



REVISTA

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## Education and social economic training

### *Educación y formación económica social*

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### Abstract

In recent decades, official discourses have attributed to education the power to solve all social phenomena that threaten and undermine life. This paper aims to specify and provide elements that allow an understanding of the relationship between education and society. Based on the concepts of education and social economic formation, our objective is to describe the relationship between: 1) education and economic infrastructure; 2) education and juridical-political superstructure; and 3) education and ideological superstructure. The study is theoretical in nature. The philosophical perspective used comes from the postulates of historical materialism and critical pedagogy. The methodology applied is based on the main guidelines of the qualitative approach, with a descriptive level of depth. The bibliographic method was used, as well as the techniques of text analysis, summaries and conceptual schemes. In the conclusions, it is exposed that the described relations allow: 1) to accelerate the qualification of the labor force; 2) to guarantee the respect for the division of labor and, to naturalize exploitation as a form of relation between human beings; 3) to create the political-legal conditions for the reproduction of the mode of production, through the joint action of the State-right-education; 4) to consolidate the ideological hegemony of the dominant social class, through the school and the official curriculum.

### Keywords

Formal education, economic infrastructure, legal-political infrastructure, superstructure, ideological superstructure-ideological apparatuses.



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## Resumen

En las últimas décadas, los discursos oficiales atribuyen a la educación la facultad de solucionar todos los fenómenos sociales que atentan y precarizan la vida. Este trabajo pretende precisar y aportar elementos que permitan una comprensión de la relación entre educación y sociedad. A partir de los conceptos de educación y formación económica social, tenemos por objetivo describir como se relaciona: 1) educación e infraestructura económica; 2) educación y superestructura jurídico-política y; 3) educación y superestructura ideológica. El estudio es de carácter teórico. La perspectiva filosófica utilizada, proviene de los postulados del Materialismo histórico y, la Pedagogía crítica. La metodología aplicada se basa en las principales directrices del enfoque cualitativo, con un nivel de profundidad descriptivo. Se utilizó el método bibliográfico y, las técnicas de análisis de textos, resúmenes y esquemas conceptuales. En las conclusiones, se expone que las relaciones descritas, permiten: 1) acelerar la calificación de la fuerza de trabajo; 2) garantizar el respeto a la división del trabajo y, naturalizar la explotación como forma de relación entre seres humanos; 3) crear las condiciones políticas-legales para la reproducción del modo de producción, a través de la acción conjunta del Estado-derecho-educación; 4) consolidar la hegemonía ideológica de la clase social dominante, por medio de la escuela y el currículo oficial.

## Palabras clave

Educación formal, infraestructura económica, jurídico-política, superestructura, superestructura ideológica-aparatos ideológicos.

## 1. Introduction

The development of productive forces, contrary to what may be believed, has led to the precariousness of the material conditions of life, so much so that in the world "inequalities contribute to the death of at least one person every four seconds" (Ahmed et al., 2022, p. 9). This problematic, caused that, in 2015, the States that make up the United Nations Organization (UN) approved an agenda with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to "transform the dominant development paradigm into one that leads us down the path of sustainable, inclusive and long-term visionary development" (ECLAC, 2018, p. 7). Likewise, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), emphasized "the contribution of education to the achievement of the SDGs" and, in addition, has repeatedly mentioned that education has the capacity to address the "urgent and dramatic challenges that the planet is facing" (UNESCO, 2020, p. 12).

In this way, we can observe that official discourses construct narratives that assign to education the extraordinary power to solve all social phenomena that put the life of humanity at risk. In this scenario, the research presented is important because it contributes to understand that formal education relates to society not precisely to "transform" it.

The research is theoretical. The theme of the paper is, "Education and Social Economic Formation". The question that guides this article is: How is education and social economic formation related? The objective of the paper is to describe some forms of relationship that derive from the interrelations: 1) education and economic infrastructure; 2) education and juridical-political superstructure and; 3) education and ideological superstructure. The purpose of the article is to contribute from a critical perspective to understand that formal education is related to society in order to reproduce and at other times create the ideological, political and economic conditions that guarantee social relations aimed at sustaining the existence of the social economic formation.



