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Evaluating Human Rights Education

How do we know it is working?

Supervisor: Prof. **Paolo De Stefani**

Candidate:
Ane Krestine Larsen

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A word cloud centered around the theme of Human Rights Education. The words are arranged in a dense, overlapping manner, with some words being significantly larger than others. The colors of the words include shades of green, yellow, red, and orange. The background is white.

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Abstract

Human rights education is ascribed great potential in terms of creating citizens committed to the fundamental values of human rights and democracy. Yet, remarkably little evaluation is conducted of human rights education programmes, making the knowledge of the actual impact limited and causing a lack of deliberate improvements. Moreover, arguments for the added value of human rights education based on assumptions are less convincing than those being a result of factual research.

The objective of this thesis is to provide a framework for evaluating human rights education. Such tool will contribute to the students' learning process, the advocacy work for the implementation of human rights in national curricula and the improvement of educational initiatives. The suggested evaluation model is based on a case study of the Amnesty International programme 'Human Rights Friendly Schools'. This is supported by a comprehensive overview of international instruments and a theoretical conceptualization of human rights education.

Based on the case study I conclude that human rights education does have a positive impact on the relation among students and teachers, the learning process, and the general school environment. Finally, I provide a list of recommendations targeting the main stakeholders that are able to make human rights education a reality worldwide.

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List of Abbreviations

AI – Amnesty International

CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

CoE – Council of Europe

CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child

DEA – The Development Education Association

DIHR - Danish Institute for Human Rights

EDC – Education for Democratic Citizenship

EU – European Union

HREA – Human Rights Education Associates

HRFS – Human Rights Friendly School

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

OHCHR – Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

OSCE – Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

PDHRE – Peoples Decade for Human Right Education

UDHR – Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UN – United Nations

UNESCO – United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund

"Education is the most powerful weapon
which you can use to change the world."

Nelson Mandela

Introduction

To respect and safeguard human rights, knowledge of what human rights are is essential. I believe that in building a society that values human rights and democracy, education plays an important role - what is being taught in schools should reflect the kind of citizens we wish to be. Learning about human rights can be viewed as a strategy for participatory economic, social and human development. In doing so, human rights education becomes a mediator for social change. The arguments for promoting human rights through education are plenty. Human rights education has the potential to engage people in society as participating and critical citizens, committed to the fundamental values of democracy. Human rights education can be a tool to ensure inclusion and dignity for all and provides a framework to help us understand problems in society, whether they be related to history, to political or to institutional structures. Human rights education is a way to “challenge all of us to prevent history from repeating itself by providing the knowledge, tools, resources, networks and vital voices towards a more equitable and peaceful world.”¹

The right to education also encompasses the right to learn about rights. Human rights education has been on the agenda of the UN since the 1990s. Through declarations and educational programmes, the organisation has repeatedly aimed to make governments prioritize human rights education. Nevertheless, due to lack of political will and allocation of resources, worldwide education in human rights remains a goal yet to be fulfilled.

Politicians are the main stakeholders to be convinced that teaching human rights is indeed a crucial part of sustainable peace and democracy. To do so, evidence of the added value makes for a strong argument. However, while the potential of human rights education is great, not many studies have been conducted on its actual impact. For evaluation to be useful, it is essential to consider the defined objectives of human rights

¹ Kissane, 2009, p. 75.

education, i.e. to know one's rights and to have the insight, confidence and courage to claim those rights. Meanwhile, human rights education should foster an understanding of the individual as a right holder as well as a duty bearer. It is thereby not limited to gaining knowledge of the legal framework and institutions responsible for upholding human rights. Human rights education is value education, meant to influence attitudes, social norms and behaviour.

Scope and Aim of the Research

This research seeks to provide an understanding of whether and how the impact of human rights education can be evaluated through examining its added value, its alleged providers, and its existing methods of evaluation. First, I will discuss the role of education as such in shaping common values to gain an understanding of the potential of teaching human rights. Next, I will present an overview of the international legal framework advocating the importance of human rights education. This will be followed by an extensive theoretical conceptualisation that defines aims, methodology, assessment and impact of human rights education.

To combine theory and practice, I have chosen to include a case study of an education programme which will be introduced in the second chapter. By exploring the approach taken to teaching and evaluating, I will suggest an evaluation design for human rights education. Furthermore, I will analyse the perceived changes the programme has contributed to creating.

The last chapter will present arguments for the importance of implementing human rights education in national education policies. Thereby, the outcome of the research will have two dimensions – a tool for educators to evaluate and thus improve human rights education and a contribution to the advocacy work for the relevance of human rights education.

Case Study

The focus of the case study is a long-term human rights education programme targeting secondary schools by Amnesty International (AI), called 'Human Rights Friendly Schools' (HRFS). Taking a 'whole-school' approach, AI seeks to assist educational institutions and teachers in the holistic integration of human rights into everyday life. This is done by focusing on implementing the principles of human rights into four key areas of school life - participation and governance, community relations, curriculum, extra-curricular domain and school environment. Thereby, the students are encouraged to adopt a common set of values and become aware of their rights and duties as citizens. Among the participating countries are Italy and Denmark whose participating schools will be the subject of this research. Based on AI's defined success criteria together with evaluation and interviews in the participating schools, I will assess the value of integrating human rights into school life. Furthermore, I will point out the benefits and the shortcomings of the AI approach to human rights education and gain an idea of how human rights are continuously part of everyday life in the participating schools. This will be explored by questioning whether teachers and students have found human rights to be a useful framework and if any noticeable transformation has occurred in the behaviour and values of the students since participating in the project.

Additionally, interviews with scholars from Italy and Denmark with practical experience in teaching have been conducted to add to my understanding of human rights education in general and evaluation methods in particular.

Chapter I

Human Rights Education

1.1 Education

The first part of this chapter will be an introduction to education. Through an elaboration of the nature of education, I will discuss what role education plays in shaping citizens and society. Moreover, I will explore what skills successful education should foster and whether values can be taught.

1.1.1 The Potential of Education

Educational institutions are central to the construction of identity and to facilitating changes in society as “the role of education today is crucial in shaping a better tomorrow.”² Educational reformer John Dewey understood the school “as an agent of social reconstruction.”³ Dewey believed in progressive education where the learning process is characterised by being democratic and participatory. He defined education as a “reconstruction or reorganisation of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience.”⁴ School communities are among the earliest opportunities in which children experience societal and public interaction.⁵ Schools are a reflection of the communities and the context in which they are set. At the same time, schools can be ideal model communities, articulating a vision of a society founded in common values and respect for human rights. In schools students can gain insight into the power of participation and joint action.⁶ Schools give students an opportunity to become aware of “other versions of reality” and “explore alternative visions of the future”⁷, making education “a

² The Development Education Association (DEA), ‘Our Global Future’, 2009, p. 2.

³ Richardson, 2008, p. 62.

⁴ Dewey, 2008, p. 71.

⁵ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 28.

⁶ Pike, 2008, p. 230.

⁷ *Ibid.*

platform for individual and community development.”⁸ Furthermore, education is crucial for material and social prosperity, and “can be considered one of the most important factors for enabling countries to work their way out of perpetual poverty.”⁹

Education can only facilitate change when the individual is recognized as an active participant in the learning process. Paulo Freire’s famous work from 1970, ‘The Pedagogy of the Oppressed’, provides valuable insight into the nature of education and how to make education a tool for change. Freire’s viewed the education system as instrumental for maintaining and oppressing people. Based on philosophies on societal change and his own experiences as an educator in Latin America in 1960s, he developed a revolutionary perspective on the potential of education. Freire encouraged a shift from understanding education as an instrument for integrating new generations into existing systems, to understanding education as instrumental for change, implying critical thinking and freedom to participate in constructing society. This relates to Dewey who stated education could be either retrospective or prospective, meaning education “may be treated as process of accommodating the future to the past, or as an utilization of the past for a resource in a developing future.”¹⁰ Freire works on the basic assumption “that man’s ontological vocation [...] is to be a Subject who acts upon and transforms his world, and in so doing moves toward ever new possibilities of fuller and richer life individually and collectively.”¹¹ The world is not static but can transform with the transformation of man. Instead of accepting that circumstances simply occur and ‘happen’ to us, we ourselves can change society in the direction we wish to. Thereby, education becomes empowerment which gives human beings the possibility to define societal structures, rather than passively being defined by structures.¹²

⁸ Abdi, 2008, p. 71.

⁹ Al-Rodhan, 2007, p.15.

¹⁰ Dewey, 2008, p. 73.

¹¹ Freire, 1996, p. 14.

¹² *Id.*, p. 15.

1.1.2 Education - Instrumental for Oppression or Change

Freire distinguishes between two different methods and outcomes of education which he defines as ‘banking education’ and ‘problem-posing education’, respectively. Banking education was the reality of the system in which he found himself, teaching in Brazil. This approach of teaching is detached from students’ reality and context. The teacher articulates reality as something static, predictable and, most importantly, not changeable. Education is the process of filling students with information to be memorized without having an actual meaning for the students. Students are viewed as ignorant which justifies the existence of the teacher. Banking education does not foster creativity and maintains people in oppressing societal structures as this passive adaptation to society hinders critical thinking. The concept of banking education clearly serves only the oppressor, not the oppressed, reducing students to “receiving objects”. Education becomes indoctrination and domination.¹³ Indoctrination is incompatible with human rights education, whose defined objective is to educate citizens “who are capable and willing to participate in an open society and a free, pluralist democracy.”¹⁴ In practice, avoiding indoctrination means giving students access to a variety of information and opportunity to create and express their own opinions.¹⁵

When taking a problem-posing approach, education must begin with the acknowledgement of both components of the learning setting as being both teachers and students.¹⁶ The content of the teaching must be relevant to and determined by the students, not limited to what the educator assumes is in the interest of the students.¹⁷ Problem-posing teaching is a process of liberation and communication. All components involved are teaching and are being taught in the absence of one ‘owner’ of knowledge, and thus become jointly responsible for the growth of one another.¹⁸ The communication between teacher and student will take the form of a nuanced debate, allowing reflection to flourish among the participants and about the subject itself.

¹³ *Id.*, pp. 52-53.

¹⁴ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 40.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Freire, 1996, p. 53.

¹⁷ *Id.*, p. 74.

¹⁸ *Id.*, p. 61.

This will enable students to understand the opinions of others and nurse the ability to form their own opinions.

