

Perspectives of Research on Human Rights Education¹

Felisa Tibbitts, Director and Co-Founder of Human Rights Education Associates (HREA)

Peter G. Kirchsclaeger, Co-Director of the Centre of Human Rights Education (ZMRB) of the PHZ Lucerne, Co-Director of the International Human Rights Forum Lucerne (IHRF)

Abstract

This article overviews some of the available research on human rights education (HRE), subdividing into three main categories: theory of HRE, implementation of HRE, and outcomes of HRE. The article illustrates that there is an increasing literature base for HRE, based on traditions such as critical pedagogy, comparative education studies, world polity theory, textbook and curricular analysis, school change, classroom studies, adult learning, transformative learning and youth development. Following the presentation of key results, the authors propose that future research might continue in the same vein while at the same time concentrate more fully on impact-related evaluations.

1 Introduction

Human rights education (HRE) is an emergent field of educational theory and practice gaining increased attention and significance across the globe. The international human rights movement, spurred by the efforts of non-governmental organizations, the United Nations and other regional human rights bodies, has broadened its focus since the late 1970s, by seeking to integrate human rights concepts, norms and values within the mainstream educational systems of world states. This effort, which has gained momentum since the early 1990s, has spawned a growing body of educational theory, practice and research that often intersects with activities in other fields of educational study, such as citizenship education, peace education, anti-racism education, Holocaust/genocide education, education for sustainable development and education for intercultural understanding.

The recognition of the importance of human rights education for the implementation and for the respect of human rights has grown in the last years. It is expected to be reinforced even further by the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, which will be prepared for the Human Rights Council in 2010.

As HRE has expanded in practice, the demand for an evidence base to show the “value added” of practice, and to guide and improve programming, is stronger than ever. Research in the field of HRE encompasses studies carried out in academic settings as well as those that take place in the context of program and impact evaluations. In addition, there are primary resources available in relation to the practice of HRE, such as teaching resources, syllabi, curricular policies as well as secondary resources such as conference proceedings. The purpose of this article is to provide an overview of some of the research that has been carried out to date, some preliminary findings, and some promising areas for future research. We are presenting these studies in categories that we think practitioners may also find useful for future reference.

1.1 Categories of HRE Research

In presenting the most relevant and interesting areas of HRE research, we think it is helpful to begin by thematically categorizing what is available. A simple and intuitive way to categorize the research available in the field is whether its application is primarily related to theory, to implementation or to the measurement of outcome.

Theory of HRE. This area of research is related to the goals, concepts, definitions and pedagogies (including critical pedagogies) of HRE. Research falling under this category attempts to clarify what HRE is, how it relates to pedagogical conditions, how it relates to other educational approaches (such as citizenship education, education for sustainable development and peace education), and how HRE relates to other trends in education (such as globalization and trans-national curricular borrowing).

¹ Sections of this article are taken from the forthcoming chapter by Tibbitts F./Fernekes W., Human Rights Education, in: Totten S./Pederson J. E. (Ed.), Teaching About Social Issues in the 20th and 21st Centuries: Innovative Approaches, Programs, Strategies.

Implementation of HRE. This research includes presentations of methodologies, curriculum, policies, training programs, as well as conditions promoting HRE practice, including curricular and policy frameworks, national human rights environments and the roles of key actors such as non-governmental organizations, educational policymakers and inter-governmental agencies. This research incorporates the practices of HRE, including curricular resources and programming of all kinds (formal, non-formal, educator preparation).

Outcomes of HRE. This research and evaluation studies involves the investigation of the results of HRE, including outcomes on the learner, educator, classroom/learning environment, institutions, community/society.

1.2 Working Assumptions of this Article

For the purposes of article, we are employing the formal definition of human rights education promulgated by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights defines human rights education as “training, dissemination and information efforts aimed at the building of a universal culture of human rights through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the molding of attitudes directed to:

- (a) the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- (b) the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity;
- (c) the promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups; and,
- (d) the enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free society.²

This definition is not specific to the school sector and, in fact, the United Nations proposes human rights education for all sectors of society as well as part of a “lifelong learning” process for individuals.³ The human rights referred to cover a broad range, including those contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as related treaties and covenants, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, among others.⁴

1.3 Methodology

In identifying research for this article, we included only those studies or programs that are self-identified as human rights education-related, or which have human rights as a primary theme of the learning program. This would exclude, for example, research related to citizenship education, intercultural education or peace education, unless these programs formally included human rights themes and in ways that were substantial (e.g., more than awareness raising). This article takes into account formal HRE research but not the broader set of information that presents or describes HRE activities.

In order to identify research for inclusion in this article, online searches were carried out on publicly available education databases, and including the research section of HREA’s Online Library.⁵ In addition, we included studies and program evaluations that are published or are not accessible on the Internet but had been privately shared by their authors.

We recognize that a key limitation of this article is our lack of access to or awareness of the full set of research that has been carried out in this field. Thus the studies that are referred to in this article cannot be considered to represent all of the available research in this field, nor even the most important.

In some cases, the content of studies referred to in this article encompass more than one of the categories of HRE research. For example, evaluation studies often define HRE and then proceed to identify the ways in which they anticipate seeing HRE revealed in learning settings. When associating a study with a research category, we interpreted the primary purpose of the article.

We now turn to the identification of some related studies, key findings to date, and potential areas for further investigation.

² See United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Plan 5.

³ See United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Plan 113-114.

⁴ The full set of human rights documents as well as related General Comments can be found on the website of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights at www.ohchr.org.

⁵ The research section of HREA’s online library can be accessed at:

http://www.hrea.org/index.php?base_id=103&language_id=1&category_id=4&category_type=3.

2 Theory of Human Rights Education

We can consider that the theory of research relates to the goals, concepts, definitions and pedagogies (including critical pedagogies) of HRE. Research falling under this category attempts to clarify what HRE is, how it relates to pedagogical conditions, how it relates to other educational approaches (such as citizenship education, education for sustainable development and peace education), and how HRE relates to other trends in education (such as globalization and trans-national curricular borrowing). An initial collaborative attempt is being undertaken to identify core HRE learner outcomes, or competencies, and is under development by practitioners.

Research on HRE approaches and methodologies reflects the ongoing discussion among practitioners about the characteristics of human rights education. One aspect of this discussion revolves around the theoretical basis of human rights education itself: its definition, concept and goals. This discussion sometimes touches upon related pedagogical approaches such as citizenship education, peace education, global education, and education for sustainable development.

Based upon this discourse, theoretical treatment of HRE has also explored the related implications for its didactic, methodological and curricular aspects of human rights education.

