

ppi 201502ZU4645

Esta publicación científica en formato digital es continuidad de la revista impresa  
ISSN-Versión Impresa 0798-1406 / ISSN-Versión on line 2542-3185 Depósito legal pp  
197402ZU34

# CUESTIONES POLÍTICAS

Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Derecho Público "Dr. Humberto J. La Roche"  
de la Facultad de Ciencias Jurídicas y Políticas de la Universidad del Zulia  
Maracaibo, Venezuela



Vol.40

Nº 73

Julio

Diciembre

2022

## Dialectics of rights and responsibilities in education

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.46398/cuestpol.4073.17>

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### Abstract

The objective of the article was to analyze the dialectic of rights and responsibilities in education. The importance of education is so great that the thesis of the responsibility of the person to receive education has now been recognized. In order for the right to education to be exercised, the domestic law of states provides for a set of responsibilities for participants in the educational process, the implementation of which actually guarantees access to education. The real economic opportunities of States have a great impact on the real content of the dialectical process of interaction of rights and responsibilities in the field of education. The relationship between the participants in the educational process is regulated at several levels: first, the rules of domestic law and then the contractual level, represented by the statutes of educational institutions, comes into force. It is concluded that, in the most advanced systems, there may be a level of intra-group agreements that are completely voluntary. The practical content of the educational process is influenced by several factors, including ideology, the objectives set by a given society, the traditions and customs that have developed in it.

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**Keywords:** educational process; legislation; actual content of rights and responsibilities; education law; dialectic of rights.

## *Dialéctica de derechos y responsabilidades en la educación*

### **Resumen**

El objetivo del artículo fue analizar la dialéctica de derechos y responsabilidades en la educación. La importancia de la educación es tan grande que en la actualidad se ha reconocido la tesis de la responsabilidad de la persona de recibir educación. Para que el derecho a la educación pueda ser ejercido, el derecho interno de los estados prevé un conjunto de responsabilidades para los participantes en el proceso educativo, cuya aplicación garantiza realmente el acceso a la educación. Las oportunidades económicas reales de los Estados tienen un gran impacto en el contenido real del proceso dialéctico de interacción de derechos y responsabilidades en el ámbito de la educación. La relación entre los participantes en el proceso educativo está regulada en varios niveles: en primer lugar, las normas de derecho interno y después entra en vigor el nivel contractual, representado por los estatutos de las instituciones educativas. Se concluye que, en los sistemas más avanzados, puede haber un nivel de acuerdos intragrupo que son completamente voluntarios. El contenido práctico del proceso educativo está influido por varios factores, entre ellos la ideología, los objetivos que se fija una sociedad determinada, las tradiciones y las costumbres que se han desarrollado en ella.

**Palabras clave:** proceso educativo; legislación; contenido real de los derechos y responsabilidades; ley de educación; dialéctica de derechos.

### **Introduction**

The transfer of knowledge accumulated by previous generations of people to new generations (what we call the educational process) is critical for the survival, development and prosperity of both humanity as a whole and its individual elements, which today have the form of states. This postulate has been accepted by people for a very long time, and in the modern world it is consolidated through the creation of a system of rights and responsibilities of subjects acting in the field of education.

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the fact that the process of education demonstrates the dialectical process of struggle between its components, although the action of each of these components is directed, it would seem, towards a single goal. It experiences the strongest influence of historical factors (in the sense of understanding the content of rights and obligations) and economic factors (in the sense of real implementation of the stipulated rights and obligations).

It may be more expedient not to repeat the generally recognized provisions on rights and obligations, but to investigate the field of education at the level of each individual state, comparing the goals and methods, actually granted rights and practically fulfilled duties of teachers and students, legal and material support of the process by the state, and then compare the results in terms of the resulting progress.