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The paper has six parts: introduction, methodology, theoretical framework, discussion, conclusions, and bibliography. In the theoretical framework, we define the concepts of education and social economic formation. Based on those concepts, in the section corresponding to the discussion, we describe the forms of relationship between: a) education and economic infrastructure; b) education and legal-political superstructure and; c) education and ideological superstructure.

The conclusions allow us to infer that education and social economic formation are related to: 1) accelerate the qualification of the labor force; 2) guarantee respect for the division of labor and naturalize exploitation as a form of relationship between human beings; 3) guarantee the political and legal conditions of reproduction of the mode of production, through the joint action of the State-right-education; 4) consolidate the ideological hegemony of the dominant social class, through the school, the official curriculum and other ideological apparatus.

## 2. Methods and materials

The study is of a theoretical nature, it analyzes the concepts of education and social economic formation. For the understanding of such theoretical objects, the postulates of Historical Materialism and Critical Pedagogy were taken as a basis. The methodology used, follows the main guidelines of the qualitative approach, because it deploys an "inquiry [...] and interpretation action" (Hernández et al., 2014, p. 7).

It has a descriptive level of depth, because it characterizes the concepts and establishes in brief outlines certain correlations. The bibliographic method was used to obtain information from non-living sources, such as documents. Purposive probability sampling was applied, based on primary documentary sources consisting of scientific articles, books, official sources, technical reports, among others.

## 3. Review of the literature

The concept of education has been defined in various ways, and the multiple conceptualizations can be associated under different criteria. In this paper, we conceive education as a political, intentional and situated process. In this sense, Paulo Freire mentions that:

First, education, whether in college, high school, elementary school, or adult literacy, is a political act. Why? Because the very nature of education has the inherent qualities to be political, just as politics possesses educational aspects. In other words, an educational act is political in nature, and a political act is educational in nature. Education has a political nature all over the world (Freire, 1990, pp. 184-185).

Following Freire's line of argument, education as a political act, intentionally deploys a set of actions aimed at transferring knowledge, skills and abilities, taking into consideration that "knowledge is not an object that is passed from one to another, but something that is built through cognitive operations and skills that are induced in social interaction" (Gallardo and Camacho, 2008, p. 51). In this way, education is an intentional political act that allows the subject, the linkage, recognition and internalization of the elements of the place where he/she develops his/her life. Thus, education as a complex political process, which crosses the various areas and activities that constitute life in society, can be presented in three main modalities: formal, informal and non-formal. Formal education is the teaching-learning organized, regulated and controlled by the State through the educational curriculum that becomes an instrument for "the creation and recreation of the ideological monopoly of the



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dominant classes and class segments" (Apple, 1997, p. 34). Then, formal education is a reproductive education, because it ensures "cultural continuity, transmitting the values and achievements of the past and present" (Marenales, 2013, p. 4). During this paper, with the concept of education, we refer exclusively to formal education.

For Critical Pedagogy, education can be observed in a double perspective; as liberating or banking. Banking education is a process that aims at the alienation of dominated groups, through their adhesion to "the dominant culture, elaborated through a selective process of emphasis and exclusions" (Freire, 1990, p. 17). On the other hand, liberating education, also known as problematizing education, aims at "the oppressed discovering the world of oppression" (Freire, 1970, p. 35) and "committing them more and more to the effort of transforming the concrete, objective reality" (Freire, 1970, p. 20).

Formal education by antonomasia is a banking education, because it becomes a mechanism that guarantees social cohesion and articulation by non-violent means. The educational process deployed to reach consensus on the multiple social phenomena is neither mechanical nor easy. On the contrary, it is a dynamic and conflictive process, because there are other ways of conceiving education that do not align themselves with formal education, but question it, refute it and propose alternatives, as in the case of liberating education. For this reason, we can indicate that within education there is a class struggle, specifically a political struggle and a struggle of ideas, expressed in educational projects, professional practices, and pedagogical models. Education, whether formal or problematizing, manifests itself in society, transcending all its spaces. Therefore, it is necessary to ask ourselves: what is society, how is it shaped, and how do education and society relate to each other?