Several articles have been widely referenced in regards to the theory of HRE. Flowers' chapter on how to define human rights education presented differing definitions of HRE and analyzed these definitions according to stakeholder point of view. She noted, for example, a direct link between the role an actor plays within society and its understanding of human rights education. Governmental actors emphasize the harmonizing function of human rights education and deny the critical potential of human rights education, whereas definitions of human rights education by NGOs tend to be transformative.⁶

On the theory of human rights education C. Lohrenscheit⁷, V. Lenhart⁸ and K. P. Fritzsche⁹ have contributed with introduction texts giving an overview on the idea, the goal, and the concept. A. Prengel¹⁰ emphasized the interdependence between human rights and education with its nucleus in human rights education. I. Khan¹¹ pointed out the practice-orientation and the horizon of global citizenship of human rights education, differing from political education with its main focus on national citizenship. Programs, strategy papers and articles discuss at length the definition of human rights education.¹²

Tibbitts' article on "Models of Human Rights Education" sought to distinguish HRE typologies based on the learner goals of "Values and Awareness Model", "Accountability Model" and "Transformational Model." These typologies were associated with learner groups – the school learners and the general public, professional groups (including duty bearers), and potential activists (including vulnerable rights holders).¹³

Magendzo and other theorists have associated human rights education with critical theory, and the work of the *Frankfurt School*, whose prominent members included T. Adorno, M. Horkheimer, W. Benjamin, H. Marcuse and J. Habermas among others. These theorists were engaged in the idea of a more just society and the empowerment of people to take cultural, economic and political control of their lives. They argued that these goals could only be achieved through *emancipation*, a process by which oppressed and exploited people became sufficiently *empowered* to transform their circumstances for themselves by themselves.

The critical theorists' framework has been taken into education in a number of different ways, but most notably by P. Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed."¹⁴ His work with oppressed minorities gave rise to the term *critical pedagogy*, meaning teaching-learning from within the principles of critical theory. H. Giroux¹⁵ and M. Apple¹⁶ have provided additional theoretical accounts of the nature and working of "praxis" and critical theory in their work on

⁶ See Flowers, Rights 107-118.

⁷ See Lohrenscheit, Recht.

⁸ See Lenhart, Pädagogik.

⁹ See Fritzsche, Menschenrechte.

¹⁰ See Prengel, Menschenrechte 63-76.

¹¹ See Khan, Education 35-41.

¹² See Kirchsclaeger P. G./Kirchsclaeger T., Education 26-36.

¹³ See Tibbitts, Models.

¹⁴ See Freire, Pedagogy.

¹⁵ See Giroux, Theory.

¹⁶ See Apple, Education; see Apple, Knowledge; see Apple, Curriculum.

the political, institutional and bureaucratic control of knowledge, learners and teachers. Since 1995, the UN and other agencies have clarified that the inherent components of human rights education include knowledge, skills and attitudes consistent with recognized human rights principles that empower individuals and groups to address oppression and injustice.¹⁷

The *transformative learning* research of J. Mezirow complemented the work of Freire. Mezirow developed the principle of “perspective transformation” whereby an individual – through experience, critical reflection and rational discourse – has a meaning structure transformation. Mezirow’s approach has been associated with the “transformational model” of HRE. Returning to Freire’s work we find not only the original concept of praxis, which is so widely cited in the HRE field, but also “emancipatory transformation”, which takes Mezirow’s idea of transformative learning beyond that of the individual into social action and change. With Freire, we find the direct link between personal and social transformation, as well as the notion of critical reflection as a redistribution of power.¹⁸

Theories regarding appropriate pedagogies for HRE may not related explicitly to the theory base just cited. Although not necessarily consciously “transformational” in the ways just described, interactive, learner-centered HRE pedagogies are intended to be empowering. The following kinds of pedagogy are representative of those promoted by HRE advocates:

- *Experiential and activity-centered*: involving the solicitation of learners’ prior knowledge and offering activities that draw out learners’ experiences and knowledge
- *Problem-posing*: challenging the learners’ prior knowledge
- *Participative*: encouraging collective efforts in clarifying concepts, analyzing themes and doing the activities
- *Dialectical*: requiring learners to compare their knowledge with those from other sources
- *Analytical*: asking learners to think about why things are and how they came to be
- *Healing*: promoting human rights in intra-personal and inter-personal relations
- *Strategic thinking-oriented*: directing learners to set their own goals and to think of strategic ways of achieving them
- *Goal and action-oriented*: allowing learners to plan and organize actions in relation to their goals.¹⁹

At least one HRE study has tried to apply results to the development of pedagogical theory, in particular in regard to the fostering of responsibility and caring. In a 1999 essay regarding the intersections between human rights, the study of Holocaust, and education for global citizenship, D. A. Shiman and W. A. Fernekes²⁰ argued that five capacities require development: (1) critical analysis of social conditions fostering human rights violations and those that impede such violations; (2) identifying social conditions that make the realization of human rights guarantees difficult to realize; (3) identifying and publicizing human rights violations or assaults on human rights; (4) proposing actions to redress human rights violations and protect against future violations; and (5) organizing and acting on behalf of human rights as individuals and within groups.²¹ The organizing values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and other key human rights documents are used to examine the sources of violations of rights and to encourage action to resolve them.

A “critical human rights consciousness” is a key goal for human rights educators.²² According to G. Meintjes, critical human rights consciousness may constitute the following:

- the ability of students to recognize the human rights dimensions of, and their relationship to, a given conflict- or problem-oriented exercise;
- an expression of awareness and concern about their role in the protection or promotion of these rights;
- a critical evaluation of the potential responses that may be offered;
- an attempt to identify or create new responses;
- a judgment or decision about which choice is most appropriate; and,
- an expression of confidence and a recognition of responsibility and influence in both the decision and its impact.

¹⁷ See Amnesty International; see Asia-Pacific Regional Resource Center for Human Rights Education, Education.

¹⁸ See Friere, Pedagogy 36.

¹⁹ See Asia-Pacific Regional Resource Center for Human Rights Education, Education.

²⁰ See Shiman/Fernekes, Holocaust 53-62.

²¹ See Shiman/Fernekes, Holocaust 57.

²² See Meintjes, Rights 68.