Education should be a critical and open dialogue, where “the problem-posing educator constantly re-forms his reflections in the reflection of the students.”¹⁹ Dialogue is central as without it “there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education.”²⁰ Dialogue has to be based on the willingness of both parties to speak and listen, to change and be changed, on humility and must be free of arrogance.²¹ In the process of dialogue, “it is important to try to ‘find ourselves in the other’ by remembering that all humans share similar desires for acceptance, security, and dignity.”²² Dialogue is “an act of creation: it must not serve as a crafty instrument for the domination of one person by another” and cannot exist “in the absence of a profound love for the world and for people”²³, meaning empathy, tolerance, understanding and commitment to others is essential. A premise for the existence of true dialogue is critical thinking. At the same time, dialogue generates critical thinking.²⁴

Traditionally, the purpose of education is to make individuals ‘fit in’, without questioning the circumstances. Problem-posing education is challenging that approach by promoting the idea that the individual should not adapt to the world, but can *make* the world adapt to the individual.²⁵ While banking education strives to submerge consciousness, problem-posing education develops consciousness along with a critical sense of reality in which intervention and transformation is possible, making education a tool for freedom. Knowledge is understood as emerging in the process of invention and re-invention.²⁶ Education is based on creativity and “stimulates true reflection and action upon reality”²⁷. Reality is dynamic and changing, just like people. This is the root

¹⁹ *Id.*, pp. 61-62.

²⁰ *Id.*, pp. 73-74.

²¹ *Id.*, p. 69.

²² Al-Rodhan, 2007, p. 56.

²³ Freire, 1996, p. 70.

²⁴ *Id.*, pp. 71-73.

²⁵ *Id.*, p. 57.

²⁶ *Id.*, p. 53.

²⁷ *Id.*, p. 65.

of education, “the unfinished character of human beings and the transformational character of reality necessitate that education be an on-going activity.”²⁸

The two approaches to education encompass different understandings of life and oppression. In banking education, a person’s situation is determined by faith and is thus unalterable, whereas the problem-posing approach views oppression as a challenge to overcome. The nature of problem-posing education is humanistic and liberating and thus not serving the interests of the oppressor. Problem-posing education becomes ‘revolutionary’ in its acknowledgement for the necessity of and contribution to change.²⁹

Today, Freire’s dialogical approach continues to be the most successful method for transformative learning. Focusing on the capacity of the inner dynamic of the learning process, it becomes clear that outer social and political structures can change. Through a personalization of unjust conditions, students become motivated to engage and seek alternatives.³⁰

1.1.3 Education versus Learning

A similar distinction can be found when examining the conceptualisation of education versus learning. Though sometimes being used interchangeable, the two concepts theoretically differ. *Education* places emphasis on conveying knowledge, enabling students “to function in the system as it is”³¹. This is underlined by the content of the curricula, “written to socialize to the acceptance of the prevailing structures as the normal order”³². *Learning* is an extension of education, being a social and active process of internalising and integrating knowledge and “gaining an understanding that leads to the construction and modification of attitudes/behaviours through the

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Id.*, pp. 66-67.

³⁰ Reardon, 2009, pp. 2-7.

³¹ *Id.*, p. 30.

³² *Id.*, p. 26.

acquisition of knowledge, skills and values.”³³ Learning is a “process of exploring the world, that always needs a relation to the world but basically is person or community centred.” Education on the other hand has a “sort of external responsibility dimension that can take many shapes.” Education can encompass a perspective “of defining a certain canon, specific knowledge or values and in part convincing people of the quality and validity of these values.”³⁴ Thus education may suffer the risk of lacking a critical dimension. Learning is when focus is shifted from knowledge to realization, making it instrumental for social and political change.³⁵ The nature of learning is transformative, “drawing from within learners capacities to envision and affect change and helping them to develop the capacity to transform the existing system.”³⁶

The learning process in human rights education is based on constructivist learning, i.e. “students literally construct their individual systems of knowledge.”³⁷ Learning is an individualized process, where students’ identity, background and experiences are influencing and partly forming how meaning is created and reformed.³⁸ The process of learning and the result of learning are equally important.³⁹ New information and experiences are integrated into already existing knowledge. The task of the teacher is to create learning opportunities by providing information, challenging tasks, encouragement and critical review.

1.1.4 A Global World Calls for Global Skills

The changing and dynamic nature of society makes a holistic approach to education essential – schools can and should be more than institutions teaching traditional subjects. Education should prepare students for active involvement, being “as much practical as theoretical, rooted in real-life issues [...] and taught through participation in

³³ Al-Rodhan, 2007, p. 27.

³⁴ Interview with Alessio Surian, Professor, Padova University, Padova, 10 April 2012.

³⁵ Reardon, 2009, pp. 24-27.

³⁶ *Id.*, p. 30.

³⁷ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 89.

³⁸ *Id.*, pp. 38-40.

³⁹ *Id.*, p. 47.

school life as well as through the formal curriculum.”⁴⁰ Through a reorientation, educational institutions should adjust and meet the skills needed in a global world. This means education should install competences to understand and overcome the challenges of pluralistic societies, as well as establish a common sense of humanity through the principles and values of human rights.⁴¹ Human rights are instrumental for promoting uniform concepts throughout humanity, helping people to identify with other human beings as citizens of a global village.⁴² For education to prepare students to become active and tolerant citizens, there must be an emphasis on “empowerment, awareness, cultural understanding and respect, universal moral values, and social cohesion.”⁴³ Moreover, education should prepare students for global interaction⁴⁴ and allow them to “understand their local context within the larger global context.”⁴⁵ Education can promote an understanding of the interconnectedness between personal, structural, cultural, national, and global dimensions.⁴⁶ Making these skills an integrated part of education, it can become a substantial tool for ensuring sustainable peace and development.⁴⁷

1.1.5 Can Values and Moral Be Taught?

“To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society.”

Theodore Roosevelt

Education can reflect the values of a society - “a society’s education system is one of the most important institutions for socializing its citizens and communicating its cultural values”⁴⁸, while at the same time education has the potential to change the values of a society.⁴⁹ To overcome the challenges and conflicts of our global reality, a

⁴⁰ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 24.

⁴¹ Al-Rodhan, 2007, p. 107.

⁴² *Id.*, p. 81.

⁴³ *Id.*, p. 13.

⁴⁴ *Id.*, p. 17.

⁴⁵ *Id.*, p. 46.

⁴⁶ *Id.*, p. 46.

⁴⁷ *Id.*, p. 13.

⁴⁸ *Id.*, p. 99.

⁴⁹ *Id.*, p. 104.

global set of ethics and values is required. This makes it crucial that "educators adopt a framework of values which is genuinely universal"⁵⁰. The principles of human rights can provide such a framework. Though human rights first and foremost provide a legal framework to which states must adhere, human rights can also be viewed as moral principles and the core element of global values.⁵¹ Education can play a crucial role in "[...] instilling in the minds of people core human rights values and the sanctity of a global citizenship ethic".⁵²

Psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg has, through his theory on stages of moral development, established that moral is developed as a response to social experiences that stimulate thinking processes. "As we get into discussions and debates with others, we find our views questioned and challenged and are therefore motivated to come up with new, more comprehensive positions."⁵³ Democratic interaction opens up to conflicting points of view and the opportunity to cooperate. While working out differences, a concept of what is just and fair develops. The process of modifying moral is enabled by the development of reasoning and thus "remains a product of the students' own thinking."⁵⁴ Nonetheless, an educator can facilitate discussions which challenge the views of the students. Thereby, education can be a means for the development of moral. Kohlberg stated that children who are engaged in independent thinking, "will eventually begin to formulate conceptions of rights, values, and principles by which they evaluate existing social arrangements."⁵⁵ Active and reflective involvement of students, the development of skills and knowledge are instrumental components for internalizing values.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Osler & Starkey, 1996, p. 48.

⁵¹ Al-Rodhan, 2007, p. 84.

⁵² Abdi & Shultz, 2008, p. 3.

⁵³ Crain, 1985.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Reardon, 2009, p. 4.

Education is not neutral, as it “always relates to and supports values.”⁵⁷ Through content, activities and policies, schools do represent a set of values, though seldom being explicit about it.⁵⁸ Knowledge and ideology is linked, since there “has to be some pre-existing agreement concerning what will count as knowledge, or what criteria will be used to develop or judge knowledge. All knowledge is constructed in some relation to ideology.”⁵⁹ Human rights education suggests that human rights are the basis for such ideology.

Surveys in countries known for a certain level of respect for human rights, show that “a commitment to rights and democracy amongst the young cannot be assumed; each generation needs to be educated into human rights and democracy.”⁶⁰ Such commitment is acquired through social experiences within family and school.⁶¹ Knowledge and respect for human rights are to a certain extent inseparable⁶², which makes human rights education crucial for upholding the human rights regime. In order for human rights to become articulated in education and the everyday life of the school, it is crucial that teachers are taught and teach the concepts of human rights.

⁵⁷ Claude.

⁵⁸ Osler & Starkey, 1996, p. 49.

⁵⁹ Al-Rodhan, 2007, p. 103.

⁶⁰ Osler & Starkey, 1996, p. 50.

⁶¹ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p.112.

⁶² Osler & Starkey, 1996, p. 90.

1.2 International Human Rights Education Framework

This part of the chapter will present an overview of international legislation and instruments aimed at promoting human rights education and encouraging state parties to implement human rights education in national legislation and educational policies. Moreover, it will introduce key players and their educational initiatives.

1.2.1 Persistent Problems for Implementing Human Rights Education

The potential of human rights education to create a culture where rights and responsibilities are known and respected has been on the agenda of the United Nations (UN) and the human rights movements since the 1990s. Since then, it has increasingly been viewed by the international community as “one of the core tools with which to implement human rights standards and ethical behaviour.”⁶³

Though there has been an increased focus on human rights education, most policies have been project oriented thereby not leading to the mainstreaming of human rights into formal education. One of the reasons for this is the failure to frame themes of e.g. war, peace, racism, and intercultural dialogue as human rights issues when teaching. Without a holistic approach to human rights, it cannot be classified as human rights education. Another major obstacle has been the lack of political will to allocate resources for creating new materials and ensuring the training of educators.⁶⁴

As there is a link between laws, regulations, and policies on the one hand, and attitudes, behaviours, and practises on the other, human rights education should be valued in the former dimension in order to become an integrated part of the latter dimension.⁶⁵ The UN provides such legal framework.

⁶³ Mihr, 2004, p. 24.

⁶⁴ *Id.*, p. 35.

⁶⁵ James, 2008, p.108.

1.2.2 United Nations

A vision of a just society is found in the ever-expanding human rights concepts and standards, deriving from “the history of human beings struggling to overcome their vulnerabilities.”⁶⁶ The promotion of human rights education is an obligation under international human rights law. The most important documents are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Vienna Declaration and the Declaration for Human Rights Education and Training. The preamble of the UDHR states “that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms [...]”⁶⁷. The ‘right to education’ elaborates by declaring that “Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.”⁶⁸ The right to education is understood as an entry point to the enjoyment of all human rights, including “the right to learn about those rights, and the ways and means to protect and promote them in our societies.”⁶⁹

With the adoption of the CRC in 1989, a new vision and understanding of children was formed. Rather than being the property of their parents, or recipients of charity, children became “bearers of rights and responsibilities”.⁷⁰ The CRC reaffirmed the right to human rights education, declaring “States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: (b) the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations” and [...]“(d) the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of

⁶⁶ Reardon, 2009, p. 21.

⁶⁷ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 10 December 1948, preamble.

⁶⁸ *Id.*, art. 26.2.