In Marxist literature, society is a complex reality where contradictions between human beings-nature and between social classes are manifested. For historical materialism, in the abstract sense, the mode of production is made up of the "unity of the productive forces and the relations of production, together with the superstructure" (Nikitin, 1959, p. 4). However, in the real world there are no pure modes of production, but social formations that combine several modes of production, where one is imposed on the others. With the concept social economic formation, one "refers to concrete social systems with different extensions in time and space" (Küttler, 2014, p. 156).

The social economic formation is constituted by an economic infrastructure and a superstructure with two instances: juridical-political and ideological. Within the social economic formation, human beings organize themselves to produce material goods and certain forms of social consciousness, which guarantee survival and life in society. Every social economic formation is a society and, therefore, they are subtly similar concepts within historical materialism. Therefore, in the present work, they will be used as equivalent categories.

The economic infrastructure of society is constituted by: 1) the productive forces and, 2) the social relations of production. Productive forces refer to "the capacity that men possess at a given moment to obtain a certain productivity, with the help of their knowledge and techniques, machines" (Cueva, 2004, p. 10). In turn, the productive forces are constituted by the means of production and the labor force.

By means of production, we understand the "set of objects and means of labor used in the process of material production" (Rosental & Iudin, 1946, p. 309). The labor force is "the set of physical and mental faculties that exist in the corporeality, in the living personality of a human being and that he puts in motion when he produces use values" (Marx, 1975, p. 203) and in the current social economic formation, it becomes another commodity that can be



bought and sold in the market, with the particularity that it is the only commodity with the capacity to create other commodities.

The other factor of the economic infrastructure is the social relations of production, which is associated with the forms of relationship that human beings establish among themselves, during "the process of production, exchange and distribution of material goods" (Nikitin, 1959, p. 2). Historically, social relations can be of mutual aid or exploitation. In societies divided into classes, the social relations of production are exploitative. In the present scenario, exploitative social relations are manifested exclusively, but not only, in the exploitation by the owner of the means of production - capital, factories, land, tools - of the worker, who sells his labor power.

In short, the economic infrastructure is the objective basis of social economic formation, which makes it possible to ensure the "production and reproduction of the material conditions for life in society" (Küttler, 2014, p. 157).

The other element that constitutes the social economic formation is the superstructure. This is composed of a juridical-political instance and an ideological instance. In the juridical-political superstructure there is the State, the law and other apparatuses (repressive, non-repressive, bureaucratic). In the ideological superstructure are the ideas, images, representations and, in general, all forms of human consciousness, but mainly those that are "necessary to a certain structure" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 56). The relationship between the economic infrastructure and the two instances of the superstructure is neither unilateral nor mechanical, on the contrary, it is complex and dynamic.

Althusser systematizes the forms of articulation between infrastructure and superstructure, stating that: "1) there is a 'relative autonomy' of the superstructure with respect to the base; 2) there is a 'reaction' of the superstructure on the base" (Althusser, 1988, p. 5).

In this sense, the economic infrastructure and the two instances of the superstructure have relative autonomy between them, but ultimately the economic infrastructure determines the superstructure. Nevertheless, the articulation of both recreates the objective conditions and creates the subjective conditions for the reproduction of the mode of production. Therefore, based on the concepts analyzed, it is worth asking the following questions: How is education and the economic infrastructure related? How is education and the juridical-political superstructure related? and how is education and the ideological superstructure related?

Before answering the above questions, it is necessary to state that education has a margin of action on society. It can only act within the demarcations of the social formation, since the latter "establishes limits within which some other structure or process may vary, fixing also the probabilities of the specific structures or processes possible within those limits" (Wright, 1983, p. 8).

Therefore, under this explanation it is theoretically erroneous to think that education is a remedy for all the ills of society, or worse, to affirm that education alone can change the reality of a society. In this context, Paulo Freire's explanation is very accurate when he says that "[e]ducation does not change the world, it changes the people who will change the world" (Freire, 1970, p. 43).

#### 4. Results and discussion

Society -in an abstract sense- is formed by the economic infrastructure and the juridical-political and ideological superstructure, where both establish relationships that enjoy



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relative autonomy, although ultimately the economic infrastructure determines the others. Conceptually, education is part of the juridical-political instance and is linked to the social economic formation, establishing different ways of relating to the economic infrastructure and to the two instances of the superstructure.

