

International
Journal of
**Human
Sciences
Research**

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION
IN THE USE OF
TECHNOLOGY TO
ACHIEVE HUMAN
RIGHTS**

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<https://lattes.cnpq.br/0525545044145972>

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Abstract: In this scientific article, we address the topic of citizen empowerment and participation in the context of the use of technologies to realize human rights. We explore the challenges and dilemmas that arise as technology advances rapidly. The central question we investigate lies in the pressing need to understand the implications of this technological evolution for the fundamental principles of dignity, freedom and equality. This study follows an exploratory approach, using a qualitative methodology with a deductive approach. We based our analyzes on reliable bibliographic sources. Our hypotheses highlight the threat to people's privacy and security due to a lack of regulation. Furthermore, we emphasize the importance of ethical reflection as a crucial component in the protection of human rights. The fundamental goals that guide our research emphasize the potential of technologies and the need for rigorous control over personal management and civil democratic participation. The objective of this study is to analyze the impact of technology on human rights and assess the extent to which regulation can mitigate its specific effects. The research results indicate that rapid technological advancement, when not accompanied by adequate regulation, can seriously compromise people's privacy and security, putting human rights at risk.

Keywords: Participation, Technology, Human Rights, Regulation, Implementation.

Human rights are fundamental principles that aim to guarantee the dignity, freedom and equality of all individuals, ensuring that they are treated with respect and justice in all spheres of society (Reis, 2010). Their historical origin dates back to antiquity, where they were already defended by Greek philosophers such as Socrates and Plato. However, it was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed by the United Nations General

Assembly in 1948, that consolidated human rights as a set of universally recognized norms (Campos, 2019).

Over time, human rights have undergone significant evolution, influenced by different historical and cultural contexts (Reis, 2010). Initially, they focused on ensuring the protection of life and individual freedom, but over the centuries, they were expanded to include social and economic rights, such as the right to education and health (Campos, 2019). This evolution reflects the continuous search for a more just and egalitarian society, where everyone can enjoy their basic rights.

Human rights can be classified into three main categories: civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights, and solidarity rights (Reis, 2010). Civil and political rights refer to individual freedoms, such as freedom of expression, association and political participation (Souza, 2018). On the other hand, economic, social and cultural rights cover fundamental rights related to social well-being, such as the right to decent work, education and health (Campos, 2019). Solidarity rights are related to cooperation and mutual assistance between individuals, such as the right to international solidarity in situations of natural disasters or armed conflicts (Souza, 2018).

The guarantee of human rights is ensured through international protection mechanisms (Reis, 2010). Organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of American States (OAS) have systems for monitoring and reporting human rights violations (Campos, 2019). Furthermore, international commissions and courts are responsible for analyzing cases of violations and applying corrective measures (Souza, 2018).

Despite advances in guaranteeing human rights, there are still several challenges to be faced. Discrimination and violence continue

to be significant barriers to the realization of these rights (Reis, 2010). Issues of poverty, inequality and corruption also hinder the full realization of human rights in many countries (Campos, 2019). In this context, technology can play a crucial role in facing these challenges, providing innovative and inclusive solutions (Souza, 2018).

Human rights play a fundamental role in building a more just and egalitarian society (Reis, 2010). The protection of these rights promotes citizenship and social development, allowing all individuals to have access to decent living conditions and opportunities for their personal and professional growth (Campos, 2019). Furthermore, human rights contribute to citizen empowerment and participation, strengthening the voice of civil society and promoting the construction of a more participatory and inclusive democracy (Souza, 2018).

The distinction between right and duty is a fundamental concept in the study of fundamental rights and is intrinsically linked to the idea of reciprocity between individuals and the State. Law is understood as the faculty or prerogative to act, or demand something that is recognized as legitimate and protected by the legal system (Ferraz Jr., 2016). On the other hand, duty refers to the obligation or responsibility that a person has to comply with certain standards or services in favor of another or the State itself (Alexy, 2008).

Thus, rights are guaranteed to individuals to be able to enjoy freedom and security without their life, while duties impose obligations and limitations on the behavior of citizens, aiming for the common good and harmony of society (Ferraz Jr., 2016). It is through this correlation between rights and duties that a fair and balanced social order is established, where each person has their rights respected as long as they also fulfill their duties towards the community.

The distinction between rights and guarantees is extremely important to understand the role of the State in protecting the fundamental rights of individuals. Rights, as already mentioned, are prerogatives recognized to individuals by the Constitution or other legal norms, ensuring their protection (Alexy, 2008). Guarantees, as far as they are concerned, are mechanisms and instruments that aim to enforce these rights, guaranteeing their applicability and protection against violations (Lenza, 2016).