## 1. Literature review

We are unlikely to find conflicting opinions in the literature regarding the existence of rights and obligations and their content in the field of education. There is no ground for dispute, for scientific discussion here. Everyone agrees with the existence of the right to education as an inalienable human right and the existence of a reciprocal obligation of the state to ensure it.

The publications of the authors in countries with developed education systems do not deal with the issues of rights and obligations at all, since these issues have been settled there for a long time, they are based on the existing legislation and the well-established traditions of society. Judging by the materials published by, say, British authors, this country has focused on raising educational standards, the level of intellectual development of citizens, and improving the quality of educational programs (Perera *et al.*, 2016).

But if we turn to research related to the realization of the right to education in African countries, then it will not be unexpected for us those researchers see the main task in ensuring access to education in general, and to more or less quality education, in particular (Evans and Mendez, 2021). In the popular work of Katarzyna Tomaševski, it is rightly noted that the rights associated with education can be divided into three categories - the right to receive education, the rights used in the course of the educational process and the rights that a person can exercise after receiving an education (Tomaševski, 2001).

The works of the authors in the area under consideration are mainly divided into three directions. Firstly, a lot of materials are devoted to the

statement of the fact that in this state the human right to receive education is recognized and legislatively enshrined (see, for example, the works of Melnychuk (2013)). Alex Guilherme brings a fresh idea to this reasoning, asking the question: we can voluntarily refuse to temporarily exercise certain rights, for example, the right to health care, but why can't we give up the right to receive education? Because it's our responsibility, he replies (Guilherme, 2016).

This thesis is consonant with the idea that legal relations in the field of education should be classified as interactive, when both parties to the process are obliged to take certain "counter" actions (Valeev, 2011).

The second question that worries researchers in this field is the actual embodiment of the proclaimed rights to education in a particular country. One can name a number of works by Indian authors related to the study of the results of the implementation of the Right to Education Act, adopted by Indian legislators in 2009 (Ojha Seema, 2013). Researchers rightly note the fact that statutory provisions often do not get their practical implementation due to insufficient funding or due to ambiguous interpretation of a certain provisions (Khomyshyn, 2018). Some of the works are devoted to the duties of the teaching staff of educational institutions.

This issue relates more to the moral and ethical area, since the conscientiousness of the attitude towards the performance of one's professional duties can hardly be regulated by legal norms. As an example, Sara Sepulkri can be cited in which she lists as a teacher's duties, in particular, the responsibility to be organized, wear professional clothing, smile, call students by name and answer questions (Sepulkri, 2021) Some authors pay attention to the immediate rights and responsibilities of students, which they exercise in the learning process. Here, the influence of traditional views is more noticeable, since undoubted responsibilities include, for example, adhering to a certain dress code or adhering to the rules of sports games. It is interesting to single out as a special duty the application of the acquired knowledge in practice (Anjum Khan, 2018).

Documents published by government agencies in various countries are considered to be very important sources for studying this topic. They reflect fresh trends that have not yet been analysed by academic scientists. An example is the publication of the Ministry of Education of Ukraine, in which sense of entrepreneurship is listed among the basic skills of the New Ukrainian School, which is completely new for Ukrainian society (The new Ukrainian school conceptual principles of secondary school reform, 2015).

Here is another example that shows how government programs reflect the new tasks of society (and this leads to their consolidation by legislative norms). The National Education Program of India, adopted in 2020, specifically emphasizes that if in the past the state's efforts were

focused on ensuring equal access to education for citizens, today the task is to develop rational thinking, a passion for science and healthy ethical values in students. The teacher is now, as stated in the program “must be at the centre of the fundamental reforms in the education system. The new education policy must help re-establish teachers, at all levels, as the most respected and essential members of our society” (National Education Policy, 2020: 4).

The general conclusion that can be drawn from a review of scientific research in this area is that scholastic reasoning about the existence of rights and their corresponding obligations, in principle, lost their meaning. Research on how to practically improve the quality of education is relevant today. It is important to find out the means to raise the level of education in poor countries - without this they are forever doomed to remain poor. But a country with a poor population for the rest of the mankind is like an uneducated person in a society of educated people - it is only a brake on human development.