#### 4.1. Education and economic infrastructure

The relationship between education and economic infrastructure in general has been analyzed using two perspectives or traditions, which are complementary rather than contradictory. The first perspective proposes that there is:

an element-to-element correspondence between social consciousness and, for example, mode of production. In this case our social concepts are totally prefigured from a pre-existing set of economic conditions that control cultural activity, including everything that takes place in school (Apple, 2008, p. 14).

The second tradition argues that education and economic infrastructure are the most important:

complex nexus of relationships that, in their final moment, are economically rooted, which exert pressures and place limits on cultural practice, including the school. In this sense, the cultural sphere is not a "mere reflection" of economic practices (Apple, 2008, p. 15).

There are subtle differences between the two perspectives to address the relationship in question, which may lead to discrepancies at the moment of hypothetically situating and describing the manifestations and purposes of the relationship. Thus, the first tradition corresponds to what Gramsci has pointed out as "economistic determinism" which would cause the establishment of a mechanical relationship between education and economic infrastructure, bringing the denial and theoretical reduction of the possibilities of action that education has in the real world. Thus, education and school are reduced to a simple process and space where the conditions of the economic instance of society are mechanically reflected.

In this section, we understand the relationship between education and economic infrastructure from the second tradition. That is, as a complex nexus of relationships where each concept enjoys autonomy, but at the same time is limited only in the last instance by the mode of production.

Formal education is linked to the economic infrastructure, through the school -by school we mean all the institutions of formal education-, to ensure the conditions of reproduction of the mode of production, which consists in reproducing the productive forces and the social relations of production, which are objectively already configured. Therefore, it is necessary to describe the relationships between: education and productive forces and; education and social relations of production.

Education, through the actors (teachers, bureaucrats, students, family) and instruments (laws, pedagogical practices, curriculum) involved in the teaching-learning process, operate under the logic of production and accumulation. Thus, education becomes a "functional formative" process that responds to the interests and needs of the owners of the means of production, who require, with the least possible time and investment, the best trained workers, with specialized knowledge. Under this logic, formal education has come to replace labor training and the school has replaced the factories as the spaces where the labor force is qualified.



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From a functionalist position, the fundamental objective of school education is the "training of young people for their incorporation into the labor force" (Fernández, 1995, p. 28). However, the functionalist thesis of education has been questioned through two arguments, which are: 1) the facilitation of the production process, and 2) the diversification of work.

Regarding the first argument, in the last decades, with the incorporation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to industry, it has caused an impressive development of the means of production, generating the simplification and acceleration of the production process and substantially influencing the forms of human relationship at work. Following this argument, the work destined to operate machines has not become more complex, on the contrary, it has been facilitated, so that the workers would not require specialized knowledge for their insertion in the sphere of production. However, the simplification of workers' work by means of machines has not meant the facilitation of the process of production, exchange, and distribution of material goods at the local, regional and global levels.

Regarding the argument of the diversification of work, which questions the thesis of functionalist education. This reasoning states that the development of productive forces, expressed in the implementation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), has accelerated the modernization of the means of production, generating the creation of more heterogeneous labor needs. Following the line of argument, the new jobs, every day demand a diversity of skills, knowledge, and know-how, but formal education is unable to satisfy them, because it is extremely homogeneous. This means that education does not guarantee work and what is learned in schools is not applied in the production process, generating millions of young people in the world who are not hired under the argument of "lack of specific knowledge for the job". For example, in a recent study, six hundred (600) heads of Human Talent of the most important companies domiciled in the United States of America were interviewed; more than half of the heads of Human Talent, concluded that "they do not believe that college prepares students for the job" (Shimshock, 2018, para. 2). Therefore, education does not always train the student for entry into the workplace.