⁶⁹ Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), ‘Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: A Compendium of Good Practice’, HR/PUB/09/3, 2009, p. 7.

⁷⁰ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 19.

understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.”⁷¹ Thereby, the importance of educating for the commitment to human rights values was given further political and legal weight.

The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action were adopted in 1993 as a result of the World Conference on Human Rights, whose intent was to reconfirm state responsibility to comply with international human rights obligations. The Vienna Declaration established human rights education as “essential for the promotion and achievement of stable and harmonious relations among communities and for fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and peace.”⁷² The Vienna Declaration explicitly refers to states as carrying the main responsibility to “ensure that education is aimed at strengthening the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms”⁷³ and thus became an important policy tool. Yet, intergovernmental organisations, national institutions, and non-governmental organisations are also acknowledged as being valuable resources in raising public awareness.⁷⁴ However, the Vienna Declaration “notes that resource constraints and institutional inadequacies may impede the immediate realization of these objectives”⁷⁵, making the implementation of human rights education a matter of progressive realisation.

Earlier that same year, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) held a World Conference on Human Rights Education, which resulted in the Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy. The Plan provided a definition of human rights education by the international community and focused on strategic development of human rights education at all levels. In summary, the Plan concluded that the main objective of human rights education is to build a universal culture of human rights. This includes strengthening the sense of dignity, the

⁷¹ Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 20 November 1989, art. 29.1.

⁷² Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 25 June 1993, paragraph 2.78.

⁷³ *Id.*

⁷⁴ *Id.*, paragraph 2.82.

⁷⁵ *Id.*, paragraph 1.33.

respect for human rights, and the full development of human personality. The values and principles of non-discrimination, tolerance, understanding and gender equality are viewed as crucial for enabling everyone to be participating citizens.⁷⁶ The intention of the Plan was to encourage states to commit to human rights education and to reach all players involved in formal and non-formal education, from students, teachers and parents to politicians, international organisations, and the media. The Plan calls for a strong civil society by mobilising “resources, from the family to the United Nations, to educate individuals and groups about human rights.”⁷⁷ Moreover, the Plan provides a framework for human rights education, which is open to local interpretation and contextualisation. The document establishes education as a catalyst for social change, aiming to “nurture democratic values, sustain impulses for democratization and promote societal transformation based upon human rights and democracy.”⁷⁸ The development of a culture of human rights and democratic societies will ultimately “enable individuals and groups to solve their disagreements and conflicts by the use of non-violent methods.”⁷⁹

In spite of good intentions, the UN recognised little had changed after the Vienna Declaration and the adoption of the Plan of Action. Therefore the UN Decade for Human Rights Education was initiated, strongly encouraged by the NGOs Peoples Decade for Human Rights Education (PDHRE) and Human Rights Education Associates (HREA). The Decade took place from 1995 till 2004 and was mainly organised by UNESCO. The initiative became an opportunity for the UN to call for all governments and non-governmental actors to intensify their educational efforts. The UN advocated the establishment and implementation of human rights education in national policies and educational planning. The objectives of the Decade were to gain an understanding for the status and need of human rights education, to formulate strategies, to facilitate capacity building, to create networks, to develop materials, and to engage the media. While such an international initiative does open up for opportunities to be

⁷⁶ United Nations (UN), ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p.15.

⁷⁷ World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy, 8-11 March 1993.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

experimental, actual human rights education remains a project of a motivated minority of teachers, rather than becoming mainstream. Furthermore, the ‘non-permanent’ and project-oriented environment makes it very difficult to assess the long-term impact.

In 1999 the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders⁸⁰ was adopted, which also refers to human rights education. While the document does not hold legal value, many principles and rights are based on standards enshrined in other international, legally binding instruments.⁸¹ The Declaration confirms the right “to know, seek, obtain, receive and hold information about all human rights and fundamental freedoms.” This includes “to study, discuss, form and hold opinions on the observance, both in law and in practice, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and [...] to draw public attention to those matters.”⁸² Encouraging innovation, all are given the right to “develop and discuss new human rights ideas and principles and to advocate their acceptance.”⁸³ While “the State has the responsibility to promote and facilitate the teaching of human rights and fundamental freedoms at all levels of education”⁸⁴, the Declaration acknowledges the potential impact of other players as well: “Individuals, non-governmental organizations and relevant institutions have an important role to play in contributing to making the public more aware of questions relating to all human rights and fundamental freedoms through activities such as education, training and research [...]”.⁸⁵

The same year, a general comment on the right to education established education as “the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalized adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty and obtain the means to participate fully in their communities.” Thereby, the international community recognizes education as vital to social change.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ The actual name of the document is ‘Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms’.

⁸¹ UN, ‘Declaration on Human Rights Defenders’.

⁸² Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms’, 8 March 1999, art 6.

⁸³ *Id.*, art 7.

⁸⁴ *Id.*, art 15.

⁸⁵ *Id.*, art 16.

⁸⁶ Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 13, E/C.12/1999/10, 8 December 1999, paragraph 1.

The Committee on the CRC adopted a general comment on the aim of education in 2001. Here, the purpose of education is defined as strengthening “the child’s capacity to enjoy the full range of human rights and to promote a culture which is infused by appropriate human rights values.”⁸⁷ The key objective of education is to “maximize the child’s ability and opportunity to participate fully and responsibly in a free society.”⁸⁸ Moreover, it is noted that education goes beyond schooling as life experiences are embraced as learning processes. The importance of taking the context of the child into consideration is stressed in that “Human rights education should be a comprehensive, lifelong process and start with the reflection of human rights values in the daily life and experiences of children.”⁸⁹

The Decade on Human Rights Education did not have the wanted outcome. In a report on ‘Achievements and Shortcomings of the Decade’, only 29 member states contributed, which in itself shows a lack of political prioritisation. The report found that little monitoring had been done at a national level, as governments lacked knowledge on human rights teaching and evaluation methodologies.⁹⁰ Furthermore, it was concluded there had been a “lack of human and financial resources to implement human rights education programmes [...], as well as lack of political will on the part of the responsible authorities.”⁹¹ In 2004, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights concluded that the decade had been useful for facilitating human rights education, though overall an unsatisfying number of initiatives had taken place. The failure to improve the status of human rights education caused the High Commissioner to recommend another educational initiative.

⁸⁷ Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 1, CRC/GC/2001/1, 17 April 2001, paragraph 2.

⁸⁸ *Id.*, paragraph 12.

⁸⁹ *Id.*, paragraph 15.

⁹⁰ Economic and Social Council, Promotion and Protection of Human Rights: ‘Information and Education’, E/CN.4/2004/93, 25 February 2004.

⁹¹ *Id.*, paragraph 27.

This led to the World Programme for Human Rights Education taking place from 2005 till 2014. The Programme is meant to support and maintain the implementation of human rights education worldwide, initiated during the Decade. While there was a greater focus on need-assessment and development of the field during the Decade, the Programme set out for more targeted and concrete aims. The Programme emphasises (again) that the main responsibility lies within the ministries of education, which should adopt and implement policies on and strategies for human rights education. For a higher degree of monitoring than during the Decade, the World Programme for Human Rights Education is divided into sectors. Focus areas include the implementation of policies, the education environment and processes, the teaching tools, and the capacity building of education personnel.⁹² The monitoring is conducted according to those components and the evaluation of the Programme is based on national self-assessment. According to a report written by the UN Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System (set up to support the Programme), there has been some progress in terms of national policies, but it is not clear whether for all countries this is due to the Programme.⁹³

In 2012, the Declaration for Human Rights Education and Training was adopted, aiming at setting global standards for human rights education. The document was drafted with players from civil society, including HREA and AI.⁹⁴ Referring to former documents on education, the Declaration reaffirms the state responsibility to provide access to human rights education for all. The Declaration conceptualises human rights education as being based on internationally adopted UN documents and containing several dimensions, explicitly distinguishing learning about, through and for human rights.⁹⁵ A culture of human rights is elaborated to encompass everyone being “aware of their own rights and

⁹²Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), ‘United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education’, E/CN.4/RES/2003/70, 25 April 2003.

⁹³ UN Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System, ‘Final Evaluation of the Implementation of the First Phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education’, A/65/322, 24 August 2010, paragraph. 61.

⁹⁴Human Rights Education Association (HREA), ‘UN General Assembly Adopts Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training’, 2011.

⁹⁵ Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, 16 February 2012, article 2.2.

responsibilities in respect of the rights of others [...].”⁹⁶ Themes such as teaching and training methodology, the universal nature of the target group, formal and non-formal education, and the importance of contextualised content and policies are addressed. The Declaration acknowledges the many providers of formal and non-formal human rights education and calls for strategic coordination. In terms of financing, the Declaration encourages voluntary funding, but re-states that human rights education (like education in general) is a matter of progressive realisation.⁹⁷

Interestingly, aspects of monitoring and evaluation are hardly touched upon, which reflects what seems to be lacking in many human rights education programmes – a reflection on the improvement and impact of educational efforts. Examining the Declaration, it becomes clear that the international community takes a rather conservative approach to education. Only referring to existing theories, methods, and legal documents, the Declaration is more repetitive than normative. The ideas posed by Freire decades ago are still not rooted in the UN framework. In theory, human rights education should be education for change. Yet, this is hardly mirrored in the official documents. There is not much focus on education as being transformative, which is also reflected in the language by using *education* rather than *learning*. “Most current practices in education focus on transfer of knowledge rather than on the development of the capacities to produce and internalize it; so they remain mechanisms for the continuation of the pedagogies and politics of the status quo.”⁹⁸ For human rights education to be instrumental for change, it is important to acknowledge that it contains an element of challenging the current state of affairs. As we will see later on, education for citizenship compliments human rights education. The Council of Europe (CoE) encourages such an approach which could be a more beneficial framework.

⁹⁶ *Id.*, article 4.b.

⁹⁷ *Id.*

⁹⁸ Reardon, 2009, p. 2.

1.2.3 UN Agencies Connected to Human Rights Education

UNESCO and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) are the main providers of human rights education within the UN. UNESCO has contributed to the elaborative frameworks on human rights education and has through citizenship and intercultural education also promoted dimensions of human rights education. Furthermore, the organisation contributes to the development of educational materials and assists in formulating human rights education policies.⁹⁹

UNICEF mainly focuses on the right to education, which encompasses quality education endorsing sustainability, development and gender equality. UNICEF promotes human rights through the ‘Child-Friendly Schools’ concept, which encourages gender equality, participatory learning, and a safe school environment and through linkage to the local community, fosters citizenship.¹⁰⁰

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) collects and publishes human rights educational material. Through the organisation United Nations Act, OHCHR provide funding to civil society initiatives, aiming to promote human rights through education.¹⁰¹

1.2.4 Council of Europe

Promoting human rights, democracy, and rule of law is the core mission of the Council of Europe (CoE), which also involves human rights education. Since the 1990s, the CoE has been one of the key human rights education players in Europe. In cooperation with the UN, the European Union (EU) and various NGOs, the CoE creates educational programmes and materials, which then are distributed among the Council’s 47 member states. Additionally, “Concrete results include the adoption of reference texts, the development of political frameworks and the creation of networks and forums [...]”¹⁰²

⁹⁹ United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), ‘Education’.