## **2. Methods**

Taking into account the specifics of the topic under consideration, the most appropriate when writing this article was the use of the comparative historical, legal and economic research methods.

## **3. Result and Discussion**

### **3.1. Education as a civilizational value**

If we consider dialectics as a process of overcoming contradictions and finding a solution in a situation that is assessed by different subjects depending on their interests in different ways, then it is the most appropriate tool for analysing the interaction of rights and responsibilities in general, and in the field of education in particular. The facts that we know about our past testify to the existence of educational institutions of various types and in various countries since ancient times though in ancient times, getting an education was a privilege that few could take advantage of. Already ancient philosophers began to formulate the idea of the right to education as a natural good of a free person, necessary to satisfy not only the individual interests of a given person, but also the general interests of the state.

It is significant that during the period of development of scientific knowledge under the auspices of Christianity, the idea arose of the necessity of education in order to improve each individual and society as a whole.

Attention is drawn to the transition from the concept of “right” to education to the concept of “necessity” of education. In the modern period, the idea of the right to receive education through the “bridge” of necessity naturally interacts with the idea of the compulsory education for each member of human society.

It is also possible to single out the moral and philosophical component of this process, when the idea of the duty of scientists to make every possible effort to disseminate knowledge, to educate a person interacts with the understanding of not only the right of this person to get an education but of his duty to master the necessary amount of knowledge. Of course, this duty cannot be enshrined in legal norms, but its awareness and universal acceptance can be of great importance for humanity. It seems absolutely correct and timely idea formulated by the Brazilian scientist Guilherme (2016) who believes that education should be understood as a duty, an obligation that all people have to themselves and their communities.

It is impossible to disagree with his arguments, and I would like to add one more to their list. A person without a certain level of knowledge is helpless. He is incapable of investing anything significant into the stream of social production. He finds himself in the position of a parasite, forced to use the fruits of labour and the achievements of other people simply to maintain his physical existence.

And this is especially obvious if we are talking about the current stage of scientific and technological development and are aware of the fact that in the future humanity will be influenced by many factors that require the development of new directions and an explanation of previously unheard-of phenomena.

We have to resolve the contradictions between the development of the technological potential of mankind and the need to preserve an acceptable habitat, to deal with the growing danger of pandemics, inextricably linked with the intensification and acceleration of human movement on the Earth’s surface, to look for solutions with regard to energy sources and prevention of natural disasters caused by natural and man-made causes. These are tasks for humanity as a whole, regardless of social, material or ideological differences in groups of people living in certain regions of the planet. Where in this process is the place of a person who has not received a proper amount of knowledge?

### **3.2. The right to education and the economic basis**

Since the importance of education is very great, some authors even question the primacy of the economic basis in the development of society, arguing that its development depends on the level of development of culture and education (Valeev, 2011). It is difficult to fully agree with this thesis,

since the separation from the community of groups of people who are not directly involved in the creation of a surplus product, but who are engaged in the transfer of knowledge accumulated by previous generations, on the one hand, and who assimilate this information, on the other hand, requires a certain level of economic well-being.

Moreover, a special category of people, which we call “scientists” and “thinkers”, emerged rather quickly. For them, the main occupation is the “extraction” of new knowledge, and not only through practical experiments, but also by the method of abstract reasoning about the essence of the surrounding world and the place of human in it. I do not think that the thesis that the existence of academic institutions and schools of thought in the ancient world became possible due to the fact that a large category of people called slaves created a sufficient surplus product that could not be used by themselves due to the peculiarities of the economic structure of the then society, would raise an objection.

However, the product taken from them made it possible to contain, in particular, groups of people who devoted themselves to philosophical research that did not have direct practical application. In the same way, the titanic work of monks in the Middle Ages, who created and rewrote chronicles and other repositories of information that brought to our time a huge amount of important and useful data, could not have been carried out if it had not been for the economic ability of society to provide them with the necessary material conditions for life.