Ideally, human rights education supports the proposition of “learning to live together” by promoting an agenda of international justice (as a precondition for peace) and by encouraging the development of personal power, group support and critical awareness.²³

3 Implementation of Human Rights Education

This research category includes presentations of methodologies, curriculum, policies, training programs, as well as conditions promoting HRE practice including curricular and policy frameworks, national human rights environments and the roles of key actors such as non-governmental organizations, educational policymakers and inter-governmental agencies. Examples of research include the practices of HRE, including curricular resources and programming of all kinds (formal, non-formal, educator preparation). We note that the *analysis of the didactic, methodological and curricular state of art of human rights education*²⁴ as an aspect of research on human rights education can be differentiated from the development of materials and instruments of human rights education.²⁵

3.1 Human Rights Education in Schools

Policy studies exist on the UN and its leading role within human rights education,²⁶ on specifically UNESCO and its role promoting human rights education in schools,²⁷ the European Union and its missing common strategy for human rights education,²⁸ and the Council of Europe and its programs for human rights education.²⁹ One study that investigated evidence of national initiatives in human rights education in schools found that despite the fact that national legislation provides a basis for human rights education in many countries, this legislation is not specific and there is little guidance at the formal policy level in relation to HRE and initial teacher training. Another trend documented was the active role of NGOs in the development of HRE in schools due to inadequate government financial allocation and decentralized systems of education.³⁰

There is evidence that HRE is emerging in the work of non-governmental organizations working at the grassroots level as well as in national systems of education.³¹ One published study on this subject indicated that the number of organizations dedicated to human rights education quadrupled between 1980 and 1995, from 12 to 50.³² An International Bureau of Education (IBE) study that examined the number of times the term “human rights” was mentioned in their documents, found a mean of .70, .82 and .64 for countries within the regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe and the former USSR and Latin American and the Caribbean, respectively.³³ A review in 1996 showed that through the cooperative efforts of NGOs and educational authorities, human rights courses and topics had been introduced into the national curricula in Albania, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Norway, the UK and Ukraine.³⁴ The IBE study and other less formal data gathering suggests that the number of educational systems including human rights in their formal curricula is now higher.

Several explanations have been proposed for the increased presence of human rights education in schools since the 1990s. One explanation relates to increased globalization, a term still being defined, but recognized as one emphasizing “world citizenship and the strong assumption of personal agency required for global citizenship”.³⁵ Moreover, authorities are increasingly calling on schools to promote respect among peoples, democratic governance and viable civil societies.

The IBE and D. Suarez and F. O. Ramirez and J. W. Meyer at Stanford³⁶ have carried out a series of studies on the growth of human rights education worldwide, with special attention to Latin America. Suarez³⁷ has looked both at

²³ See Adams, Program 48-50.

²⁴ See Lohrenscheid, Recht 37-121.

²⁵ See Lohrenscheid/Hirsch, Unterrichtsmaterialien; see Kirchsclaeger P. G./Kirchsclaeger T., Menschenrechtsbildung.

²⁶ See Mihr, Nationen 33-38.

²⁷ See Fritzsche, Menschenrechtsbildung 133-147.

²⁸ See Benedek, Menschenrechtsbildungsprogramme 117-132.

²⁹ See Mahler, Menschenrechtsbildungsprogramme 105-116.

³⁰ See Lapayese, Initiatives 389-404.

³¹ See Buergethal/Torney, Rights; see Claude, rights; see HREA [Human Rights Education Associates] <http://www.hrea.org>; see IIDH [Inter-American Institute of Human Rights], Inter-American Report on Human Rights Education, A Study of 19 Countries: Normative Development. Second Measurement; see Elbers, Rights.

³² See Ramirez et al., Rise 3.

³³ See Ramirez et al., Rise 3.

³⁴ See Kati/Gjedia, Education; see Tibbitts, Dignity 428-431.

³⁵ See Suarez, Citizens 49.

³⁶ See Ramirez et al., Rise 35-52.

³⁷ See Suarez, Citizens 48-70.

globalization in relation to transnational “policy borrowing” in the area of HR and a range of country-level predictors in understanding what may be contributing to this expansion. Factors associated with its dissemination include country history in relation to human rights abuses/human rights ratification and civil society human rights advocacy as well as local educational reform efforts. As we might have intuitively imaged, the presence of HRE in the national curricula was associated with post-totalitarian or post-conflict countries, where there have been massive human rights abuses and changes in educational leadership.

Similarly, the research of A. Keet³⁸ in South Africa has examined the interaction between the transnational efforts to promote HRE (for example, through UN agencies) and the context for selective acceptance and adaptation of HRE in national curricula on the basis of the South African educational context. The question about the universality of HR and cultural relevance is thus being played out academically through critical questions about whether “universal” approaches to HRE result in “symbolic politics” in national educational systems and how programming can be designed that is both relevant to the national and local situation and intended to forward the full range of empowerment and action-oriented goals that HRE is intended to carry.

Democratic citizenship, including human rights education, is often seen by regional human rights agencies as a way to “manage diversity”, with human rights education incorporated into processes such as the Graz Stability Pact in South Eastern Europe.³⁹ In contemporary Europe, education for democratic citizenship, including human rights education, is often a way of promoting young people’s active participation in democratic society, in promoting social cohesion and in fighting violence, xenophobia, racism, intolerance and aggressive nationalism.⁴⁰ In the early 2000s, human rights education has been linked in inter-governmental circles with a variety of global phenomena, including development and poverty, religious freedom, and globalization in general.⁴¹ Europe’s regional human rights agency, the Council of Europe, is working on developing a culture of religion, which takes an “ethics” and “human rights” based approach to religious teaching in order to provide an alternative to governments that currently offer required religion classes that can be a source of division and ethnic nationalism, as in Serbia-Montenegro.⁴²

Since the 1940s, issues-centered approaches to curriculum design in social studies programs in the United States have emphasized the importance of reflective thought among learners, a process which has most often been linked to the examination of social problems that have defined easy solutions, or which represented “closed areas” of discourse in the society.⁴³ Social studies theorists such as A. Griffin, E. Hunt and L. Metcalf, D. Oliver and J. Shaver, F. Newmann, and S. Engle and A. Ochoa have elaborated conceptual frameworks for the design of curricula that promote the development of critical reflection by students about pervasive social problems, many of which juxtapose democratic ideals and their incomplete realization as core curricular content for classroom instruction.⁴⁴ Problems such as racial/ethnic relations, patterns of prejudice, discrimination and intolerance, poverty, sexism and others directly related to human rights have been integral in issues-centered curricula, and continue to be present in social studies education throughout the USA today.⁴⁵

3.2 Regional and Country-Specific Studies of HRE in Curriculum

Regional and country-specific studies have also attempted to identify the presence of human rights themes and approaches within educational standards and curriculum.

A comparative analysis of indicators of HRE principles and content in the text of constitutions and national education laws in 19 countries in Latin America showed a quantitative and qualitative increase between 1990 and 2002. This analysis also involved an investigation of other mechanisms for promoting HRE, such as national plans of action, and specialized programs and educational units.⁴⁶

National comparative studies on the implementation of HRE nationally in schools have included the countries of Japan, Austria, Australia and the United States. These studies have demonstrated the contextual factors in countries that have contributed to government support of HRE (such as pedagogical reforms and curricular spaces for

³⁸ See Keet/Carrim, Education.

³⁹ See Council of Europe, Education 8; see South House Exchange, Education.

⁴⁰ See Froumin, Education 3.

⁴¹ See UNESCO, Education.

⁴² See Tibbitts, Report.

⁴³ See Hunt/Metcalf, High School.

⁴⁴ To explore the works of issues-centered theorists further, consult these sources: Griffin, Approach; Hunt/Metcalf, High School; Oliver/Shaver, Public Issues; Newmann/Oliver, Controversy; Engle/Ochoa, Education.