¹⁰⁰ United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), ‘Basic education and gender equality’, 2012.

¹⁰¹ OHCHR, ‘Human Rights Education and Training’.

¹⁰² OSCE, ‘Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America:

Within the CoE framework, human rights education is viewed as interlinked with education for citizenship.¹⁰³ Furthermore, the Council's educational programmes are about peace, intercultural education and social diversity. In 1997, the 'Education for Democratic Citizenship' (EDC) programme was initiated and continues till today. At the time, the Council had been going through extensive expansion, which brought challenges to democracy and human rights. Political apathy, migration, and increased social diversity characterised parts of the region and called for solutions. The EDC programme was seen as such contribution, through promotion of active participation, responsibility, solidarity, respect, and dialogue. The project has grown and now also contains a dimension of human rights education.¹⁰⁴

In 2010, the non-binding Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education was adopted as a result of many years of work for the implementation of citizenship and human rights education.¹⁰⁵ The Charter includes references to methodology and aim of human rights education, main providers of formal and non-formal education, the importance of implementing policies, evaluating efforts and international cooperation.¹⁰⁶ The Charter is meant to be a reference point and a guiding tool for policy-makers.

1.2.5 Civil Society Initiatives

NGOs have been crucial in terms of offering assistance and resources to develop, promote and improve human rights education. However, as NGOs have limited resources and are unable to reach a broader target group in comparison to national ministries of education, their educational efforts are less sustainable. Though working within the UN human rights education framework, there is no common strategy for NGO programmes, which tend to work with a narrow scope of rights, according to their

A Compendium of Good Practice', HR/PUB/09/3, 2009, p. 12.

¹⁰³ Council of Europe (CoE), 'What is Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights?'.
¹⁰⁴ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 51.

¹⁰⁵ *Id.*, p. 52.

¹⁰⁶ CoE, Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, 11 May 2010.

own focus areas.¹⁰⁷ For these reasons, it can be problematic that states leave human rights education to NGOs, as “this type of ‘outsourcing’ includes the trend that governments neglect their responsibility to implement human rights in daily life.”¹⁰⁸ It is therefore central states prioritize human rights education in the curricular, to ensure a mainstreaming of aim and methods as well as a broader reach.

Influential organisations in the field are AI, HREA and PDHRE which all have consultative status in the UN.¹⁰⁹ The organisations participated in formulating the concept of the Decade for Human Rights Education and the Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. Their activities include training in the formal and non-formal educational sector, development of extensive databases on methodologies and educational tools and facilitating networks for sharing experiences and best practise. NGOs are also involved in lobbying for the implementation of human rights education in national education policies. Through short and long-term national, regional and global projects the organisations assist in implementing the policies of UN.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Mihr, 2004, pp. 27-28.

¹⁰⁸ *Id.*, p. 29.

¹⁰⁹ Economic and Social Council, List of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council as of 1 September 2010, E/2010/INF/4, 1 September 2010.

¹¹⁰ Amnesty International (AI), ‘Human Rights Education’, (HREA), ‘About Us’, Peoples Decade for Human Rights Education (PDHRE), ‘About the People’s Movement for Human Rights Learning’.

1.3 Conceptualising Human Rights Education

Following the historical approach to the legal framework and the overview of initiatives and relevant players, I will carry on with an elaboration of the concept of human rights education. This will include exploring the notion of creating a human rights culture, different educational dimensions, aims, connection to social changes and approaches to evaluation.

1.3.1 Elements of Human Rights Education

The preamble of the UDHR states that dignity is the “foundation for freedom, justice and peace in the people.”¹¹¹ Dignity is the common ground on which we identify with one another. Understanding dignity is to understand and accept that though we are all different, we are equal. Accepting the premise of human dignity is crucial, when declaring that human rights are inherent and universal. Human rights concepts and standards are instrumental for a universal actualisation of human dignity.¹¹² As dignity is the core of human rights, it must be the starting point when teaching human rights.

The fundamental role of human rights education is to build a society where justice and human rights are valued and respected for all.¹¹³ Human rights education equals educating for the commitment to human rights values, defined in international law and acknowledged as being universal. It is value education, “based on the universal concept of justice and injustice”¹¹⁴, which aims at creating a culture of human rights. Human rights education is empowering people to advocate for social justice and encourages a change of focus from violation to realisation. As mentioned before, human rights education should promote a holistic approach to human rights, meaning endorse the universality, indivisibility, and interdependence of all rights, as “the potential of human rights as the means to cultivate transformational thinking lies in viewing all human

¹¹¹ UDHR, 10 December 1948, preamble.

¹¹² Reardon, 2009, p. 1.

¹¹³ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, foreword.

¹¹⁴ Mihr, 2004, p. 7.

rights norms and standards as a whole, an integrated ethical system.”¹¹⁵ Human rights education should raise awareness on the relation between rights, individuals and state responsibilities. Human rights education in schools often takes a ‘horizontal’ approach to rights and responsibilities, i.e. individuals respecting the rights of each other. It is important that human rights are understood as a state responsibility also in the ‘vertical’ dimension, with legal weight to which governments can be held accountable.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, human rights education should evoke an understanding of human rights as an evolving process, corresponding to the societal and global development.¹¹⁷ By establishing the values of human rights as a universal starting point, a framework is provided to challenge injustice and draw parallels to violations in the immediate environment, as well as within a global context.¹¹⁸

From a pedagogical point of view, human rights education is multidimensional and can be described as "all learning that develops the knowledge, skills and values of human rights".¹¹⁹ It is education raising awareness of legal standards, developing knowledge on the connection between the legal framework and human rights issues related to our own reality¹²⁰ and education building values and skills “needed to promote, defend and apply human rights in daily life.”¹²¹ Human rights education should be learner-centred, meaning, “it has to begin from the needs, preferences, abilities and desires of each person, within each society.”¹²² This implies an outcome-based approach of teaching, focusing on what “students should be capable of doing rather than on what teachers should teach them.”¹²³ Human rights education should provide an understanding for differences as being acceptable, natural and valuable. Educators committed to human rights education are ‘positive agents for change’. Teaching human rights includes taking a human rights approach to education, emphasising inclusion and student

¹¹⁵ Reardon, 2009, p. 3.

¹¹⁶ Osler, 2009, p. 64.

¹¹⁷ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p.100.

¹¹⁸ Osler & Starkey, 1996, p. 89.

¹¹⁹ Tibbitts, 2002.

¹²⁰ Mihr, 2004, p. 5.

¹²¹ OSCE, ‘Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: A Compendium of Good Practice’, HR/PUB/09/3, 2009, p. 9.

¹²² CoE, ‘Compass’, 2002, p. 17.

¹²³ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 29.

participation.¹²⁴ An educator for human rights should evoke critical thinking and encourage a structural analysis of gender, political, civil, economic, social, and cultural matters.¹²⁵ It is central that students gain the ability to view human rights issues in a broader societal scope. However, at the same time the content must be meaningful to the students. Thus age and cultural context of the students must be taken into consideration.¹²⁶

An important aspect of human rights education is the stimulation of discussions and ideas among all players involved. As seen earlier, open and democratic discussion is instrumental for the development of moral¹²⁷, which is part of changing attitudes and eventually behaviour – another fundamental dimension of human rights education. This is enabled by a good classroom climate, implying a need to focus on the self-esteem of the students, encouraging tolerance and dignity.¹²⁸

1.3.2 Education for Democracy and Citizenship

The core of human rights is dignity, which is also the foundation for the normative framework for the political processes installed by democracy.¹²⁹ As human rights and democracy are interlinked, so is education in human rights and in citizenship. The two approaches “differ in focus and scope rather than in goals and practices.”¹³⁰ Both aim at creating “moral values and participation in the political, social and economic process.”¹³¹ Citizenship education focuses on the individual’s role in relation to a community, whereas human rights education is based on the liberties and responsibilities of the individual.¹³² Promoting citizenship will naturally develop respect for and commitment to the universality of human rights.¹³³ Part of human rights

¹²⁴ Osler & Starkey, 1996, p.142.

¹²⁵ Huaman, Koenig, Shultz, 2008, p. 18.

¹²⁶ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p.18.

¹²⁷ See pp. 21-23.

¹²⁸ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p. 21.

¹²⁹ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, pp. 16-17.

¹³⁰ *Id.*, p. 9.

¹³¹ Ghosh, 2008, p. 87.

¹³² Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 9.

¹³³ Ghosh, 2008, p. 87.

education is the struggle for democracy, including challenging societal structures and promoting meaningful participation of all citizens. Democracy is a system dependent on citizens' active involvement. Citizens "must understand and appreciate the system, and they must feel responsible for its stability."¹³⁴ Active citizens are characterised by subscribing to the values of "freedom, equality and independence"¹³⁵, which are also fundamental elements of human rights. Human rights education is a "critical approach to examining and building our societies"¹³⁶, suggesting that a consequence of human rights awareness is active participation and transformation. Like human rights education, the focus of education for citizenship is on "educational practices and activities designed to help young people and adults to play an active part in democratic life and exercise their rights and responsibilities in society."¹³⁷ Citizenship education encompasses getting students to accept the premise that we are all global citizens. Moreover, citizenship education encourages active participation and engagement, pursuing the idea that we can all become agents of change, which is comparable to human rights education.¹³⁸

1.3.3 Other Approaches to Teaching Human Rights

Human rights are a natural part of teaching peace, disarmament, sustainable development, and environment, as those issues are all interrelated.¹³⁹ However, human rights education is "more than peace, re-education or civic education"¹⁴⁰, as human rights encompass all individuals, even those 'outside of society'. Citizenship education targets citizens of a particular state, leaving out the stateless, foreigners, immigrants, refugees and members of minority groups. Peace education is only for former enemies and re-education is for those who have suffered under dictatorship propaganda, both related to a post crisis period. Though important for their target groups, these

¹³⁴ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 26.

¹³⁵ Ghosh, 2008, p. 88.

¹³⁶ Tibbitts, 2002.

¹³⁷ OSCE, 'Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: A Compendium of Good Practice', HR/PUB/09/3, 2009, p. 9.

¹³⁸ Dower, 2008, p. 48.

¹³⁹ UN, 'Teaching Human Rights', HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p. 52.