From the two arguments presented, contradictions could be identified. On the one hand, it is claimed that blue-collar workers do not require specialized knowledge and, on the other hand, it is argued that blue-collar workers do require certain types of knowledge. To get around this contradiction, it is necessary to indicate that; all formal education is regulated and controlled by the state, but according to the needs and levels of development of the productive forces such as "technological growth, which has led us not only to the rapid growth of higher education in the 1960s, but also to a continued emphasis on technical and business education" (Apple, 2008, p. 32). Therefore, formal education is not completely homogeneous, because within it, there are differences in the forms, levels and contents to be taught. When diversifying the school and the contents to be taught, not only the needs of the productive forces are considered. The situations of the social relations of production are also considered. In this sense, not all schooling institutions accept students coming from the same socioeconomic situation and, much less so, teach the same contents in such institutions -despite the fact that the educational curriculum unifies contents-. Therefore, there are different schools, some of which are aimed at certain types of students, depending on their socioeconomic situation and the needs of the industry.

In this way, the school for the children of the sectors that own large means of production and capital is different from the school attended by the children of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie. Under these characteristics, the educational experiences and the contents to be taught are diversified. In one place, technical matters are taught, in other schools, knowledge aimed at management. Likewise, in some places, research is carried out to solve



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social problems, in other places, research is carried out to promote industry, and in other places, research is simply not carried out.

Therefore, by way of hypothesis, education is related to the productive forces through a socializing process that is concretized and materialized in the institutions of school education to:

1. Qualify the labor force of the proletariat, through the teaching of skills - know-how - to occupy jobs, which require greater physical wear and tear and less specialized knowledge.
2. "[To] assist ultimately in the production of the technical-administrative knowledge needed among other things to expand markets, control production, labor, people" (Apple, 1997, p. 37).
3. To engage in the necessary research and the production of knowledge at the service of industry and capital, to recreate the production, exchange and circulation of goods -commodities-.

The social relations of production in class-divided societies are exploitative. However, the development of neoliberalism "as a form of mutation of capitalism, which turns the worker into an entrepreneur" (Han, 2014, p. 9) has reconfigured the forms of exploitation in the social relations of production. Thus, the exploitation made by the employer to the worker in the factory is no longer the only one. Coercion and the limitation of the autonomy of will are no longer the only forms of exercising power in social relations.

On the contrary, alongside these forms of exploitation, there are others. The pauperization of the labor situation makes the worker become an "entrepreneur" and with this "Today everyone is a worker who exploits himself in his own enterprise. Everyone is master and slave in one person" (Han, 2014, p. 9). Thus, the new techniques of exploitation demand that the analysis of education and production relations address the new techniques of (self-)exploitation. But in this paper, we will not turn our attention to the aforementioned, but exclusively to the exploitation made by the owner of the means of production to the worker.

The relationship between formal education and the social relations of production of the economic infrastructure will be explained from the correspondence approach, whose central thesis states: "what links the school with the world of work is not fundamentally cognitive learning, but non-cognitive learning" (Fernandez, 1995, p. 31). Although it is arbitrary to divide learning in this way, we find it pertinent only for explanatory purposes.

By cognitive learning, we internalize all the knowledge, know-how and skills that give aptitude -qualify the labor force- to the worker. By learning, called "non-cognitive", "psychic dispositions and the capacity to integrate in a non-conflictive manner in one type or another of labor relations" are acquired (Fernández, 1995, p. 31). That is to say, through education, the attitudes that make it possible to initiate and maintain adequate social relations of production are incorporated.

Through formal teaching, whose main features are authoritarianism, homogenization of students, the passive-vertical relationship and the application of positivism in science, there is a tendency to find justifications that are oriented to the naturalization of situations that have been socially constructed. In general, exploitation among human beings is legitimized, the problem of social classes and the inequitable distribution of wealth, the division of labor, the division of salaries based on multiple distinctions, such as: manual and intellectual labor, sex and age, are naturalized.





In conclusion, through school education a set of mental representations is brought into play that the individual ends up incorporating, which contain the "rules of respect for the social-technical division of labor and, ultimately, rules of the order established by class domination" (Althusser, 1988, p. 3) to naturalize exploitation in the social relations of production. Then, through education, consensus is generated on certain topics, oriented to sustain and reproduce the social relations of production, based on exploitation. On the incorporation of mental representations through education, by means of the school, we will analyze it in the part corresponding to education and ideological superstructure.