Nowadays, mankind creates a sufficient surplus product (the issue of the equitability of its distribution is not included in the area of the article), and this allows us to invest not only in those scientific research that has a direct impact on human well-being, and even not only in those whose significance is of a very distant, even hypothetical, character, but also in those investigations that, according to sound logic, can never bring even the slightest benefit (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art.26).

### **3.3. Actual realization of the right to education**

The complex of rights and obligations related to the field of education is rather complicated in the modern world; it includes various forms of social relations functioning in the field of education and upbringing. Its regulation is carried out at several levels, and the specific implementation depends on many factors. All authors writing on the right to education begin their discussion by referring to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 26 of which states that “everyone has the right to education”. At the same time, the requirements are emphasized to ensure free primary and general education, the availability of technical and professional education and access to higher education, which depends only on the abilities of the applicant.

The authority of the declaration is evidenced by the fact that it was signed by 192 states - all members of the UN. However, it should be remembered that humanity is not a subject of law, it does not pass laws and does not sign contracts. Anything related to the concepts of rights and obligations inevitably presupposes the participation or at least the consent of national states.

Such complexes of rights and responsibilities, which require the contribution of material resources for their implementation, and the educational complex, as mentioned above, belongs to them, are generally inconceivable without the most active participation of the states. Here the question may arise whether the right to education should be understood as an inalienable human right or as the right of a citizen of a given state. It seems that it is advisable to proceed from the real state of affairs.

Sometimes the legislation of states speaks of the right of citizens to education (Constitution of Ukraine, 1996, Art. 53). Foreigners and stateless persons are, as it were, taken out of the brackets. In bylaws, this issue can, however, be regulated in one way or another. In the United States, for example, the issue of the right of children of illegal immigrants to education demanded a special decision of the Supreme Court in 1982 (*The Background of Plyler v. Doe*, 2021).

In some cases, the state guarantees its citizens the right to free education, while for non-citizens it is offered the possibility of only paid education (for example, in the largest German state of Baden-Württemberg, which introduced university tuition fees for non-EU foreigners in 2017) (*Studying in Germany*, 2020). When an applicant for education wishes to obtain a higher education, he meets the principle of the competitiveness of higher education.

The possibilities of higher educational institutions are limited and it is necessary to prove that you have the best starting level of knowledge compared to others, from which your higher education will begin. But this is not a limitation of the right, but rather the embodiment of the principle of "dependence on merit" proclaimed in the Universal Declaration. The rights of any member of a society can only be exercised within the framework of this society.

The organizational form of the community of people today is the state. States can formulate the norms of their law, correlating them with internationally recognized principles, implementing the content of the latter into the system of domestic law. But it should be remembered that international principles set a minimum standard, and sometimes have the character of recommendations. A more significant influence on the formation of the direction in which the rights are exercised and the responsibilities in the field of education are fulfilled are the ideas dominating in a given society.

These ideas determine the setting of tasks, the implementation of which the given society considers expedient and necessary. For example, if a society considers it necessary and possible to specifically regulate the right to education for certain groups of the population, say, children who, for various reasons, cannot attend school on a common basis, it creates an appropriate comprehensive provision of the rights of these children. Illustrative is an edition of the Illinois State Board: *Understanding Special Education in Illinois*, which explains the rights of students with special needs (Illinois State Board of Education, 2020).

It is important to take into account that the proclamation of the right to education in no way answers the question about the volume and nature of the knowledge gained, about the quality of education. This issue is fundamentally dependent on the social system and economic well-being of a particular society. Therefore, in different states and societies, the concept of education, its standards, criteria for its adequacy may differ very seriously.