¹⁴⁰ Mihr, 2004, p. 9.

educational initiatives do not entail a holistic approach to human rights. Hence there are limitations to other approaches to education for respect and tolerance, as they usually are more thematic and less focused on the universality of human rights.¹⁴¹

1.3.4 The Aims of Human Rights Education

“Human rights education, together with education for democratic citizenship and education for mutual respect and understanding, is vital for all our societies. It promotes equality, empowerment and participation as well as conflict prevention and resolution. In brief, it is a means to develop societies where the human rights of all are respected, protected and fulfilled.”¹⁴²

The potential ascribed to human rights is similar to the purpose and aim of human rights education – sustainable peace, prosperity, and the development of people to their full potential. Whereas teaching methods varies, it is generally accepted that the overall purpose of human rights education is “achieving the social and political conditions for the widest possible realization of all the universal human rights.”¹⁴³ The ultimate aim of human rights education is to create a culture of human rights. That means students must “learn to evaluate real-life experience in human rights terms, starting with their own behaviour and the immediate community in which they live”, as well as taking “active responsibility for improving their community.”¹⁴⁴ A key aspect of human rights education is to understand that the protection of others equals our own, individual protection. This is the premise for viewing global human rights issues as relevant. Furthermore, it will lead to the integration of human rights into social behaviour.¹⁴⁵ Students should obtain a feeling of responsibility and belief in being able to change the situation of those suffering.¹⁴⁶ Successful human rights education enables and

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² OSCE, ‘Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: A Compendium of Good Practice’, HR/PUB/09/3, 2009, p. 7.

¹⁴³ Reardon, 2009, p. 24.

¹⁴⁴ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p. 96.

¹⁴⁵ Mihr, 2004, p. 12.

¹⁴⁶ Abdi & Shultz, 2008, p. 5.

empowers individuals “to act according to their own abilities and responsibilities.”¹⁴⁷ In a UN teacher’s booklet, a useful clarification of the wanted impact of human rights education is provided. As the target group of the case study to follow is secondary school students, I will here focus on the aims and expectations to that age group.

Human rights education should result in:

• Respect for self, parents, teachers and others
• An understanding of social responsibility and citizenship
• The ability to distinguish wants from needs and needs from rights
• Knowledge of specific human rights

Furthermore, human rights education should facilitate an understanding for the key concepts of:

• Self and community
• Personal responsibility
• Individual and group rights
• Freedom, equality, and justice
• Rule of law and international law
• Government and security
• World peace, development, political economy, and ecology

When students reach the age of 15 to 17, knowledge of human rights as universal legal standards, integration of human rights into personal awareness and behaviour and moral responsibility/literacy should also be among the aims of the human rights education.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Mihr, 2004, p. 12.

¹⁴⁸ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p. 17.

1.3.5 A Culture of Human Rights

Culture is a “learned phenomenon; it is acquired, for the most part, through the ordinary processes of growing up and participating in the daily life of a particular ethnic collective.”¹⁴⁹ Culture is “manifested in a set of values and norms which help to build up institutions and transform a society to behave according to it.”¹⁵⁰ A culture can be explained as a way of constructing identity and understanding differences.¹⁵¹ As stated above, the main aim of human rights education is to create a culture of human rights. Creating a human rights culture means creating a culture based on knowledge and “understanding, awareness and empowerment of and through human rights.”¹⁵² Essential elements of a human rights culture are respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, valuing human dignity and cultural diversity, developing attitudes and behaviour leading to respect for self and others, promoting gender equality and empowerment, leading to active citizenship and democracy.¹⁵³ A culture of human rights encompasses knowledge and awareness of human rights, integration of marginalised groups, a sense of individual responsibility and a self-reflecting education system where learning is based on dialogue.¹⁵⁴ The basis of such culture is exploring what it means to be human and creating an understanding for the concept of dignity.¹⁵⁵ “A human rights culture is established if the majority of people in a country or region identifies themselves with the universal norms and rules of the UDHR.”¹⁵⁶

1.3.6 Teaching Methodologies

Human rights education should be active learning and learning for action.¹⁵⁷ The education pedagogies promoted in human rights education are activity-centred, using

¹⁴⁹ James, 2008, p. 99.

¹⁵⁰ Mihr, 2004, p. 39.

¹⁵¹ James, 2008, p. 100.

¹⁵² Mihr, 2004, p. 2.

¹⁵³ CoE, ‘Compass’, 2002, p. 18.

¹⁵⁴ Mihr, 2004, p. 45.

¹⁵⁵ *Id.*, p. 32.

¹⁵⁶ *Id.*, p. 39.

¹⁵⁷ Reardon, 2009, p. 2.

and challenging students' prior knowledge and experiences. There is a focus on participation, dialogue and promoting human rights in intra-personal and inter-personal relations. The approach should be dialectical, analytical and goal-oriented based on individual objectives.¹⁵⁸ Methodological components of human rights education are cognitive and affective learning, critical thinking, respect for differences and active engagement of all participants.¹⁵⁹ Teaching human rights implies understanding learning conditions for the class as a whole and for students as individuals. The skills, values and abilities of students vary, which must be taken into consideration. This includes knowing and integrating students' various backgrounds into the learning process.¹⁶⁰

The principles of the CRC can be transferred into pedagogic notions of dignity, security, participation, identity, inclusion, freedom, access to information, and privacy which should all be components of human rights teaching. Dignity should prevail in the relation between student and teacher. Security can be interpreted as a safe classroom environment, in a physical as well as psychological sense. Student participation is facilitated by student responsibility and negotiation, seeking to avoid complete teacher control. Identity and inclusion means room for developing identity and respect for different cultural backgrounds through valuing diversity. In a human rights environment, freedom of expression is respected and participation in decision-making is encouraged. The access to information must include a diverse range of sources, enabling students to interpret and analyze information critically. The right to privacy must be respected and teachers must always act in the best interest of the student.¹⁶¹

Education can be divided into formal, non-formal, and informal education. Formal education is the structured education system, from primary school to university, including specialized programs. Non-formal education is when the teaching takes place outside the formal curriculum, focusing on personal and social skills and competences.

¹⁵⁸ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, pp. 32-32.

¹⁵⁹ UN, 'Teaching Human Rights', HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p. 25.

¹⁶⁰ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 57.

¹⁶¹ Osler & Starkey, 1996, pp. 154-156.

Informal education is the lifelong process of acquiring, knowledge, values, and skills through experiences, influences, and resources in daily life.¹⁶² All dimensions of education are “complementary and mutually reinforcing elements of a lifelong learning process.”¹⁶³ The setting for human rights education can be formal or non-formal (informal learning is naturally an extension). Formal human rights education is reaching a broader target group with the potential of a long-term impact, while an informal approach can be NGOs offering extra-curricular activities and materials. For sustainable learning, human rights education needs to be implemented into the formal education i.e. national legislation and curricula and integrated into official educational material and the education of educators. The current practice is to include human rights within social, economic and humanities subjects. However, human rights education is learning beyond subjects as it is “concepts that co-determine the atmosphere of teaching and learning”¹⁶⁴ and “ideally, a human rights culture should be built into the whole curriculum”.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, human rights education should not be a process limited to the school environment but generate outreach to families and communities.¹⁶⁶

When teaching human rights, an environment with room for disagreement and debate is important for students to experience how to solve conflicts.¹⁶⁷ Teachers need to acknowledge that human rights “involve conflicts of values and that students will benefit from understanding these conflicts and seeking to resolve them.”¹⁶⁸ Disagreements, differing values, and competing interests are all a natural part of pluralistic societies. “By confining disagreement and controversy to the issues and not to personalize differences of opinion, conflicts can be resolved by non-violent means.”¹⁶⁹ Students must thus learn to debate which is instrumental to the resolution of problems and conflicts in a democracy.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶² CoE, ‘Compass’, 2002, p. 21.

¹⁶³ *Id.*, p. 22.

¹⁶⁴ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 95.

¹⁶⁵ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p. 18.

¹⁶⁶ Mihr, 2004, p. 5.

¹⁶⁷ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p. 22.

¹⁶⁸ *Id.*, p. 24.

¹⁶⁹ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 29.

¹⁷⁰ *Id.*, p. 40.

Human rights education is not about preaching an ideology, but first and foremost about promoting universal legal standards.¹⁷¹ For students to learn and understand this, human rights standards should be reflected in the school environment. This calls for mutual respect among teachers and students and democratic participation in decisions affecting school life.

1.3.6 Teaching *about, through, and for* Human Rights

“Information is not knowledge. The only source of knowledge is experience.”

Albert Einstein

Human rights education can be explained as teaching about, through and for human rights. Teaching *about* human rights provides a theoretical framework for human rights concepts through an introduction to human rights law and history. Students need to understand why liberties require legal structures and also carry a set of responsibilities. Learning about human rights is to accept the human rights framework for negotiation and behaviour within the family, the school, the local, and global community.¹⁷² This must be supported by the way students learn.

Teaching *through* human rights makes the educators into role models, reflecting the values being taught in rights-respecting classrooms where human rights values and principles are supported by a democratic, inclusive, and participatory teaching style. Students need to be active and interact, as they “only learn to take responsibility if they are given the liberty to do so.”¹⁷³ This dimension is a challenge for the whole school since “human rights and democracy become the school community’s pedagogical guideline and the lens through which all of the elements of school governance are judged.”¹⁷⁴ Surveys suggest there is a connection between the level of democracy experienced at school and the level of knowledge of human rights and participatory

¹⁷¹ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p. 22.

¹⁷² CoE, ‘Compass’, 2002, p. 19.

¹⁷³ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 46.

¹⁷⁴ *Id.*, p. 31.

citizenship.¹⁷⁵ Teaching through human rights affects attitudes and values, in getting a “sense of responsibility for one’s own actions” in being committed to social change, in having an open mind, in appreciating diversity, and in understanding solidarity, dignity, and justice.¹⁷⁶

Teaching *for* human rights is encouraging and supporting students to take action for human rights.¹⁷⁷ Learning for human rights means developing skills supportive of human rights values, i.e. active listening, dialogical communication, openness and tolerance towards different opinions, the capacity to advocate for both own and other peoples rights, critical thinking, and the ability to analyze information, engage in teamwork and non-violent conflict resolution.¹⁷⁸ As explained by Confucius, this is where the educational efforts come together in that “I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.”¹⁷⁹

Concrete exercises to facilitate the various learning processes can be brainstorming, case studies, role-plays, debating, interviews and field trips. Brainstorming encourages participation and creativity. Case studies develop analytical, problem solving and corporation skills, which inspire to discussions, debate, and further research. Role-plays and debate are means to foster empathy and understanding for other perspectives. Interviews can personalize human rights and expand the knowledge of human rights issues in the community. Field trips can create a connection between schools and local communities, and ideally give students opportunities to act. Furthermore, art can be a way of making abstract concepts concrete and can affect attitudes by involving emotions.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁵ *Id.*, p. 33.

¹⁷⁶ CoE, ‘Compass’, 2002, p. 20.

¹⁷⁷ AI, ‘Human Rights Friendly School’, p. 26, 2009.

¹⁷⁸ CoE, ‘Compass’, 2002, p. 19.

¹⁷⁹ *Id.*, p. 20.

¹⁸⁰ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, pp. 25-28.