In other words, rights are the normative contents, while guarantees are the forms and procedures that allow these rights to be effectively exercised and protected (Lenza, 2016). Guarantees can be judicial, when they involve access to justice for the protection of rights, or institutional, when they involve the creation of bodies and entities specialized in the promotion and protection of fundamental rights (Alexy, 2008).

The distinction between human rights and fundamental rights lies, mainly, in their sphere of application and scope. Human rights refer to the rights recognized to all individuals simply because they are human beings, regardless of their nationality or belonging to a specific State (Piovesan, 2015). These rights are considered universal, indivisible and interdependent, constituting a common ethical and legal basis for all humanity.

As far as it is concerned, fundamental rights are those provided for in the Constitution of a given country or legal system, providing protection for human rights within the scope of a specific nation (Piovesan, 2015). These are rights of internal application with the function of guaranteeing the realization of human rights in the national context.

The relationship between human rights and fundamental rights is close, as fundamental rights derive from human rights, being a way of implementing these principles in the

national legal sphere (Piovesan, 2015). Thus, human rights constitute the universal basis, while fundamental rights represent their implementation and protection within a specific State, strengthening the protection of human rights at the national level.

Fundamental rights are essential pillars that guarantee human dignity, freedom and equality for all individuals. In the context of education, the right to technology plays an increasingly important role in achieving inclusive, accessible and quality education. To better understand the dimensions of fundamental rights and their implications in realizing the right to technology as a citizen's role, we present table 01.

Table 01 presents definitions about citizen participation, technology and human rights, the forms of citizen participation in the previous segments, in addition to benefits, with examples of rights and challenges, and possible solutions and applicable good practices. These dimensions are interdependent and complementary, highlighting the need for a holistic approach when addressing the use of technology in the popular environment and as a way of realizing human rights.

Technology can be defined as the set of knowledge, techniques, skills, methods and processes used to produce goods, services or knowledge, as well as to solve problems and satisfy human needs (Castells, 1999). Throughout history, technological evolution has been marked by significant advances in several areas, such as agriculture, industry, communications and information technology, profoundly transforming society and human relations (Barreto, 2016).

With the advancement of technology, new possibilities and challenges arise for society. Artificial intelligence, for example, has potential ethical and legal impacts in areas such as automated facial recognition and algorithmic decision-making (Mittelstadt

et al., 2016). The Internet of Things, by connecting objects and devices to the network, raises questions about the privacy and security of personal data (OECD, 2018). Biotechnology, as far as it is concerned, brings discussions about genetic manipulation and its ethical limits (Moreno, 2005). Automation can change the labor market and labor rights, requiring adaptations and appropriate public policies (Frey & Osborne, 2017). The use of Big Data raises concerns about the protection of personal data and algorithmic discrimination (Barocas & Selbst, 2016).

Regulating technology is a complex challenge, as it is necessary to balance encouraging innovation with protecting human rights. The creation of an adequate regulatory framework is essential to guarantee ethics and responsibility in the development and use of technology (Floridi, 2016). Governments and international organizations play a crucial role in developing policies and standards that promote technological innovation in a responsible manner that respects human rights (OECD, 2019).

Technology can be a powerful tool for promoting and protecting human rights. In the field of education, for example, the use of technology can facilitate access to information and knowledge, promoting inclusion and equal opportunities (UNESCO, 2015). Furthermore, technology can be used as an instrument to defend and protect human rights, as in the case of applications and platforms that help report violations and monitor government actions (Amnesty International, 2018). Inclusive technologies have also been developed to meet the needs of people with disabilities, making their full participation in society possible (Mann et al., 2016).

Despite the benefits, technology also brings challenges and risks to human rights. The dissemination of false information

ASPECTS	CITIZEN PARTICIPATION	TECHNOLOGY	REALIZATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
Definition	Active involvement of citizens in political and social processes.	Applying digital devices and platforms to improve civic participation and activism.	Guarantee and protection of the fundamental rights of all individuals, without discrimination.
Forms of Participation	Votes, protests, petitions, involvement in civil society organizations.	Social networks, mobilization applications, online petition platforms.	Use of digital tools for awareness raising, mobilization and advocacy.
Benefit	Strengthening democracy, gives a voice to minorities, increases the responsibility of leaders.	It facilitates large-scale communication, expands access to information, connects activists around the world.	Promote equality, justice and dignity for all.
Examples of Human Rights	Freedom of expression, gender equality, religious freedom.	Protection from mass surveillance, freedom of expression online, access to education.	Combat discrimination, abuse and injustice.
Challenges	Lack of representation, citizen apathy, manipulation of information.	Invasive surveillance, disinformation, privacy threats.	Political resistance, impunity, lack of resources.
Solutions and Good Practices	Civic education, community involvement, government transparency.	Digital education, privacy regulation, data protection.	Citizen empowerment, activities of human rights organizations, law enforcement.