⁴⁵ See Evans/Saxe, Handbook; see Totten/Pedersen, Issues.

⁴⁶ IIDH [Inter-American Institute of Human Rights], Report 81.

HRE) as well as obstacles within the schooling sector (such as the testing culture, overcrowded curriculum, and a lack of teacher training).⁴⁷ Such studies have shown ad hoc and non-sustainable state support for HRE, with much of the push for HRE coming from civil society. The Gerber study of Australia and the United States concluded that there was no apparent relationship between the governments' ratifications of international human rights treaties and domestic practices concerning human rights and HRE.⁴⁸

L. Mueller⁴⁹ analyzed human rights education in German schools and Postsecondary institutions following the recommendations of 1980 for the integration of human rights education in primary and secondary schools by the German Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK). He evaluates the implementation of these recommendations. The 1999-2000 study conducted in 43 schools with a total of 144 teachers and 2824 students covers the recommendations in all their aspects – the content objectives, the methods used, the holistic approach to human rights education appealing to students' minds, emotions and actions as well as results and consequences – and it also correlates human rights education practice with socio-demographic variables. Mueller elaborates two key findings: (1) while the UNESCO schools are more actively engaged in human rights education, their students objectively do not have more knowledge of human rights than those in regular schools. (2) Human rights education is dependent on emotion: Emotional involvement of addressees of HRE are more likely to become active for human rights. Tackling subjects from an affective angle means enhancing the possibility of an effect on students' behavior and of effective human rights education.

V. Druba analysed the use or the linking to human rights within 95 schoolbooks focusing on space, frequency and structuring content.⁵⁰ His study showed that curricula and schoolbooks include mistakes about human rights and human rights issues. Furthermore, human rights and human rights issues are understood as facultative or even voluntary learning contents.

Regarding the curricular state of art of human rights education, for example, R. Pehm⁵¹ compared the integration of human rights education with the integration of political education in the Austrian teacher education. His study showed that Austrian teachers are not very familiar with the topic of human rights education and that they have difficulties to answer based on knowledge human rights questions.

The signatory states-parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child are obligated to address the need for human rights education through development of action plans concerning children's rights, and a number of states parties have taken action to examine current national efforts regarding education dealing with human rights. For example, on July 6, 2007, the National Human Rights Commission in India recommended that a comprehensive human rights education plan should be enacted "as a main subject at all levels from primary to post-graduate".⁵² This recommendation was the outcome of a study by a task force on human rights education created by the National Human Rights Commission of India in 2006.

In the United States, Banks' 2000 study revealed that less than half of all fifty states had mandates for the inclusion of human rights content in compulsory education, and many of these mandates were linked to curriculum subtopics (for example, study of the Holocaust and genocides) that were more narrowly focused than the definition offered by of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. In a subsequent study conducted in the United States, Banks (2001) provided evidence that human rights education was evident in statewide curriculum standards in twenty U. S. states, although it remained unclear how much time individual classroom teachers actually devote to human rights instruction, or the degree to which such instruction is informed by accurate and current information on the topic. Stone⁵³ found that while the majority of states reference human rights in their teaching standards, there was little evidence that systematic integration of human rights education was occurring in the nation's classrooms.

One study dealing with the implementation of Holocaust education, conducted by SRI Associates in conjunction with the U. S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, found that the most prominent rationale offered by classroom teach-

⁴⁷ See Lapyese, Initiatives 389-404; see Gerber, Convention.

⁴⁸ See Gerber, Convention 323.

⁴⁹ See Mueller, Schools.

⁵⁰ See Druba, Menschenrechte.

⁵¹ See Pehm, Bildung.

⁵² See HREA [Human Rights Education Associates] <http://www.hrea.org>.

⁵³ See Stone, Education 537-557.

ers in the United States for the study of the Holocaust was from the perspective of human rights. Eighty eight percent of the representative sample of 327 educators who responded reported that they had taught the topic from the human rights perspectives.⁵⁴ This was far greater than the 56% who stated they taught the topic from the perspective of American history, the second most prominent stated rationale.⁵⁵ While this would seem to suggest that human rights content is more pervasive than previously noted in the Banks study, the SRI study does not reveal what these teachers know about human rights, nor does it provide encouraging data on professional development about the topic.

3.3 HRE in Non-School Settings

In addition to taking place in schools, HRE is also part and parcel of a variety other educational settings; in training programs for professionals such as the police, prison officials, the military, social workers, diplomats; state employees; for potentially vulnerable populations such as women and minorities; as part of community development programs; and in public awareness campaigns.

Regarding the inclusion of HRE e. g. in police training programs, C. Sganga⁵⁶ stated that “police officers not only need to learn and understand human rights. They primarily need to learn and know how to implement them in their professional practice and at the same time, they need to experience and benefit from human rights protection in their work place and private life.” The orientation of HRE towards practical implementation within a specific professional context and its reciprocal content – addressees of HRE as possible subjects and objects of human rights violations – are key elements of HRE in non-school settings.

The variety and, at the same time, the common elements of successful human rights education for adults in general are part of the content of the study of K. Teleki.⁵⁷ Teleki showed that there are common elements that have to be respected in general for effective human rights education for adults. Teleki reviewed twenty-six evaluation reports of human rights training programs for adults, including target groups such as human rights defenders, police officers, government officials and the general public, and their supportive literature. Based on the evaluations focusing on quality of the programs regarding their design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation, Teleki concluded the following recommendations as being particularly important for guaranteeing successful and effective trainings in general: Human rights education programs should use the adult education methodologies that are known to be effective for human rights training: they should include follow-up with participants after the completion of the program and they should try to contribute with evaluation data to the filling of the existing lack of longitudinal evaluation data of the long-term impact of human rights trainings on participants.

The broad normative framework of human rights education and the wide spectrum of potential learners have resulted in a great deal of variation in the ways in which human rights education has been implemented. Although human rights education is defined by the universal framework of the international, and, in certain cases, regional, standards, the specific topics and their application is contingent upon local and national contexts. Regional research in Asia, for example, has documented the challenges associated with adapting programming to local contexts, as well as the need to prepare educators for accepting and implementing participatory methodologies.⁵⁸

4 Outcomes of Human Rights Education

This research and evaluation area includes studies that investigate the results of HRE, including outcomes on the learner, educator, classroom/learning environment, institutions, community/society. Some of the research that has been carried out has been done within the context of a program evaluation. Many of these evaluations are not published but some are, and could be taken into account in this article. The bulk of publicly available outcome and impact evaluations, however, are coming from higher education, where there appears to be an expanding interest in HRE.

4.1 Frameworks for Identifying Impacts on Learners

As outcome and impact evaluations in the field continue to expand, so do measurements for capturing learner outcomes. A pilot study on human rights education and student self-conception carried out in the Dominican Republic identified four categories in student responses to human rights, with reference to the differing constructions of human rights problems one can find across different communities. These four categories are (1) knowledge of human rights issues, (2) perceptions of personal abilities and preferences, (3) commitment to non-violent conflict

⁵⁴ See Donnelly, Education 52.