#### 4.2. Education and legal-political superstructure

Within the Marxist literature, "it is possible to identify at least [...] three conceptions of the theory [...] of the State" (Cisneros, 2014, p. 192). The three conceptions are: instrumental, particular, and negative. The instrumental notion, highly abstract and generalizing, holds that every State is an "instrument for the oppression of one class by another" (Lenin, 1997, p. 8). The notion, on the other hand, defines the capitalist state as "the administrative council that governs the collective interests of the bourgeois class" (Marx & Engels, 1948, p. 12).

The juridical-political superstructure comprises essentially - not exclusively - the State, government, and law. The State, as a fictitious entity, contains all the institutions that form the juridical-political superstructure, such as: schools, courts of justice, prisons, military-police institutions, bureaucracy. In Althusser's terms, here concur the ideological, repressive and administrative apparatuses of the State. Education is part of the juridical-political superstructure and is directly and dynamically related to the State and the Law.

The State, beyond legitimizing and legalizing the economic exploitation and cultural hegemony of one social class over another, has as its fundamental task to educate the masses in order to attune them to the needs required by the economic infrastructure. Education as a set of intentional acts, is exercised through various institutions, combining coercive and consensual factors, but with the same objective; to create and recreate the rules, techniques and mechanisms that allow coexistence in society and the reproduction of the mode of production.

The State also educates the masses because in this way it guarantees its own existence and predominance. Following this line of argument, Gramsci maintains, that:

Every State is ethical to the extent that one of its most important functions is to raise the large population to a certain cultural and moral level, a level that corresponds to the need for development of the productive forces and the interests of the ruling classes. The school as a positive educational function, and the courts as a repressive and negative educational function, are the most important state activities in this sense; but tend to the same end many initiatives and allegedly private activities, which form the apparatus of political and cultural hegemony of the ruling classes (Gramsci, 1987, p. 23).

The State needs to train the masses, under the needs required by the productive forces and the social relations of production, and this is possible through the educational function that the State itself performs through school education. The State by educating the masses guarantees the political conditions that affirm its existence and supremacy.

However, in order for the State to be able to respond to the needs of the economic infrastructure, it must operate jointly with the other element of the juridical-political superstructure, which is law. The concept of law is difficult to define, due to the diversity of



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approaches and the ambiguities and vagueness of the term itself. Since Marxism, human beings in the process of production of goods have always established relations among themselves, and these relations have been regulated in some way, but only in certain societies "the regulation of social relations under certain conditions assumes a juridical character" (Pasukanis, 1976, p. 65). In this way, "modern law" produced by the nation-state is the set of legal provisions whose purpose is to regulate the social relations of production, the property relations over the means of production, and the process of production, distribution, and exchange of goods. From the neo-Kantian idealist tradition -for Pasukanis, all Western General Theory of Law is based on neo-Kantian idealist postulates- law is a set of prescriptions whose purpose is to "regulate human conduct" (Nino, 2003, p. 2) through two elements: authority and coercion.

Although the materialist and idealist conceptions of law have more points of divergence than convergence, both perspectives give law a coercive, repressive and limiting character of the autonomy of the will to ensure life in society. Therefore, the "juridical relationship does not presuppose <<by nature>> a situation of peace [...] Law and arbitrariness, those two apparently opposed concepts, are in fact very closely united" (Pasukanis, 1976, p. 115). In short, the State through law "ensures by force (whether physical or not) the political conditions of reproduction of the relations of production" (Althusser, 1988, p. 12).

For law to be able to regulate and ensure the social relations of production and, in short, to make "life in society" possible, it requires "social institutions created for the defense or protection of certain interests, legitimate or illegitimate" (Muñoz-Conde, 1999, p. 30) that maneuver through coercion. But, when people commit actions contrary to the legitimate or illegitimate interests that are safeguarded by the institutions of social control and the law, the latter operates in a repressive and violent manner through state agencies, such as the courts of justice, the police, prisons, and other institutions.

However, this type of violence institutionalized by the State, and legalized by law, is a violence of last resort and cannot be used permanently due to the factual impossibilities of States and social costs. The State cannot solve all social conflicts through violent power; it needs other forms of exercising power to achieve the same ends. In order not to reach this point, it is necessary to make individuals people subject to the law, in the sense that they are motivated by legal norms to be observed at the moment of acting.