1.3.7 Learning Dimensions of Human Rights Education

To understand the content, methodology and aims of human rights education, learning can be divided into three levels, distinguishing between knowledge through information, awareness and values through emotion, and action through skills.¹⁸¹

- *Cognitive learning* is the level of gaining knowledge and understanding. This level places little emphasis on the development of communication, conflict resolution and activism skills.¹⁸² Through a historical contextualisation of human rights, showing how events have led to the accomplishment of the legal framework, the core concepts of human rights are introduced. The main content is the UDHR and the CRC¹⁸³ and the nature of the information is general and thematic. However, the historical, legal and theoretical overview is not enough to build a culture of human rights - “For these documents to have more than intellectual significance, students need to approach them from the perspective of their real-life experience [...]”¹⁸⁴ Though being an important starting point, the cognitive level does not necessarily lead to action.¹⁸⁵

- *The emotional and awareness level* is when learning transforms values, attitudes and behaviour through self-respect and critical thinking. Knowledge is a prerequisite for awareness, raised by a process of contextualising every day examples, experiences and reflections. Knowledge and skills have to be supported by human rights values, to contribute to a right-respecting democratic society. Values and attitudes are developed through experience.¹⁸⁶ Acting according human rights values implies the ability to act in balance with one’s own interests and the interests of the community as a whole.¹⁸⁷

- *The active level* is when students acquire skills, initiative, and drive to take action for the promotion of human rights through the formal legal system, NGOs, and in their

¹⁸¹ Mihr, 2004, p. 13.

¹⁸² Tibbitts, 2002.

¹⁸³ Mihr, 2004, p. 6.

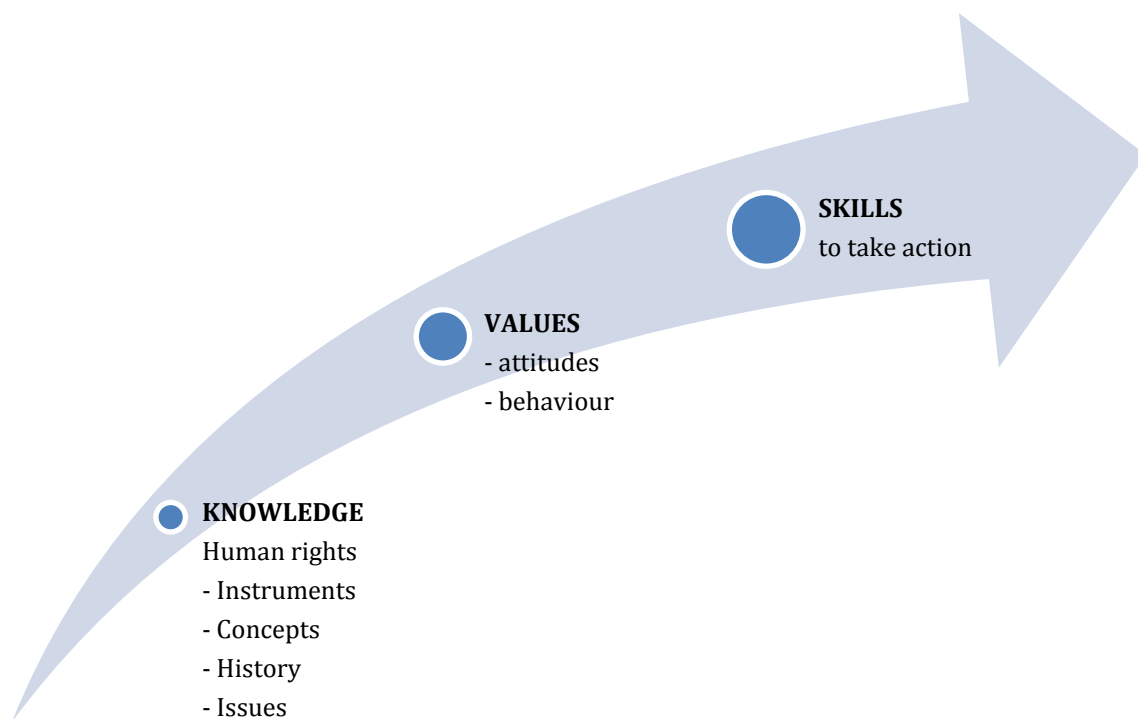
¹⁸⁴ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p. 20.

¹⁸⁵ Mihr, 2004, p. 6.

¹⁸⁶ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 31.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

daily lives. When students gain a sense of responsibility, they are motivated to become active. A focus on students' self-esteem is important in this dimension. This, along with personal experiences and introduction to the reality of other people's lives, makes people into active participants and reactors to injustice.¹⁸⁸ The level entails giving students possibilities to act, which makes inclusion of local communities valuable in the learning process.¹⁸⁹ The challenge of the emotional level is that it "can easily be manipulated through one-sided information or propaganda."¹⁹⁰ For human rights education to be successful, all three levels have to be included in the teaching.¹⁹¹



¹⁸⁸ Mihr, 2004, p. 5.

¹⁸⁹ *Id.*, pp. 6-7.

¹⁹⁰ *Id.*, p. 6.

¹⁹¹ *Id.*, p. 8.

1.3.8 Impact and Social Change

“The potential for human rights as a common vision of human dignity to be the catalyst for change is significant.”¹⁹² Human rights education has the potential to create a culture of respect and justice, where conflicts are solved non-violently.¹⁹³ Human rights education is viewed as one of the primary means to establish “sustainable and long-term stable democratic societies.”¹⁹⁴ In fact, if human rights do not become an integrated part of the curricula, “there will be no sustainable civil society or culture of human rights.”¹⁹⁵ Human rights education is instrumental for the survival of the international human rights regime.¹⁹⁶ Teaching human rights will help to overcome social injustice and inequality and will lead to a situation where “people actually change their minds, improve their skills and change their behaviour according to human rights standards.”¹⁹⁷ Human rights education is aimed at social transformation, it is “political education that holds within it a spiritual mission. It is recognizing that the root of all human rights violations in all societies is the absence of equality between women and men and non-discrimination.”¹⁹⁸ Taking starting point in the individual, human rights education leads to changes at a behavioural level. “Transformational forms of learning produce inner change as well as contribute to the development of capacities that empower learners to bring changes in the social groups and structures of which they are part.”¹⁹⁹ There is a connection between education, activism, and social change²⁰⁰, because “where human rights education exists there are greater opportunities for full rather than exclusionary citizenry participation and the presence of a more vibrant and active civil society.”²⁰¹ Due to “the wide array of other influences on young people’s attitudes and behaviours,

¹⁹² Abdi & Shultz, 2008, p. 3.

¹⁹³ Mihr, 2004, p. 14.

¹⁹⁴ *Id.*, p. 4.

¹⁹⁵ *Id.*, p. 2.

¹⁹⁶ *Id.*, p. 21.

¹⁹⁷ *Id.*, p. 45.

¹⁹⁸ Koenig, 2001.

¹⁹⁹ Huaman, Koenig, Shultz, 2008, p. 22.

²⁰⁰ Dower, 2008, pp. 49.

²⁰¹ Kissane, 2009, p. 67.

there can be no guarantee that the demonstration of a global ethic in schools will have the desired impact on individual students, but it remains the best option.”²⁰²

1.3.9 Summary

As we have seen, education does have the potential to challenge and establish values. When education affects attitudes, it can become an engine for change. However, this depends on the methodological approach, on the ability to include students in an active learning process, and on the contextualising of the content. This includes engaging in critical dialogue with room for disagreement among students and teachers. Moreover, a shift in discourse and practice from human rights *education* to human rights *learning* would show a willingness to let the teaching of human rights embrace a challenging approach to established societal structures. Furthermore, learning implies a teaching pedagogy in line with Freire’s problem-posing method, seeking to make education a tool for social change. The main aim of human rights education is to create a human rights culture. Such culture is created when a genuine commitment to the fundamental values of human rights is established. Human rights education seeks to have a multi-dimensional effect, which is why human rights learning must take place at several levels to be successful in creating such a culture.

²⁰² Pike, 2008, p. 235.

1.4 Evaluating Education

Human rights education is complex to evaluate, as the learning process encompasses dimensions of obtaining knowledge, of affecting values and of building skills to act. While knowledge of human rights history and instruments can be assessed according to traditional evaluation tools, change in values and attitudes calls for a ‘softer’ approach. To estimate whether students have gained skills to act for human rights is a developing process going beyond life at school. Due to this complexity, the evaluation is often neglected in human rights education. This causes a deficiency of substantial insight into the outcome, as well as lack of ground for improvement. The following pages will examine the importance of evaluation and explore different methods to clarify the wanted outcome of such assessment. This will guide the design of an evaluation tool for human rights education in Chapter III.

1.4.1 Why

Evaluation is based on the predetermined criteria that “are elements, which will allow us to compare reality with the objective or the expected outcomes of the educational activity.”²⁰³ These will help establish indicators of success. Evaluation is an important tool to change, improve and recognize achievements,²⁰⁴ and is a way to keep the motivation, set new goals, and thus progress further.²⁰⁵ Moreover, evaluation is a means to legitimizing the use of resources and to improving the methods for a greater and more sustainable impact²⁰⁶ through identifying and analysing strengths and weaknesses.²⁰⁷ Evidence of having achieved its objectives is needed, as “such research could not only enhance the quality of educational programming, but help to substantiate what is now primarily intuition about the importance of education within the human rights field.”²⁰⁸ The content and ‘softer’ dimension of human rights education does not mean its

²⁰³ Kloosterman, Giebel, Senyuva (eds.), 2007, p. 81.

²⁰⁴ *Id.*, p. 17.

²⁰⁵ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, pp. 98-99.

²⁰⁶ Mihr, 2004, p. 44.

²⁰⁷ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 120.

²⁰⁸ Tibbitts, 2002.

outcome cannot be evaluated. However, the evaluation design must “reflect the multifaceted goals intended for students (intellectual, skill and affective-values development) as well as the diverse pedagogical methods used.”²⁰⁹

Taking an educational approach to evaluation, the main aim becomes the potential learning process evaluation contains. This means going beyond assessment by also providing *explanations* and conclusions.²¹⁰ Educational evaluation is a critical and reflexive practice, conditioned by an open mind and the willingness to reconstruct own presumptions and ideas.²¹¹ Thereby, evaluation itself has an educational dimension and becomes “an opportunity both to promote the values of participation and to practice it”²¹², in line with the aims of human rights education.

1.4.2 What

To grasp achieved competences, we must design “models that support us in defining learning objectives and guiding our assessment of learning achievements”²¹³ in order to assess and evaluate a given learning process. To conduct a constructive evaluation, one must consider “which competences can be assessed?” and “what kind of knowledge is of central importance?”²¹⁴ Further central reflections to guide the evaluation are how these competences can be obtained and how teachers can estimate whether the wanted skills have been achieved.²¹⁵ It is important to bear in mind that evaluation is meant to support and strengthen the students, which requires a focus on the self-perception of capabilities and on enabling students to perform self-evaluation. Assessment can be both internal and external, which are two supplementary dimensions.²¹⁶ The methodology used has to correspond to the overall objective of the evaluation, which has to be a transparent and fair process.

²⁰⁹ Tibbitts, 1997, p. 11.

²¹⁰ Kloosterman, Giebel, Senyuva (eds.), 2007, pp. 14-15.