⁵⁵ See Donnelly, Education 52.

⁵⁶ See Sganga, Education.

⁵⁷ See Teleki, Training.

⁵⁸ See Asia-Pacific Regional Resource Center for Human Rights Education, Voices 52.

resolution, and (4) willingness to intervene in situations of abuse and solidarity with victims.⁵⁹

Some program evaluation tools exist to guide internal program managers and external researcher in the evaluation of HRE programming.⁶⁰ More tools are forthcoming, however. To change the situation of rare studies on the impact and the effects of human rights education, K. Schulze⁶¹ has developed an evaluation tool for human rights education in Germany. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Education is in the process of finalizing two tools, one to support the evaluation of in-depth training programs and the other for governments to self-assess the status of human rights education policies and practices at the country level.

A 10-country impact evaluation carried out for Amnesty International involved the development of logframe indicators for outcomes at the individual, institutional and community/societal level. The outcomes at the individual level included understanding of one's human rights and the rights of others; awareness of human rights issues; the development of empathy and care for the human rights problems of others; a sense of personal agency in promoting human rights; the application of human rights principles to one's private life and relationships; and increased personal realization of human rights.⁶²

4.2 Public Awareness of Human Rights

G. Sommer and J. Stellmacher conducted in 2002 and 2003 two representative studies on human rights.⁶³ The worldwide implementation of human rights is seen by 76% of the participants as „very important“. Regarding specific human rights, this number dropped significantly. From 17 selected human rights 11 were considered by 50% of the participants as „very important“, but 6 rights like right to peaceful assembly and association, right to asylum, right to freedom of religion were considered by less than 50% „very important“. The positive recognition of the importance of human rights in general must be combined with the results of the part of the study focusing on the knowledge about human rights. The results of this part show a very small knowledge about human rights by the participants: Only 4% were able to name the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Human Rights Conventions when they were asked to name a document which defines human rights for every human being worldwide. In the average only 3 articles of the 30 articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights could be listed. The latter results confirmed the results of a study carried out by L. Mueller and B. Weyand⁶⁴, which showed that people with higher education could name spontaneously only between three and seven human rights.

Various studies in the U.S. and Western Europe on children's beliefs and concepts related to human rights have demonstrated support for the universality of human rights. Research carried out in the 1970s with youth from the U.S., U.K. and the Federal Republic of Germany revealed that although children could not necessarily define human rights, they had a certain philosophy of rights that reflected an acceptance of human rights by virtue of being human.⁶⁵ Other studies – many of them classroom based – have documented gains in knowledge around human rights content.

4.3 Learner Outcomes Associated with Specific HRE Methodologies

These goals are integral to a conception of citizenship education that places the study of critical social issues at the center of curriculum design. As Hahn noted in a comprehensive review of the literature on issues-centered social studies in the United States, “social studies educators who make a commitment to issues-centered instruction are likely to find that their students become more interested in the political arena, develop a greater sense of political efficacy and confidence, and become more interested in the issues that they have studied as well as knowledgeable about them”.⁶⁶

These findings correlate well with the skills and dispositions noted by Schuetz⁶⁷ for human rights education, and are reinforced by the findings from the 1999 IEA study on civic education demonstrating that classroom instruction which fostered broad-based student participation with an open classroom climate and the in-depth considera-

⁵⁹ See Bajaj, Education 28.

⁶⁰ See Martin, Rights; see Tibbitts, Evaluation; see Mihr, Education.

⁶¹ See Schulze, Evaluation.

⁶² See Tibbitts, Models.

⁶³ See Sommer/Stellmacher/Brähler, Menschenrechte 211-230; see Sommer/Stellmacher, Menschenrechtsbildung 34-37.

⁶⁴ See Mueller/Weyand, Wirkung 279-295.

⁶⁵ See Torney/Brice, Childrens; see Gallatin, Conceptualization 36.

⁶⁶ See Hahn, Centered 37.

⁶⁷ See Schuetz, Culture.

tion of issues facilitated greater student commitment to political participation and tolerance.⁶⁸

One study conducted in the U.S., which compared methods of instruction on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, showed that knowledge of international law was greater for that subset of students who engaged in cooperative learning.⁶⁹ Numerous studies have confirmed the value of student-to-student interactions for enhancing cognitive learning, as well as perspective taking and more positive interactions with peers.⁷⁰ Although little work has been done specifically on human rights education, one can conclude that a teacher trained to facilitate cooperative learning, to value student opinion, to present a role model of one who respects rights and opinions of others, to encourage students to reflect upon their experience and play with new ideas, and to provide students with at least some responsibility for control over the learning process can facilitate many of the learning outcomes that are important to human rights education.⁷¹

The study of R. Pehm⁷² evaluated a four-week human rights education program in an Austrian high school at least one and a half years following the end of the program. The former students indicated that the field work (e. g. street interviews) had been the most powerful part of the program for their social learning process. They underlined that during this program they learned a lot about themselves and their social behavior. In addition to these “experience-units”, relatively abstract units on human rights treatises contributed significantly to content learning which was retained from the program.

A forthcoming study by S. Reitz⁷³ concerns effects on the social competences of the learners using e-learning in the field of human rights education. The dissertation analyses whether improving social competence via e-learning is possible at all. Human rights education is often divided into areas of “cognition”, “attitudes” and “behavior.” In order to achieve the pedagogical goals, all three areas have to be considered. In contrast to the cognitive area, the attitudinal and behavioral areas pose a particular challenge: so far, hardly any programs exist that explicitly consider these areas – most e-learning programs focus on the dissemination of knowledge.

4.4 Outcomes of HRE Curricular Programs and Classroom Environments on Learners

Human rights themes and content in schools can be found as a cross-cultural theme within educational policy or integrated within existing subjects, such as history, civics/citizenship education, social studies and the humanities. Human rights education can also be found in the arts and in non-formal clubs and special events that take place in the school setting. Whole-school approaches to the integration of human rights values are also becoming established in practice and in the literature.

Most research in relation to HRE in schools has focused on their presence in the curriculum and associated aspects of formal education, such as teacher preparation. However, the very features of HRE that make it possible for human rights education advocates to promote (and claim) that they are integrating HRE in schools make it difficult to categorize HRE. The diverse approaches of HRE are evident in at least three ways: the learning goals of HRE, the content of HRE (meaning the topics that are emphasized), and the ways in which HRE is introduced in schools (for example, as a cross-curricular theme or through informal education activities). Such diverse approaches make it difficult for comparative research to be carried out, so studies at the school and classroom level are largely, although not exclusively, local in focus.

