Profile

The universities' training profiles for social communicators and journalists indicate their commitment to the training of a critical, pluralistic, conscious, and committed citizen, with an understanding of their historical context. This can be observed in the focus group discussions, where the following is stated.

GFUP34: "The university, as a result of the peace agreement signed by President Santos, has been willing to review the curriculum of the Social Communication and Journalism programme so that it contributes to the reconstruction of the social fabric".

GFUM21: "It is of great importance that universities reflect on this situation and also become responsible for managing spaces for peace." GFUAD 12 states that it is beneficial that the Social Communication and Journalism programme provides students with an understanding of the real context through exercises that connect them with social reality".

GFUST31: indicates that "the Chair of Peace has been integrated into the curriculum, with the objective of recruiting students who are committed to the practice of citizenship".

3.2. Contents

In terms of the content addressed by the Social Communication and Journalism programmes in order to develop the Chair of Peace, it is evident that they focus on the review of the internal armed conflict that Colombia has had since the mid-20th century, as well as the contributions that this undergraduate programme can make to the promotion of a culture of peace. This is evidenced by the contributions made in the focus groups, which highlighted the following: GFUP22: "The establishment of a Chair of Peace within the curriculum provides an opportunity to examine the historical context of Colombia, with a particular focus on political violence, the recovery of territory, the reclamation of public space and the reconstruction of social cohesion."

GFUM36: "The integration of a Chair of Peace within the curriculum enables us to engage with the complex issues of peace, conflict, citizenship and armed groups." and the necessity for a culture of peace", GFUAD72 "As a chair, we endeavor to fortify the comprehension of the historical trajectory of violence that has precipitated the absence of peace within the state", and GFUST64 "Students are instructed to recognize their country through its historical, geographical, and cultural foundations, thereby fostering the development of informed citizens who are cognizant of their place of residence and able to project themselves effectively within the workplace".

3.3. Pedagogical Strategies

In order to develop the contents of the syllabus incorporating the Chair of Peace, the Social Communication and Journalism programmes typically employ pedagogical strategies that are primarily face-to-face in nature, with minimal use of virtual resources. This situation can be appreciated when considering the following statements made in the focus groups: GFUP51: "The Chair of Peace class is developed through workshops, discussions and research work that students develop and then socialise or debate with their classmates, all depending on what the teacher has planned."

GFUM47: "We mainly do readings that are then discussed in class, encouraging the critical analysis of historical texts that lead students to appropriate the history of their country, all this is done in the classroom."

GFUAD62: "To develop the chair, as the university is virtual, we use virtual resources." The class is developed using virtual resources, as the university is virtual. Forums and participatory learning circles are employed, in which tutors lead students in a dialogue about peace building, taking into account the history of the regions. GFUST12: The Chair of Peace training is developed through problem-based learning. Historical problems are provided for analysis by students in their classes, with conclusions presented. This encourages critical review of conflict".

3.4. Learning Assessment

With regard to the subcategory of learning assessment, it is noteworthy that in the Social Communication and Journalism programmes, the Chair of Peace is assessed in a formative manner. This

is an important step in order to avoid assuming that it is a disciplinary content comparable to the components and subjects of the syllabus. This was evidenced by the responses provided during the focus group discussions, which highlighted the following points: GFUP25: "At the university, we do not employ objective summative tests to assess the learning outcomes of the Chair of Peace. Instead, we utilise formative assessment techniques, such as self-assessment exercises, which encourage students to engage in metacognitive reflection". GFUM32: "We utilise essays and discussions, which are then provided to students in a formative manner. Our objective is not to simply present the Chair of Peace as another subject; rather, we aim to foster an appreciation for it as a space for personal and social growth, which ultimately leads to a sense of belonging to their country." The GFUAD18 approach "involves the utilisation of online forums and participatory learning circles, wherein educators facilitate the review and correction of student contributions, affording them the opportunity to rethink their initial interventions". The GFUST12 methodology "entails the implementation of research workshops, during which students engage in research activities, including the reading of pertinent materials, data analysis, and the construction of knowledge. These endeavours are evaluated by the instructor in a formative manner".