²¹¹ *Id.*, p. 5.

²¹² *Id.*, p. 16.

²¹³ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 34.

²¹⁴ *Id.*, p. 95.

²¹⁵ *Id.*, p. 96.

²¹⁶ *Id.*, p. 99.

As human rights education ultimately is about building a culture of human rights, “programming must be evaluated on its ability to contribute to this general goal.”²¹⁷ To understand the output of collected data and to analyse the impact, the following needs to be questioned:

- “Does the effect of the HRE [human rights education] program differ from the effect that would have been produced in the absence of such program?
- Is there any link between the HRE programs and the participants’ behaviour and knowledge in respect to human rights?
- Has the respect for human rights improved after the HRE programs have taken place?
- Were the participants able to develop specific human rights skills?”²¹⁸

In human rights education, the competences to be assessed lead back to the three dimensions of human rights education – knowledge, values and skills for action. When assessing the level of understanding and knowledge, standard ways of testing students will reflect the outcome. However, a change in values and behaviour calls for different evaluation methods, as “assessing attitudes and attitude change is much harder because of the subjective nature of the judgements involved.”²¹⁹ This can be viewed by looking at students’ individual abilities through their “[...] skills of analyzing problems, skills of understanding the perspectives or points of view of other groups; attitudes, motivation or interest application, action and generalization.”²²⁰

Evaluating the change of environment in a school setting through assessing the level of democracy and human rights is also part of assessing the outcome of human rights education. To estimate whether the general atmosphere has improved demands carefully defined success criteria and an on-going, dynamic evaluation on a regular basis.²²¹

²¹⁷ Tibbitts, 2002.

²¹⁸ Mihr, 2004, pp. 43-44.

²¹⁹ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p. 29.

²²⁰ Tibbitts, 1997, p. 11.

²²¹ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, p. 29.

Indicators to show progress are the content of the curriculum, the methodology of the teaching, the learning advancement and the school climate, including management and development.²²² Factors to take into consideration are “organisation of the school, dominant values in the classroom, understanding of [human rights] key concepts and relationships of authority.”²²³ This includes examining existing discrimination patterns, the level of security, the approach taken to violations of school rules and methods of conflict resolution. Moreover, the level of non-degrading treatment and punishment (including corporal punishment), whether diversity is welcomed and freedom of expression is respected should be taken into consideration. It should also be questioned whether students are exposed to diverse perspectives and global issues in the teaching, if students are participating in democratic decision-making and whether the working conditions are fair for everyone.²²⁴

1.4.3 How

The method of data collection is determined by the outcome one wants to measure. Quantitative and qualitative approaches both have their shortcomings and advantages in that “quantitative indicators of success relate to measurable outcomes; qualitative relate to subjective outputs, like quality and attitudes.”²²⁵ Usually, both methods are combined when evaluating as they show different outcomes. As a shift in values is an essential element of human rights education, a useful evaluation must contain qualitative data. The characteristic of collecting qualitative data is that it is process and context oriented and therefore will “include perspectives of people studied.”²²⁶ Moreover, formal assessments gain from being combined with the teachers’ informal observations on learning activities, “students’ use of concepts and expression of attitudes.”²²⁷ Self- and peer-evaluation is also encouraged, as “these methods will help to strengthen a student’s reflective process and encourage more self-direction in learning.”²²⁸

²²² Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 112.

²²³ *Id.*, p. 114.

²²⁴ UN, ‘Teaching Human Rights’, HR/PUB/2004/2, 2004, pp. 97-99.

²²⁵ Tibbitts, 1997, p. 5.

²²⁶ *Id.*, p. 7.

²²⁷ Tibbitts, 1997, pp. 13-14.

²²⁸ *Id.*, p. 12.

1.4.4 When

While planning evaluation, it must be considered when in the learning process an assessing intervention is appropriate. One can distinguish between *formative* and *summative* evaluation. Formative evaluation takes place during the development of the education programme, allowing for improvement while still in progress. Conducting formative assessment “will function as a facilitator of learning and will lead to better achievement.”²²⁹ The main goal of such assessment “is to support the individual student.”²³⁰ Formative assessment takes starting point in the individual student’s learning progress and performance through ‘softer’ methods of testing as well as through observations and conversations. A formative assessment implies a shift towards: “goal-oriented learning instead of purely content-oriented learning; individualised teaching instead of teaching where everybody works on the same task.”²³¹ Summative evaluation takes place when the programme has ended in order to estimate whether it has lived up to the defined goals and future projects can benefit from the lessons learned.²³²

1.4.5 Who

As the aim of human rights education is to improve the school culture as such, it makes sense to involve everyone related to the school – teachers, students, staff and parents.²³³ An education programme is evaluated independently of the institution that has provided such programme, i.e. the following case study is not an evaluation of AI. However, “programs often reflect the decision making, communication, problem-solving and public relations practices of the organization in which they are based.”²³⁴

²²⁹ Gollob, Krapf, Weidinger (eds.), 2010, p. 95.

²³⁰ *Id.*, p. 100.

²³¹ *Id.*, p. 101.

²³² Tibbitts, 1997, p. 1.

²³³ *Id.*, p. 4.

²³⁴ *Id.*, p. 3.

1.4.6 Summary

As stated in the beginning, the aim of this research is to provide an understanding whether and how the impact of human rights education can be evaluated. Though being complex, the presented theoretical considerations suggest it is possible. Moreover, it even appears to be crucial for improving and ensuring that educational efforts actually do contribute to creating a culture of human rights. Additionally, evaluation is an essential element of the learning process. The design of such evaluation must take starting point in the aims and dimensions of human rights education – learning that develops knowledge, values and skills. At the same time, the evaluation must reflect that human rights education involves the learning about, through and for human rights. This entails a focus on not only *what* is taught, but also *how* human rights are taught.

The case study to follow will present an evaluation model and propose what the added value of human rights education is. This will contribute to the understanding of the potential and the challenges of evaluation as well as form the basis for the evaluation design to be suggested in the Chapter III.

Chapter II

Case Study of the Amnesty International ‘Human Rights Friendly School Programme’ in Denmark and Italy

To concretize the theoretical concepts and outcome of human rights education, I have chosen to include a case study of a long-term education programme organised by AI. The programme is an initiative within the framework of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education. First, I will describe the concept, aims and methodology of the programme. This will involve an elaboration of AI’s approach to evaluation. Next, I will examine the status of human rights education in Denmark and Italy. This will be followed by an analysis of the programme implementation and evaluation based on interviews conducted at KonTiki Skolen and Liceo Norberto Rosa.

2.1 The Education Programme

2.1.1 Amnesty International

AI is a human rights movement with more than 3 million contributing members worldwide. The organisation was founded in London in 1961. Originally, AI focused on the release of prisoners of conscience through political pressure and public campaigning. Throughout the years, the organisation has expanded its focus to encompass the abolition of death penalty, torture, political killings and forced disappearances. Nowadays, the work of the organisation also involves economic, social and cultural rights.²³⁵

In 1985 AI became involved in human rights education. AI defines human rights education as “a participatory practice aimed at empowering individuals, groups and communities through fostering knowledge, skills and attitudes consistent with

²³⁵ AI, ‘The history of Amnesty International’.

internationally recognized human rights principles.[...] Its goal is to build a culture of respect for and action in the defence and promotion of human rights for all.”²³⁶

Currently the organisation provides formal and informal education for young people and adults. Due to the organisation’s “experience, size, reputation, and global reach, Amnesty International has a significant role to play in efforts to integrate human rights education into schools.”²³⁷ Moreover, AI lobbies for the integration of human rights education in schools at a national level.²³⁸

The Italian AI section has more than 80.000 members²³⁹, while the Danish AI section exceeds 100.000 members.²⁴⁰

2.1.2 Human Rights Friendly Schools

The HRFS programme promotes values based on the principles of the International Bill of Human Rights, the CRC and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) through meaningful participation, empowerment and accountability. The programme’s pilot phase started in 2009 and ended in 2011. Fourteen countries from four different continents have participated²⁴¹, together constituting a global network meant to share best practice on human rights education. Among those are Italy and Denmark, which will be subject to the case study.

The HRFS programme is a cooperation between national AI sections and secondary schools, meaning that both stakeholders bring complementary experience and expertise. AI sought to build on an existing human rights friendly starting point; hence the participating schools were selected on that criterion.²⁴² When becoming part of the

²³⁶ AI, ‘Guidelines for Human Rights Friendly Schools’ (not public), 2009, p. 10.

²³⁷ *Id.*, p. 6.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

²³⁹ AI, ‘Organizzazione’.

²⁴⁰ AI, ‘Amnesty runder 100.000 medlemmer i Danmark’.

²⁴¹ The participating countries were Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, Denmark, Ghana, Israel, Ireland, Italy, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Paraguay, Poland, Senegal and the UK.

²⁴² AI, ‘Human Rights Friendly Schools’, 2009, p. 5.

programme, schools are encouraged to analyse how human rights values exist in school life and to consider how this aspect can be strengthened.

A human rights friendly school “embraces the potential of human rights as core operating and organizing principles” in fostering “an environment and a community in which human rights are learned, taught, practiced, respected, defended, and promoted.”²⁴³ Human rights concepts should be ‘translated’ and put into practice in daily school life by establishing a safe atmosphere of equality, non-discrimination, inclusion, dignity, and respect. Ideally, the programme should be implemented horizontally and holistically, as “you can only teach human rights by having an environment, culture and atmosphere which respects and promotes human rights in the school.”²⁴⁴ Through participatory learning, a HRFS should foster an understanding of human rights as being concepts beyond studying as human rights is a way of life. Fairness and transparency are vital to planning processes and policies in order to democratize the school space. Participation and ownership make students feel valued and will in a long-term perspective be instrumental for building a strong and stable civil society.²⁴⁵

2.1.3 Programme Aims

Through the HRFS, AI wants to establish common values founded in human rights. These values should dominate all aspects of school life, creating a human rights culture where students can develop to their full potential. The learning process is not limited to the students; teachers should likewise be committed to the values of the HRFS. According to AI, a human rights culture is characterized by “an atmosphere in which all members of a given community understand, value and protect human rights.”²⁴⁶ Many stakeholders are involved in creating a human rights culture; students, teachers, staff, and parents should all respect and protect the rights of self and others and have the

²⁴³ AI, ‘Guidelines for Human Rights Friendly Schools’ (not public), 2009, p. 10.

²⁴⁴ AI, ‘Human Rights Friendly Schools’, 2009, p. 9.

²⁴⁵ *Id.*, pp. 9-10.