They change not only in the course of historical development. They are different in different societies existing at the same time. In one society, reading and writing and basic arithmetic skills are considered sufficient primary education. In another, the student already at the initial period of study gets access to modern information technologies and some skills in their use. Plus, the ideology of each nation, formed due to reasons beyond the scope of this article, has a huge impact on the actual level of education of the population and on the content of educational programs.

If ideology cannot influence the content of such exact disciplines as mathematics, then a wide range of social sciences and even natural science is greatly influenced, for example, by the religious beliefs adopted in a given society, and this applies not only to theocratic states. Economic sciences are largely influenced by ideology. History and social science in general belong to such politicized areas that when the social system changes, say, during the transition from a communist state system to democracy, or from a dictatorship to a system of free elections, these disciplines have to be studied anew.

Many states in their program legislative acts recognize that education is the basis of intellectual, cultural, social and economic development, that its goal is the all-round development of a person, the formation of conscious citizens, and an increase in the intellectual potential of the people. But there are no generally accepted criteria to estimate the actual situation, and they cannot be formulated in the foreseeable period of time, given the real differences in the educational systems of countries.

Those states that set themselves the goal of accelerating the development of education and raising the educational level of the population, in their legislation fix the norms that create the material prerequisites for the

implementation of the proclaimed educational rights. An illustrative (but not alone of course) example of this practice is the legislation of the Philippines, which stipulates that education has the highest budgetary priority.

Moreover, it is explicitly stated that through the payment of adequate remuneration and other incentives, it is necessary to ensure that the best talents in this field are attracted to the teaching corps (Llego, 2021). The internal agreement of society about the priority of the development of a high-level educational system makes education desirable, compulsory and prestigious.

Japan, today being at the top of the technological development rankings, has built its education system purposefully after experiencing severe economic turmoil. The result is obvious, given that only primary education is compulsory here. South Korea has made education the main and prestigious goal of the population, and as a result is leading in the number of people with higher education.

Singapore, with its ideology of meritocracy (where the highest rating in society is received not by origin, but by education and skills) invests 12 billion dollars annually in the educational sphere and competes with Hong Kong for the first place in terms of IQ of the population. Ireland pays for education for its citizens even in private educational institutions. In Poland, which has clearly set itself the goal of being incorporated into world technological progress, lectures for 70% of students are delivered in English.

### **3.4. Levels of dialectical interaction of rights and responsibilities in the field of education**

There are three levels at which the dialectical interaction of rights and responsibilities in the field of education is carried out. At the first level is the issue of the possibility of obtaining education as such, of the freedom of access to the learning process. Here we can talk about the existence of a universal human consensus regarding this problem. At the second level, there are problems of the quality of education, as well as the possibility of obtaining high quality education at the expense of public resources, that is, free of charge for the student and his family. There are significant differences in the volumes and forms of implementation of this provision, depending on the state and social structure of the country, and the level of its economic development.

The third level is the topic of the interaction of the rights and responsibilities of the participants in the educational process, let's call them collectively "students" and "teachers". And since in modern civilization the quality of legal capacity is acquired by people at a certain age, another

group of participants is added to the system of these relationships i.e. parents (legal representatives) of minor students. Each subject of legal relations should understand that as soon as he decided to exercise his right, a number of “mirror” duties arise that regulate his behaviour and make the exercising of the rights by him acceptable for other members of the community. Any right entails a duty to use it in a way that does not violate the rights of others.

*Sic utere tuo ut alienum non laedas* (use your own so as not to harm another), says the generally recognized principle of Roman law. Therefore, the right of a subject to use any public good, for example, to receive an education, always presupposes his obligation in the process of exercising this right, at least, not to interfere by his behaviour with the receipt of this benefit by another equal subject. Almost everywhere, the enjoyment of the right to education is associated with certain conditions that the subject must fulfil in order to practically realize it. There is always a process of “struggle” between rights and responsibilities, which, in theory, should lead to the most optimal result for society at a certain stage of development.