Knowledge. Studies from the 1970s already began to document that although students believe that human rights ought to be universally respected, their level of knowledge about this subject is not as high as one might wish. In the Educational Testing Service survey of college students in 1976, for example, half of the items regarding human rights appeared in the list outlining serious misconceptions on the part of students. Whereas only about half the students knew that the United Nations promulgated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), more than three-quarters of the freshmen overestimated the number of human rights treaties that the United States had ratified.⁷⁴ These findings were actually more positive than a poll conducted by P. D. Hart Research Associates in 1997 with U.S. 11th and 12th grade students that showed only a 4% awareness of the existence of the UDHR as an official document that set forth human rights for everyone across the globe; moreover, 59% of the youth surveyed did not believe that any such document existed.⁷⁵

⁶⁸ See Torney/Richardson, Assessment 185-210.

⁶⁹ See Branson/Torney, Rights 44.

⁷⁰ See Branson/Torney, Rights 44-45; see Furth, World.

⁷¹ See Branson/Torney, Rights 45.

⁷² See Pehm, Schulfach.

⁷³ See Reitz, Vermittlung.

⁷⁴ See Klein/Ager, Knowledge 56-77; see Branson/Torney, Rights 38-39.

⁷⁵ See Hart, Survey.

Several studies have been carried out from a developmental perspective to examine adolescents' and children's knowledge about their own rights. G. B. Melton⁷⁶ was one of the first to provide an account of the development of children's reasoning about their rights in hypothetical situations as well as their general knowledge of children's rights. The results of these studies showed that the development of reasoning by children regarding children's rights was dependent on two variables: age and socio-economic background. Older children and children from high status families thought about rights in more abstract terms, based on moral considerations, while younger children, particularly those from a lower status background displayed more egocentric reasoning in which rights are defined in terms of what one can do or have.

Ruck, Abramovitch and Keating⁷⁷ criticized this developmental framework, asserting that a stage framework, in fact, does not characterize adolescents' and children's conceptions about children's rights. Instead, they argue, such knowledge is highly influenced both by the social content (home or school) in which the right is embedded and by the type of right under consideration.⁷⁸

Values, Attitudes and Feelings. Values associated with HRE include: accepting differences, respecting the rights of others (especially members of less powerful groups), and taking responsibility for defending the rights of others.⁷⁹ Certain authors have suggested that learners should be encouraged to develop empathy and multiple perspectives in order to understand human rights and the import of this value system for interpersonal behavior, such as being considerate of others.⁸⁰

The effect of children's rights education on the attitudes and behaviors of children has been assessed in empirical studies by Decoene & De Cock⁸¹ and Covell & Howe.⁸² The evaluation data gathered in these studies indicate that children's rights education is an effective agent of moral education. Children who learn about the Convention on the Rights of the Child and about the rights of children show more rights-respectful attitudes toward other children and toward adults. In particular, students who learn about children's rights indicate more positive attitudes toward minority children.⁸³ A study of the Facing History Program which emphasizes moral behavior and individual decision-making through a reflective examination of the Holocaust showed that young people who participated in the program grew in psychosocial competencies in their interpersonal and intrapersonal skills.⁸⁴

Higher empathy is one of the characteristics of adolescents that has been associated with political tolerance.⁸⁵ The importance of developing greater empathy among students was also emphasized by Staub who in his analysis of the roots of genocide and massive human rights violations in various countries, argued for the need to "teach children about the shared humanity of all people", particularly by helping them "learn about the differences in customs, beliefs and values of different groups of individuals while coming to appreciate commonalities in desires, yearnings, feelings of joy and sorrow and physical and other needs".⁸⁶

One human rights-oriented curriculum implemented at Hunterdon Central Regional High School in Flemington, New Jersey, beginning in 1990 involved classroom instruction that introduced students to case studies of human rights abuses followed by the use of simulations of United Nation's human rights monitoring bodies and their efforts to address violations brought forward within the United Nations human rights treaty framework. In addition to providing students with relevant information about the operation of the UN international human rights system, a major goal of this curriculum emphasized the development of empathy among students regarding the victims of international human rights violations, such as torture, disappearances, and other examples of state-sponsored violence.⁸⁷ An action research study conducted with student and teacher participants in this curriculum over a three-

⁷⁶ See Melton, Concepts 186-190; see Melton, Advocacy.

⁷⁷ See Ruck/Abramovitch/Keating, Children 404-417.

⁷⁸ See Molinari, Social 232.

⁷⁹ Partners in Human Rights Education, Manual; see Dupont et al., Children; see Matus, Women; see Mihr, Education; see Bernath et al., Rights 14-22; see Claude, Rights.

⁸⁰ See Glover/O'Donnel, Rights 15-17.

⁸¹ See Decoene/DeCock, Children 627-636.

⁸² See Covell/Howe, Children 171-183; see Covell/Howe, Education 31-42.

⁸³ See Covell/Howe, Children 171-183; see Decoene/De Cock, Children 627-636; see Covell/O'Leary/Howe, Curriculum 302-313.

⁸⁴ See Barr, Reflections 145-160.

⁸⁵ See Avery, Tolerance 274.

⁸⁶ See Staub, Origins 405.

⁸⁷ See Gaudelli/Fernekas, Rights 18-21.

year period confirmed this impact for a majority of the students. At the same time only a very small number of students indicated any interest in taking social action, leading the researchers to conclude that “most students view caring and empathy as internal responses, rather than social ones”.⁸⁸

The Hampshire County Rights Respect and Responsibility school reform (RRR) in the United Kingdom is a whole school approach based upon the Convention of the Rights of the Child. In correspondence with the Convention of the Rights of the Child, the RRR focuses on the need to protect the rights of all children, helps them to understand their responsibilities, and offers a framework for teaching and learning. This way the RRR promote the practice of democratic citizenship and respect for human rights among all members of the school community. K. Covell & R. B. Howe⁸⁹ conducted a three-year evaluation of the RRR using a multi-method approach including a survey, interviews and focus groups. The study (the second annual evaluation) – based on information provided by 16 schools comprising 15 head teachers, 69 classroom teachers and 96 pupils – shows a demonstrated significant impact on the school environment where RRR has been fully implemented. These impacts include positive results on pupils’ social relationships, behavior and achievement. Teachers also reported an overall positive effect of RRR on their teaching and relationships within the school.

Participation. Academics interested in education for democracy have commented that both HRE and social justice-oriented approaches should lead students to “change the existing political domain rather than just participate in it”⁹⁰ and pursue a liberation agenda that looks at power, knowledge and authority.⁹¹

Surveys have shown that people have a natural understanding of injustice and become active participants if they (a) have a sense of self esteem and (b) have had experiences of great injustice either personally or through stories being told to them.⁹² Civic involvement in adulthood is traced to experiences of group membership and engagement in the adolescent years.⁹³

Significantly, one of the main messages of the 1999 IEA Study was that there are multiple modes of citizenship. These certainly include knowledge, voting and volunteering, but also encompass other types of psychological engagement with society (sense of confidence in one’s ability to make a difference in the groups to which one belongs) and/or a willingness to protest non-violently against injustice.