The law alone does not subject people, and even less so when the state organs involved in legal production do not enjoy legitimacy. In this case coercion and violence are needed, but as we have already indicated, the State and the law cannot resolve all phenomena by force. For the individual to respect the rules that ensure the social relations of production, without resorting to the use of violent means, the joint action of other institutions, such as school and education, is required, so that they "ideologically" ratify the authority of law over people regardless of the content of its laws, or the legitimacy of the organs that produce or apply them.

Therefore, formal education is interrelated with law, through the formation of citizens. Thus, it contributes to the conversion of individuals into persons subject to the law and linked to the State. To achieve this result, the school is organized in a vertical and authoritarian manner, where "three different lines of authority converge: the professor and the teacher represent society, the adult group and knowledge, while the pupil and the student occupy the place of the individual, the non-adult and the one who does not know" (Fernández, 1995, p. 37).



Under this form of educational organization, it is not only guaranteed that the child obeys the adult, for being an adult, the student obeys the teacher, for being a teacher, the worker obeys the employer, for being an employer, the laws are voluntarily complied with, for being enacted by the parliament, but in essence guarantees the forced assimilation of the principle of authority, which is nothing more than the expression of the social dualism between the dominant class and the dominated class, which transcends and is expressed in the most diverse social relations, which in turn, are guaranteed by the law and the institutions of state social control.

As a hypothesis, education contributes to the process of converting individuals into persons subject to the law, through a socializing process, where the subject of law assimilates the authority and supremacy of state legal production, so that individuals recognize, incorporate and abide by the content of the normative provisions, voluntarily and without resorting to violent means. In this way, the State and the law ensure the political-legal conditions that guarantee the reproduction of the mode of production.

#### 4.3. Education and ideological superstructure

Without ignoring the multiplicity of definitions of the concept of ideology and the lack of consensus on it, in this section we will take as a basis the theoretical contributions of Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, and Michael Apple to understand the relationship between ideological superstructure and education.

The ideological superstructure can be defined as the instance where the "different ideologies, religious, moral, juridical, political, etc." (Althusser, 1988, p. 4). By ideology we understand the "system of ideas, of representations, which dominates the spirit of a man or a social group" (Althusser, 1988, p. 16). In this regard, Gramsci distinguishes two types of ideologies present in the superstructure, which are: the historically organic ideologies that "'organize' the human masses, form the terrain in the midst of which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, fight" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 56) and the arbitrary ideologies that "create nothing more than individual 'movements', polemics" (Gramsci, 1987, p. 57).

The forms of relationship between ideology and human beings can be explained through two theses: the subjective and objective. The subjective thesis holds that ideology allows human beings to represent their material conditions of life in an imaginary way. While the objective thesis states that the individual behaves, acts and limits himself under certain rules that come from the ideology he "freely" adopted. From the objective thesis, we can say that ideologies make the "free" individual a person subject to the dominant ideologies. When ideologies manage to subdue the majority of people, they reach the degree of hegemony.

Ideological hegemony is not a situation that occurs in isolation in the ideological instance, nor does it remain immobile in it. On the contrary, it becomes concrete and "acts by "saturating" our very consciousness, so that the educational, economic and social world we see, and with which we interact, and the logical interpretations we make of it, becomes [...] the only world" (Apple, 2008, pp. 15-16). From this perspective, it is necessary to describe the role of education for certain ideologies to achieve hegemony.

Education is part of the juridical-political superstructure, then, the relationship between education and ideological superstructure is contained in the total articulation of the superstructure. In this sense, the State becomes an instrument that "makes viable and coordinates" the correlation of the two instances of the superstructure, since it is the entity that exercises leadership, coordination, planning and evaluation of formal education, whether public or private. The relationship between education and ideologies is made



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viable through the educational curriculum. Every curriculum, whether official or hidden, has an ideological content and, through these contents, schools are organized and act as ideological apparatuses.