This is by no means an abstract remark. Participants in the legislative process should always take into account that, when formulating a rule that establishes someone’s right to perform certain actions or receive public goods, the corresponding obligations of other subjects should also be provided so that the proclaimed right can be exercised. It goes without saying that specific material conditions must also be taken into account. This fully applies to the education sector.

### **3.5. Sub-level of regulation: norms of statutes of educational institutions**

The charters of specific educational institutions represent the lowest layer of norms that regulate the rights and responsibilities of participants in the educational process. The term “lower” does not mean diminishing the importance of these rules for students, but only reflects the fact that they cannot be contrary to state legislation. The statutes actually take the form of a so-called public offer, that is, an offer to all who wish to conclude an agreement on the basis of provisions already formulated and not subject to discussion.

Of course, as in any public offer, certain requirements are set for potential parties to the contract. If the parents (or guardians) of a student agree with the conditions of study at this college, lyceum, school, and the students themselves meet the requirements for candidates, the contract is concluded, and the students are subject to the rights and obligations provided for by the said contract. The rights and responsibilities of schoolchildren, of course, include natural provisions that ensure the participation of schoolchildren

in the learning process and impose obligations on them not to prevent others from having the same opportunities.

Often, bylaws provide parents with the opportunity to participate in public school government bodies called parental committees. Traditions and customs also play an important role here. Since traditions and customs in different countries can vary greatly, the variety of rules that govern the rights and responsibilities of students and teachers in different educational institutions is very great. In such documents, they often find a place for provisions that are considered generally accepted, relevant for a given country, and important specifically for a given educational institution.

In the popular Ukrainian Lyceum “Leader”, for example, rules are specially stipulated for students to come to class at least 15 minutes before the start of classes, the obligation of boys to take off their hats when entering the building, the type of lyceum uniform is described in detail. Lyceum rules include a requirement for students to sit in public transport when all adults are seated (Rules of Internal Order, 2018, art. 2, 3, 4, 5).

American High Point University, among the rights of students, specifically highlights the rule on the possibility of students with disabilities (disabled people) to demand “reasonable accommodations that provide equal access to courses, their content, programs, services and facilities” (High Point University, 2013). St. Mary’s College of Maryland not only defines in the most detailed way the list of student violations and misconduct (which includes, in particular, plagiarism, sexual misconduct, cyberbullying and threats), but also regulates the procedure for considering these violations, including the prosecution and defence process, so that Students The Handbook in some of its parts begins to resemble the Criminal Procedure Code (St. Mary College of Maryland, 2021).

The Charter of the Australian Ashwood High School pays significant attention to the requirement to comply with copyright laws, the prohibition of computer games, access to pornographic sites and the transmission of offensive or threatening materials. Responsibility for maintaining and using your network file storage is specifically mentioned (Rights and Responsibilities, 2021). At the American University of Willamette, it was considered necessary to secure the right of the student to be interviewed with any employer right on campus (Code of Student Conduct, 2021). In mentioned above Northbridge International School (Cambodia) public displays of affection between students are considered inappropriate behaviour.

## Conclusions

Although the right to education has undoubtedly universal human recognition and value, it can only be realized in specific historical and socio-economic circumstances. The importance of education, the need for any person and society, allows us to speak about the obligation of each individual to obtain the necessary amount of knowledge, and about the obligation of the state to ensure the possibility of obtaining it.

The rights and responsibilities of subjects of the educational process are governed by a complex system of norms, including those with generally recognized international principles, norms of domestic law, traditions and customs of society, contractual forms in the form of statutes of educational institutions and even voluntary reached agreements of participants in the educational process. The task of humanity as a whole and of each state separately is to maximize the level of education, its content and volume.

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# CUESTIONES POLÍTICAS

Vol.40 N° 73

*Esta revista fue editada en formato digital y publicada en julio de 2022, por el **Fondo Editorial Serbiluz**, Universidad del Zulia. Maracaibo-Venezuela*

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