The latter has been termed social movement-related participation and includes beliefs that adult citizens should join human rights and environmental organizations or participate in groups acting to benefit the community. Interestingly, students differ across countries in the types of political engagement they anticipate being involved in.⁹⁴

The 1999 IEA Civic Education Study showed that only 10 percent of U.S. 9th graders reported participating in youth organizations affiliated with a political party, and six percent participated in human rights organizations. The latter statistic was consistent with the international average across all 28 countries participating in the study.⁹⁵ These statistics demonstrate that schools do not appear to be environments where human rights activism is an integral component of the curriculum or overall school program. Rather, there appears to be some ambivalence among educators about whether schools “should be in the business of promoting political activism”.⁹⁶

One human rights-oriented curriculum that took place in a U.S. classroom involved exposing students to case studies of human rights abuses and simulation activities intended to elicit an empathetic response in students. A related study confirmed this impact for a majority of the students. At the same time only a very small number of students indicated any interest in taking social action, leading the researchers to conclude that “most students view caring and empathy as internal responses, rather than social ones”.⁹⁷

Other studies have also found that many individuals who support human rights in principle are unlikely to take action when faced with human rights problems.

⁸⁸ See Gaudelli/Fernekes, Rights 22.

⁸⁹ See Covell/Howe, Rights.

⁹⁰ See Oesterreich, Justice 287-301.

⁹¹ See Hawes, Grain.

⁹² See Mueller, Rights 6.

⁹³ See Verba et al., Voice; see Youniss/McLellan/Yates, Engendering 620-631; see Flanagan/Sherrrod, Development 452.

⁹⁴ See Torney/Richardson, Assessment 197.

⁹⁵ See National Center for Education Statistics, Condition 110.

⁹⁶ See Campbell, Voice 28.

⁹⁷ See Gaudelli/Fernekes, Rights 16-26.

4.5 Impact of HRE Programming on Adults, Their Professional Work and/or and Their Communities

Some examples of impact studies related to HRE and adult training were included in a special issue of *Intercultural Education*⁹⁸ devoted to HRE and transformative learning.

The impacts reported by the authors were those originally targeted by the programs themselves. Outcomes for the rural women in Turkey participating in the WWHR-New Ways program showed not only significant increases in cognitive, affective and action competencies but also reported decreases in physical and emotional violence from partners, a nearly unanimous increase in self confidence and, in many cases, decisions to return to education or to the workforce. An independent evaluator also documented changed family relationships, including a shift in decision-making power in the family. Although only one third of the women participating in the program ended up joining a civil society group following the training, over the years a dozen independent women's grassroots initiatives were organized successfully by the trainees.⁹⁹

In Argentina, "personal empowerment" was documented for the 31 women who not only participated in the right to health care workshops but were willing to contribute their testimonials to the human rights report.¹⁰⁰ Equally significant for the trainers was the ways in which these led directly to social action and change. At the end of this initiative, a faculty of medicine and a nursing faculty in the province where a complaint about discrimination had taken place had agreed to add to the curriculum a course on human rights in order to sensitize novice doctors and nurses about the rights of all patients to health care and respectful treatment in medical settings. Moreover, the municipal Secretary of Health and the Ombudsperson's Office had initiated investigations into the allegations made in the human rights report.

The human rights educators and workers attending the training of the Canadian Human Rights Foundation arrived already familiar with the human rights framework and dedicated to its implementation.¹⁰¹ For these trainers, the impacts were increased skills and knowledge that could be applied in their activist and training work, an enhancement of their self perception and renewal as a human rights educator or activist. Follow up with the trainees showed that the majority had actively applied training elements to their work.

4.6 Environmental and Personal Characteristics Associated with HRE Occurrences and Impacts

Certain personal characteristics and backgrounds of learners have been associated with positive results related to HRE. These backgrounds may be divided by target group, gender, learning environment and country predictors.

Target groups. In the *Intercultural Education* special issue on "Transformative Learning and HRE," three kinds of learners were included in the studies:

- so-called human rights victims - those experiencing restrictions on the enjoyment of their human rights (women in rural Turkey, poor women in Argentina without access to proper health care, educators suffering under military dictatorship in 1980s Chile);
- adolescents (who are naturally in a critical developmental stage of life); and
- human rights activists and educators (already presumably empowered).

Although transformative experiences are identified for all groups, the articles showed that there were differences of degree and kind. Based on the outcomes reported, human rights education program experiences for groups suffering oppression were the most profound, as illustrated through dramatic shifts in perspectives and empowerment.

Groups suffering from oppression are linked not only with a larger collective experience but with a particular time in history and place. For example, the initial human rights education programs presented for Chile took place during the period of military dictatorship. In Turkey, legal changes enhancing the role of women had made headway in official circles but remained to be realized in practice in more traditional regions. In Argentina, the women denied access to health care suffered not only from sheer poverty but also limited family planning options. Thus, the larger context for the human rights learner is a political and social one, one marked by inequities in power and justice.

⁹⁸ See *Intercultural Education*, Special Issue on Human Rights Education.

⁹⁹ See Ikkaracan/Amadeo, Rights 115-128.

¹⁰⁰ See Chiarroti, Reality 129-136.

¹⁰¹ See Nazzari et al., Model 171-186.

Gender. Gender-based differences are emerging as an area of special interest in human rights education programming and may warrant additional scrutiny.

A German study of the impact of human rights education programming on students at 43 schools showed that the results – as demonstrated through personal engagement with human rights concepts – were highest for those students profiled as “emotionally oriented/social.” This profile included characteristics such as “cooperative,” “emotionally sensitive,” “feeling troubled when witnessing human rights violations” and “actively engaged for human rights”, and contrasted with other student profiles the researcher labelled “rational/sceptical” and “self-concentrated/impulsive”. Reinforcing the finding that those students (predominantly female) who are more “emotionally oriented” will have greater engagement with human rights concepts, teachers in these schools confirmed that they had found most effective those teaching methods that permitted the greater emotional involvement of their students.¹⁰² Other sources have found gender differences more generally in attitudes relating to social justice.¹⁰³ Higher empathy is one of the characteristics of adolescents that has been associated with political tolerance.¹⁰⁴

The issue of gender as it relates to political knowledge has also emerged in the International Education Association studies. The 1999 IEA Civic Education Study, which surveyed 88,000 14-year-olds, also revealed gender differences in relation to political activity. At age 14, the most striking gender difference was observed in the Support for Women’s Political Rights Scale, with females more supportive than males in every country. Females were also substantially more supportive of immigrant’s rights, more likely to collect money for a social cause, and less likely to express general interest in politics and to say they would block traffic as a form of protest.¹⁰⁵

Learning environment. According to results from the 1999 IEA Civic Education Study, students’ experiences of democracy at school and with international issues have a positive association with their knowledge of human rights.¹⁰⁶ Looking at rights-related attitudes, students with more knowledge of human rights, more frequent engagement with international topics, and more open class and school climates held stronger norms for social-movement citizenship, had more positive attitudes toward immigrants’ rights, and were more politically efficacious.

