

Empowering Youth: Shaping a Peaceful and Inclusive Future

(Original)

Luís Gustavo Gonçalves Barreira

(Age 22, Brazil)

Federal University of Tocantins

The Social Complexity of the Global Population is a study environment filled with challenges and conflicts, where peace is the light at the end of the tunnel that seems distant with every step we take towards it. The present shapes the future, and in it, individuals in formation play a leading role in building a peaceful future. But what exactly is a peaceful future? And why should young people be the protagonists in this objective? These complementary questions aim to address the fundamental question of 'how will we construct society?' The concept of a peaceful world is grounded in a harmonious space and, above all, the absence of conflicts in all their forms.

Currently, world peace is contextualized in the consolidation of concepts that establish the social structure, such as racism, sexism, xenophobia, social inequality, discrimination against LGBTQIA+ individuals, among many others, which support the debate in order to make World Peace inclusive for all societal groups. Thus, respect for differences is the first step towards the consolidation of our main objective for society, and the new generation actively engages in the debate as practical agents of the lived experiences and communications of the new existing demands.

The foundation and popularization of respect, however, are not sufficient for the consolidation of the common objective. Thus, the presence of individuals belonging to marginalized groups who experience discrimination becomes crucial as catalysts for the debate. In other words, a world where everyone has a voice and social minorities are valued will be an open space for promoting the protection of rights.

The perception of young individuals as beings in intellectual development or mere inexperienced individuals, held by a significant portion of those who govern society,

separates them from the social function of collective work. Even if their creative ideas are utilized, they are not given a space of leadership in the process of social construction. Therefore, the discussion about having a voice is more complex than simply giving young people the opportunity to speak. It is, in fact, established on the voluntary vocation of the population to listen to these young individuals because that is what ultimately creates a shared space for development. The creation of discussion forums, public debates, assemblies, along with encouragement for speaking, which can be done through essay competitions, debate simulations, and opportunities to speak at events addressing relevant causes, are alternatives and paths that society should consider in order to truly listen to the voice of the youth.

With this space, the concept of "equity" emerges and asserts itself as a "principle that aims to guarantee justice and impartiality in the distribution of resources," encompassing issues related to opportunities and benefits, always guided by the individual and circumstantial differences of each person or group. Thus, the valorization of minorities is closely related to a peaceful world, and the role of young people in promoting inclusion and equality becomes the alternative to amplify their voices against prejudice in all spaces. This should happen from their education and extend beyond academic settings, fostering and creating awareness campaigns, promoting diversity and tolerance, and defending human rights.

Giving voice to young people also establishes the importance of creating secure and accessible channels for reporting, as human rights violations and abuses happen around us. When their voices are ignored, they not only lose the opportunity for justice but also for healing and recovery. The establishment of online platforms with direct lines for reporting and assisting cases of violence, discrimination, or any form of injustice proves to be reasonable and accessible.

Therefore, the youth are responsible for a unique and valuable perspective, and it is crucial that they have access to institutional spaces to enable them to engage in political activism for the future of public policies. The creation of programs and incentives to encourage youth participation should be a priority in the present, so that the future is influenced by the decisions we make today.