By ideological apparatuses, we indicate the set of institutions such as the school, church, media, family, unions, non-governmental organizations, political parties, social movements that "function massively with ideology as the predominant form, but use secondarily, and in extreme situations, a very attenuated, disguised, i.e., symbolic repression" (Althusser, 1988, p. 10). The school, within the capitalist social formation, is the ideological apparatus par excellence. Not only does it allow certain ideologies to achieve hegemony, but it also reduces other ideologies to their maximum expression.

Thus, the school, as an ideological apparatus, is an institution that by *antonomasia* reproduces knowledge, leaving few openings for the questioning or recreation of that same knowledge. In this way, the "school teaches a hidden curriculum that seems convenient only for the maintenance of the ideological hegemony of the most powerful classes in this society" (Apple, 2008, p. 63). Therefore, the planning and control of what is taught and how it is transferred in school institutions is "a decisive element for the enhancement of the ideological domination exercised by certain classes" (Apple, 2008, p. 42.).

Therefore, through the ideological apparatuses of the State, the ideological instance acts to convert the ideology of the dominant class into the socially hegemonic ideology; so that the individual is subjected to hegemonic ideas. Similarly, the school as a fundamental ideological apparatus, becomes the means that ensures "harmony (sometimes strident) between the repressive apparatus of the State and the ideological apparatuses of the State" (Althusser, 1988, p. 12). In this way, the school receives the ideas, representations, and manifestations coming from the ideological instance, materializes them in the educational curriculum and, under the guidelines contained in the latter, organizes, distributes and reproduces the ideas that will be transferred through education to the actors participating in the educational process.

However, education as a set of intentional acts aimed at creating cultural, ideological, and political experiences is not only present in the school. On the contrary, it crosses, to a lesser or greater extent, the rest of the State apparatus. In this way, the institutions of school education come to fulfill the task of approving what the rest of the State apparatuses must transfer as forms of knowledge with the presumption of social and universal validity. Thus, "the school not only controls people; it also helps to control meanings. As it preserves and distributes what is perceived as "legitimate knowledge" -the knowledge that "everyone should have"-, the school confers cultural legitimacy to the knowledge of specific groups" (Apple, 2008, p. 88). Likewise, the school through education makes individuals become people subject to the dominant ideology and under the premises of this ideology, they interpret reality and act upon it, either to defend or change it.

As a hypothesis, through the ideological apparatuses of the State, such as the family, school, political parties... educational processes are created and directed under the regulation of the State, to create and recreate the ideological, cultural and political conditions that allow the reproduction of the mode of production and, in addition, "socializes people by making them accept as legitimate the limited roles they ultimately fulfill in society" (Apple, 2008, p. 49).



## 5. Conclusions

Education and the productive forces of the economic infrastructure establish processes focused on accelerating the qualification of the labor force and the development of the means of production. Thus, education aimed at certain sectors of society, such as the proletariat, is oriented towards "teaching how to do" technical issues for production, while education aimed at the children of the owners of the large means of production and capital, is another. In this process, certain schools come to replace the workplace as the preferential space for qualifying the labor force.

Education and the social relations of production of the economic infrastructure establish processes focused on training students to: 1) respect the division of labor according to technique, age and sex, and 2) integrate themselves in a non-conflictive and mechanical way in the processes of production. With this, social relations of production based on exploitation are justified as natural, when several scientific disciplines demonstrate that they have been socially constructed.

Education is related to the juridical-political superstructure through a set of educational activities aimed at creating and recreating the political and legal conditions - the rule of law, democracy, law - that guarantee and facilitate the reproduction of the mode of production. By educating the masses, the State guarantees the political conditions that affirm its existence and supremacy as an entity with the capacity to fix the political-legal conditions of the social relations of production.

Education is related to the ideological superstructure through the ideological apparatus of the State -such as the school, university, among others- forming an instrumental link. Therefore, the school as an ideological apparatus of the State, through the official curriculum, receives mainly the hegemonic ideologies coming from the ideological instance. Subsequently, through education, it develops, reproduces and distributes them to all individuals to make them subjects dominated by hegemonic ideas.

In this sense, formal education fulfills a double function: on the one hand, it binds the exploited to the ideas that justify their exploitation and, on the other hand, it divides the exploited, who at times become aware of their exploitation and decide to propose alternatives to their domination.



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