Over the years, numerous studies have been conducted on classroom processes in order to see the connection between these and democratic values. These studies have shown that an open classroom climate, cooperative learning environments and student participating in school decision-making structures are associated with higher levels of political knowledge and efficacy, support for democratic values, higher levels of moral development, and expectation that students would participate in political and social-movement activities as adults.

Country-level predictors. Data from the 1999 IEA Civic Education Study was used to examine country differences in students’ knowledge pertaining to human rights compared with other forms of civic knowledge, and students’ attitudes toward promoting and practicing human rights. The results show that countries with governments that pay more attention to human rights in intergovernmental discourse have students who perform better on human rights knowledge items.¹⁰⁷

5 Conclusion

The article demonstrates that there is an expanding literature on HRE, based on traditions such as critical pedagogy, world polity studies, textbook and curricular analysis, school change, classroom studies, adult learning, transformative learning and youth development. The rich and diverse range of research that has already been carried out suggests many discrete directions that future studies may take. Additional research in any of the aforementioned categories would be welcomed and would increase our understanding of the theory and practice of HRE.

However the unique qualities that HRE aspires to have – such as the use of participatory and critical pedagogy – and its aims to promote a human rights culture suggest that future research might concentrate especially on these areas. Human rights education is attempting to distinguish itself on the basis of its potential to “empower” and

¹⁰² See Mueller, Rights.

¹⁰³ See Atkeson/Rapoport, Things 495-521; see Hess/Torney, Development; see Sotelo, Political 211-217; see Verba/Schlozman/Brady, Voice.

¹⁰⁴ See Avery, Tolerance 274.

¹⁰⁵ See Torney-Purta, Socialization 472-473.

¹⁰⁶ See Torney-Purta, Socialization 465-478.

¹⁰⁷ See Torney-Purta et al., Adolescents 857-880.

“transform.” Yet, our understanding of how such dynamics can take place are somewhat limited, at least in the research base.

There also remains a need for scientifically rigorous impact evaluations on the outcomes of HRE programming, and how such programming can successfully operate within a given human rights context, learning environment and learner group. Practitioners should be able to draw on studies in order to design programs in ways that will maximize its benefits, taking into account these many variables. Researchers may also want to pay special attention to contexts or learner groups where we may be finding particular strong impacts. For example, studies conducted to date suggest that HRE outcomes may be influenced by individuals with particular background characteristics (e.g., highly empathetic persons, membership in a vulnerable group). Such research may help us to fill the “action” gap between HR awareness and knowledge and participation in the political domain or taking steps to change behavior in inter-personal relationships.

At the same time, the design and conduct of research in the field of human rights education should remain grounded in rigor and realism. Even if practitioners would hope that human rights education programs will bring about changes supportive of a human rights culture, as with any educational program, one cannot expect such outcomes on the basis of short-term educational experiences. Thus, as future studies allow us to better understand the ingredients for success – as well as failure – within HRE, such lessons can be applied for program improvement.

Ten years ago, the reference section for this article would have been a substantially shorter one. We can only hope that in ten years’ time we will have an equivalent explosion of quality and quantity in terms of HRE studies and insights into practice.

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Felisa Tibbitts

Direktorin und Mitgründerin Human Rights Education Associates (HREA)

Director and Co-Founder of Human Rights Education Associates (HREA)

Geboren 1959. Felisa Tibbitts ist Direktor und Co-Gründerin von Human Rights Education Associates (HREA), einer internationalen Nichtregierungsorganisation, die sich Menschenrechtsbildung widmet. Felisa Tibbitts studierte Erziehungswissenschaften, absolvierte dann einen Master an der Kennedy School of Government und der Graduate School of Education an der Universität Harvard, wo sie auch eine Zusatzausbildung abschloss. Felisa Tibbitts hat nationale Lehrplan-Reformprojekte mit Menschenrechtsbildungsfokus in Albanien, China, Kroatien, Estland, Nordirland, Marokko, Rumänien und in der Ukraine durchgeführt und Trainings in über 20 Ländern gehalten. Zudem lehrt sie in den Online-Kursen von HREA, ist Dozentin an der Harvard Graduate School of Education und Gastprofessorin an der United Nations' University for Peace in Costa Rica.

In 2009 gab sie ein Gewaltpräventionscurriculum mit integriertem Menschenrechtsansatz heraus und trug zu einem Menschenrechtslehrplan für die UNRWA-Schulen in Gaza bei. Zudem führte sie eine 10-Länder-Effekt-Evaluation der Bildungs- und Trainingsprogramme für Amnesty International durch.

Felisa Tibbitts berät das UNO-Hochkommissariat für Menschenrechte, UNICEF, UNESCO, OSZE, den Europarat und das Open Society Institute.

Peter G. Kirchsclaeger

Co-Leiter Zentrum für Menschenrechtsbildung (ZMRB) der PHZ Luzern, Co-Leiter Internationales Menschenrechtsforum Luzern (IHRF)

Co-Director of the Centre of Human Rights Education (ZMRB) of the PHZ Lucerne, Co-Director of the International Human Rights Forum Lucerne (IHRF)

Geboren 1977. Studium der Theologie, Judaistik und Philosophie in Luzern, Rom (Gregoriana) und Jerusalem (2001: Lizenziat an der Universität Luzern) und Philosophie, Religionswissenschaft und Politikwissenschaft in Zürich (2003: Lizenziat an der Universität Zürich). 2002-2005: Leiter Kompetenzzentrum SCIENCE & SOCIETY am Institut für Kommunikation und Kultur, Universität Luzern. Seit 2003: Mit-Gründer und Co-Leiter Internationales Menschenrechtsforum Luzern (IHRF), von 2003-2005 an der Universität Luzern, seit Dezember 2005 an der Pädagogischen Hochschule Zentralschweiz Luzern (PHZ Luzern). 2004-2008: Promotionsstudium im Fach «Neues Testament» an der Theologischen Fakultät der Universität Zürich im Rahmen eines Forschungsprojektes des Schweizerischen Nationalfonds (SNF) «Der absolute Wahrheitsanspruch des johanneischen Christus als Anfrage an das Gespräch zwischen den Religionen» (2008: Abschluss des Verfahrens). Seit 2004: Promotionsstudium im Fach «Philosophie» zum Thema "Philosophische Begründung der Menschenrechte» an der Otto-von-Guericke-Universität Magdeburg. September 2005-August 2006: Forschungsaufenthalt an der University of Chicago Divinity School (USA) mit einem Forschungsstipendium des Schweizerischen Nationalfonds (SNF), der Schweizerischen Studienstiftung und der Otto Herz-Studienstiftung. Seit 2007 Co-Leiter des Zentrums für Menschenrechtsbildung (ZMRB) der PHZ Luzern.