Table 1-Table 01: Technological citizen participation and realization of human rights.

Technological citizen participation and realization of human rights

Source: Prepared by the Author (2023)

and fake news can compromise freedom of expression and access to reliable information (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017). Technological surveillance can affect people's privacy and intimacy, generating conflicts between security and individual rights (Lyon, 2018). Furthermore, the use of algorithms can result in discrimination and automated decisions, affecting vulnerable groups (Barocas & Selbst, 2016).

Public policies play a fundamental role in the realization of human rights, providing government actions and strategies aimed at protecting and promoting fundamental rights. Examples of successful policies can be observed in different countries, such as programs to combat poverty, access to education, health and social protection (Sen, 2009). However, the implementation and evaluation of public policies present challenges, such as the efficient allocation of resources and monitoring the results achieved (Bresser-Pereira, 2016).

Technological innovations have the potential to significantly contribute to the realization of human rights in several areas (UNDP, 2018). In education, for example, the use of educational technologies can expand access to knowledge and improve the quality of learning (World Bank, 2019). Furthermore, technology can be a tool for promoting government transparency and accountability, strengthening citizen participation (OECD, 2020). The development of social technologies is also relevant to address specific challenges, such as access to drinking water in poor communities.

Collaboration between governments, companies and civil society organizations through public-private partnerships has proven to be an effective strategy in promoting human rights (UNCTAD, 2017). These partnerships allow the combination of resources and ownership of different

actors, enabling the implementation of more comprehensive and sustainable projects and initiatives (Porter & Kramer, 2019). Examples of successful partnerships can be observed in corporate social responsibility programs, with a positive impact in areas such as education, health and social inclusion (Russo & Tavares, 2018). However, joint action also presents ethical and responsibility issues that must be considered to ensure respect for human rights (Araújo et al., 2021).

Digital education plays an important role in the responsible and critical use of technology, enabling individuals to understand and appropriately use technological tools (UNESCO, 2021). Addressing issues related to human rights in schools and institutions is fundamental for the formation of citizens who are aware of their rights and duties (Freire, 2020). The dissemination of reliable information and awareness of rights are fundamental to strengthening the defense of human rights and citizen participation (OHCHR, 2020). However, the dissemination of reliable information and awareness of rights faces challenges, such as combating fake news and misinformation (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017).

The implementation of public policies with technology faces challenges related to digital access and inclusion (Câmara & Lavinás, 2019). Ensuring access to adequate technological infrastructure is essential to allow all citizens to enjoy the benefits of technology (OECD, 2020). Furthermore, it is necessary to invest in training and training for the appropriate use of technology, in order to include vulnerable individuals and groups (Almeida et al., 2022). Assessing the impact and effectiveness of technology-based public policies is a complex challenge, requiring the analysis of indicators and results (OECD, 2021).

In developed countries, several successful

experiences of public policies with technology have been observed. Digital inclusion programs in schools and communities improve access to information and education (OECD, 2022). Government projects facilitate access to public services and citizen participation in decision-making (World Bank, 2022). Cooperation between different actors, such as governments, companies and civil society organizations, makes it possible to create innovative solutions to face specific challenges.

Developing countries face specific challenges in realizing human rights with technology, such as issues of infrastructure, access and digital empowerment (UNDP, 2022). However, successful innovation experiences have been observed in areas such as health, education and social inclusion (World Bank, 2022). International cooperation plays an important role in supporting these initiatives, providing resources and expertise for project and policy development (UNESCO, 2022).

Civil society organizations have contributed significantly to guaranteeing human rights with technology, developing projects and initiatives that meet the needs of vulnerable groups (OHCHR, 2022). Joint action with the public and private sectors expands the reach and impact of these initiatives (Araújo et al., 2022). However, these organizations face financial and operational challenges that can compromise their operations.

The analysis of technological trends is essential to understand the possible future impacts on the realization of human rights (Floridi, 2022). Artificial intelligence, for example, can bring significant advances in areas such as health, education and security, but it also presents ethical and legal challenges (Mittelstadt et al., 2022). The projections and possible impacts of technological innovations must be carefully analyzed to adopt appropriate

public policies and innovative practices to guarantee human rights (Sen, 2022).

Throughout the research, important lessons learned about the relationship between technology and human rights were identified. The creation of appropriate public policies, the promotion of partnerships between different actors and digital education are key elements for the realization of human rights (Almeida & Ichihara, 2022). It is recommended that public policies be formulated based on evidence and the use of innovative technologies to face challenges and promote respect for fundamental rights. It is considered that technology, when used ethically and responsibly, can be a powerful ally in the protection and promotion of human rights (Araújo et al., 2022).

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