4. Discussion

The data obtained from the focus groups indicates that the universities offering Social Communication and Journalism programmes are developing the Chair of Peace, with consideration given to its role in shaping a new political landscape in the country (García-Noguera and Verdugo, 2023). This situation is consistent with the proposal put forth by Galindo and Ruiz (2019), which posits that the Chair of Peace can facilitate an environment conducive to dialogue and engagement between all social actors. A situation that does not exclude students, who are expected to contribute to the knowledge and transformation of the territory as a result of their training (García-Noguera and López, 2022).

In this context, it is evident that the Chair of Peace is being implemented with pedagogical resources that pay little attention to virtual training. This is a scenario that, in view of the advance of information and communication technologies, is favouring the development of cyberculture (Rueda-Ortiz & Uribe-Zapata, 2022). Consequently, it is imperative that universities do not remain aloof from this phenomenon (Stadtlober & Pesce, 2021), particularly in light of the fact that educational institutions were compelled to develop virtual resources or platforms during the Covid-19 pandemic to facilitate the construction of learning (Dueñas et al., 2022).

Similarly, when reviewing the subcategories assumed in the research (training profile, content, pedagogical strategies, and learning assessment), it is possible to consider that although the Chair of Peace is being developed in response to curricular exercises that intentionally seek to promote the construction of a culture of peace, it is advisable that this reflection transcends the classroom setting and incorporates virtual spaces where students can interact with the inhabitants of the whole country (Vera-Rojas et al., 2023). This is in accordance with García (2022), who asserts that virtual education presents an opportunity to transcend the spatial limitations within which education has traditionally been confined.

It is also noteworthy that, within the context of university autonomy in designing undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, the implementation of the Chair of Peace using virtual pedagogical resources facilitates access to training in areas where higher education has not yet reached. This presents an opportunity to foster the development of a more educated society, one that is more aware of its history and the role that each individual can play in the social reconstruction of the country.

5. Implementation of the Chair of Peace through Social Networks

The results of the project indicate that universities offering the Social Communication and Journalism programme should consider social networks as a potential space for the study of the Chair of Peace and its dissemination in the territory. This commitment arises from the recognition that social networks represent a scenario of the knowledge society, where students interact on a massive scale and continuously (Llivipuma, 2023). A space that can be utilised for the training of individuals at different educational levels, with the objective of developing critical thinking based on the analysis, argumentation and contrasting of information (García, 2012).

In light of the aforementioned, three resources are put forth for the training of the Chair of Peace related competencies through the utilisation of social networks:

1. Educational social networks:

These types of networks provide a forum for the dissemination of knowledge and discourse between academic actors for background studies, the construction of projects and the production of texts that acknowledge and build upon existing research (Fuentes-Cancell et al., 2021). It is also worth mentioning the ResearchGate, Academia.edu, ORCID and Google Scholar networks.

2. Cultural social networks

Are virtual spaces where actors can contribute to the construction of a new cultural scenario from cyberculture (Morais, 2022). A new space where, from the immediacy that characterises social networks, reflections can be shared that, from a political, cultural and social perspective, contribute to a new cultural scenario, that of virtuality (Bonet-Martí, 2020). In these networks, we may consider the following: Facebook, X, and Instagram.

3. Social interaction networks

These networks represent a valuable resource for facilitating synchronous interaction between academic actors from diverse locations within a given territory (Maldonado-Manguí et al., 2020). In this context, they serve as a conduit for communication, the exchange of ideas, and the construction of knowledge (Acharki, 2021). The aforementioned networks encompass the following: The following tools are available for use by teams: Google Meet and Zoom.

6. Conclusion

Training through the Chair of Peace represents an academic commitment assumed by the universities where the research was focused on and implemented through their curricular design. A training process has been developed that addresses the study of armed conflict, the reconstruction of social fabric, the construction of a culture of peace and the responsible exercise of citizenship.

In this context, while the work being done to implement the Chair of Peace is acknowledged, it should be noted that it is being developed on a face-to-face basis, a situation that does not respond to the new training dynamics stimulated by the advance of information and communication technologies. It is therefore proposed that educational social networks, cultural social networks and social interaction networks should be considered as resources for the innovative implementation of the Chair of Peace.

It is also important to consider that the training provided by the Chair of Peace can be used to foster a more democratic, equitable and inclusive scenario in the acquisition of knowledge through social networks. In particular, due to the diversity of the conditions of the territory and the limitations to access the training scenarios.

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