²⁴⁶ AI, ‘Guidelines for Human Rights Friendly Schools’ (not public), 2009, p. 5.

capacity and opportunity to take part in school decisions affecting their lives.²⁴⁷ The global nature of the programme should establish network sharing experiences and promote a worldwide “shared language of equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination, and participation.”²⁴⁸ A long-term aim of the programme is to “influence national governments to adopt whole-school human rights education approaches in education generally.”²⁴⁹

2.1.4 Methodology

The HRFS programme takes a whole-school approach, meaning reaching out and involving parents and communities. The interaction with communities enables students to “participate in the functioning of their community, and to identify the human rights needs and issues and partner with others to take action.”²⁵⁰ Human rights thereby has the potential to become more than the content of a subject, “it becomes the way in which we teach, the way in which we learn, and the way in which we live our lives.”²⁵¹

The programme is divided into four main areas – participation and governance, curriculum development, community relations, and extra-curricular school environment. All aspects are important for the process of bringing abstract values and principles to life in the school setting. Elements of good practice are peer-to-peer learning, cultural exchange, participation in the formulation of human rights policies, and a code of conduct for everyday school life. The school community should be based on horizontal relationships and democratic decisions.²⁵² Human rights should be promoted through and in the relations between the different members of the school community. Keywords are partnership, equality, valuing diversity, dignity, respect, fairness, and meaningful engagement of all involved in school life.

²⁴⁷ AI, ‘Human Rights Friendly Schools’, 2009, p. 5.

²⁴⁸ AI, ‘Guidelines for Human Rights Friendly Schools’ (not public), 2009, p. 9.

²⁴⁹ *Id.*, p. 7.

²⁵⁰ *Id.*, p. 32.

²⁵¹ AI, ‘Human Rights Friendly Schools’, 2009, p. 4.

²⁵² *Id.*, pp. 5-6.

Integrating human rights into the curriculum means that “all students have the opportunity to learn about, for, and through human rights”²⁵³, relating to the normative conceptualisation of human rights education. AI defines this as introducing human rights law, history, and concepts, while exploring controversial issues that are of school and community concern. This is done in a human rights framework and developing rights-respecting classrooms supported by an inclusive, participatory, and varied teaching style and supporting young people to take action for human rights.²⁵⁴ Part of the curriculum integration is to consider whether human rights should be a single subject or mainstreamed into existing subjects. A mainstreaming of human rights into mandatory courses has the advantage that “all students will get some exposure to human rights issues and ideally become familiar with considering other issues from a human rights perspective.”²⁵⁵ However, this demands considerable resources in terms of teacher training and additional material.²⁵⁶ Furthermore, human rights should be integrated into the extra-curricular domain, as what happens outside the school environment also is of great importance to the students. It is a space “without the constraints of state or national learning standards or exams” giving everyone the opportunity to “work together to define specific areas for interest and action.”²⁵⁷

2.1.5 Challenges

AI recognises that the programme does come with challenges worth taking into account. The programme encourages numerous changes, which take time. Changing the curriculum needs government support – yet not a lot of emphasis is put on the advocacy dimension of the HRFS programme. Moreover, it is not just a matter of changing what is being taught but also a shift in teaching and learning methodology.²⁵⁸ Whereas adjusting the content of the curriculum is a natural part of school life, it is more complex to translate abstract and academic human rights concepts into a school setting – which changes does it entail to have human rights friendly governance in school?

²⁵³ *Id.*, p. 19

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁵ AI, ‘Guidelines for Human Rights Friendly Schools’ (not public), 2009, p. 42.

²⁵⁶ AI, ‘Human Rights Friendly Schools’, 2009, p. 19.

²⁵⁷ AI, ‘Guidelines for Human Rights Friendly Schools’ (not public), 2009, p. 48.

²⁵⁸ AI, ‘Human Rights Friendly Schools’, 2009, p. 11.

Another issue is that teachers do not necessarily welcome a democratic education approach, as this challenges their traditional position as being authorities. A human rights friendly classroom is characterised by everyone having expertise and being able to contribute to the learning process.²⁵⁹ Thus a HRFS must strive to find the balance between leadership and participation. Furthermore, the inclusion of local communities can also put a school in a dilemma if partners do not respect human rights.²⁶⁰

2.1.6 Evaluation

AI acknowledges that effective monitoring and evaluation is important, as it can ensure improvement and “help to achieve buy-in and support from Ministries of Education.”²⁶¹ Yet, several factors are challenging to conducting a comprehensive and constructive assessment - lack of resources, change in staff, accuracy in data collection, and the question of how to make the evaluation useful at a political level.²⁶²

As the HRFS programme took place in very differing settings, conducting a standard evaluation has been difficult. However, two tools were designed to gain a general insight into the outcome. These components were in some cases supplemented by autonomous evaluation initiatives, depending on the resources available at the local AI departments.

In order to monitor the effect of the programme, an evaluation instrument for taking the ‘human rights temperature at school’, was designed to “help participants reflect on their experiences in the school.”²⁶³ Through quantitative 20-questions multiple-choice questionnaires, changes in perception were measured at the beginning and the end of the programme. The benefit of such approach is the extensive before and after picture it provides. Students gain “from being included in the monitoring process as a form of

²⁵⁹ AI, ‘Guidelines for Human Rights Friendly Schools’ (not public) 2009, pp. 55-56

²⁶⁰ AI, ‘Human Rights Friendly Schools’, 2009, pp. 16-18.

²⁶¹ *Id.*, p. 13.

²⁶² *Id.*, pp. 12-13.

²⁶³ AI, ‘Guidelines for Human Rights Friendly Schools’ (not public), 2009, pp. 55-56.

participatory learning.”²⁶⁴ However, it is a very time-consuming method, which only allows for statistical insight and no qualitative and experiential assessment. This makes it difficult to estimate whether there has been a change in values and if skills to take action for human rights have been developed.

Additionally, AI designed the ‘Year One Action Plan’ which was formulated based on cooperation between the participating schools and the national AI section. The Action Plan was meant to establish a starting point for the school, by defining existing human rights norms and setting targets for improvement. However, one year is not a long time to facilitate sustainable changes and there is a risk that negative results might be demotivating. Moreover, this Action Plan mainly focused on human rights at a macro-level, meaning that an insight into the level of human rights in daily school life was lacking.²⁶⁵

AI is currently working on a collective evaluation of the HRFS programme, which has not been published yet. Therefore, my point of reference will be the evaluations conducted by the national AI sections and information provided by teachers from the two schools. First, I will introduce the two schools that participated in the HRFS programme followed by an examination of the framework for human rights education in national legislation.

²⁶⁴ *Id.*, p. 56.

²⁶⁵ *Id.*, pp. 56-57.

2.2 Denmark and Italy

2.2.1 KonTiki Skolen

The KonTiki school is an elementary school with 200 students and is located close to Hillerød, a city in the Northern part of Zealand, Denmark. Hillerød is a city with a regional hospital and medical industry, where many of the students' parents are employed. Hillerød is a 'white middleclass city', which is reflected among the students at KonTiki.

KonTiki is what in Danish is called a 'friskole', meaning it is a private alternative to public schools, usually created on parents' initiative. While the education must comply with the regulations for public schools, a 'friskole' is to a certain extent allowed to organize the teaching according to own values and ideology.²⁶⁶ KonTiki is characterised by being independent from political and religious beliefs.

According to school principal Ane Fabricius, there are no specific human rights issues in the school. There are very few ethnic minorities among the students, some adopted children and many children with a parent from another European country. This cultural diversity is brought in through the teaching as well as parents' involvement and gained from as much as possible.

The school is characterised by a great extent of students' influence and participation. This is expressed in daily morning meetings, democratic decision making concerning the content of teaching and a high degree of responsibility of own learning. Students' influence in daily school life means there is a close and informal contact between teachers and students. The school has a policy of calling the students 'children' and 'young people' and teachers 'adults', reflecting a holistic approach, as "there simply is a difference in choosing to look only at the educational part of our relation. Our perspective is considerably broader, meaning they are children we must take care of,

²⁶⁶ Dansk Friskoleforening, 'Fakta om Friskoler'.

more than students, which only indicates the role they take. Moreover, we find it a bit old-fashioned. It is an old-fashioned way of perceiving students getting knowledge transferred, where we experience it to be children learning through life.”²⁶⁷ The teachers function as role models and as the students’ ‘other adults’ away from their parents, meaning they are concerned with the students’ “inner life, leisure life, well being, and relation to their parents.”

The participation in the HRFS programme generated some discussion at KonTiki. Working together with an organisation worried part of the staff, since the school is founded on being independent. The cooperation was suggested to the teachers, to the board and to the parents’ association, who all had to agree in order for the programme to be realized. Once the decision was taken, all teachers were engaged in the implementation.

2.2.2 Liceo Norberto Rosa

Norberto Rosa is a public high school with about 250 students situated in Susa, in the Northern part of Italy. Susa is characterised by being a middle class area where wealth is not widespread and with only a small numbers of immigrants. People from the region have over the last years been part of spontaneous and organized democratic participation and action as a consequence to the government’s decision to build a high-speed railway in Val di Susa.²⁶⁸ This has occasionally led to confrontations between citizens and authorities, which some students from Norberto Rosa have been involved in.²⁶⁹ The economic crisis in Europe has affected the families of the students and many of them now have an unemployed parent. This has caused a difference in the everyday life of the school, where extracurricular activities have been reduced due to the families’ lack of resources.

²⁶⁷ Interview with Ane Fabricius, School Principal, KonTiki Skolen, Hillerød, 24 April 2012 (own translation from Danish).

²⁶⁸ AI, ‘Internal evaluation of the HRFS programme in Italy’ (not public), 2010.

²⁶⁹ Interview with Alessio Surian, Professor, Padova University, Susa, 31 March 2012.

The social backgrounds of the students are not very diverse and the families tend to have at least a medium-cycle higher education level. Norberto Rosa is a high school that requires a lot of studying and engagement, which means it is usually chosen by students with an academic interest and a more or less stable social background. At Norberto Rosa there are around two students with immigrant background per class and they are described as being perfectly integrated, according to teacher Fabrizia Farci. The school has a small number of disabled students and students who suffers from dyslexia, who follow a special programme. These students are given tools in order to have equal opportunities to the rest of the students.

The relationship among students and teachers is characterised by being informal, according to student representative Viviana Magaglio. This is related to the fact that many teachers prefer such a relation as well as to the size of the school.²⁷⁰ Fabrizia describes the relationship as “quite good, there is respect”.²⁷¹ Viviana senses the teachers “love their jobs and they believe in their job. I really like this, because I respect them because they love it.” Viviana finds that there is no discrimination among the students and the relations are generally marked by respect for one another: “This is a beautiful school in this aspect. Because we know, we are few and we are like a big family. I know, I think, everyone here. So every day I say hello to everyone and there is no people who try to be bad [bully].”²⁷²

The decision to participate in the HRFS programme was taken by all teachers, as consensus was needed to be able to join.

2.2.3 Human Rights Education in Denmark

In the Danish ‘folkeskole’ (i.e. basic compulsory education from the age of app. seven to sixteen), the aim of the education is partly “to provide students with [...] an understanding of other countries and cultures; [...] promote the well-rounded development of the individual student; to develop [...] confidence in their own

²⁷⁰ Interview with Viviana Magaglio, Student, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

²⁷¹ Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

²⁷² Interview with Viviana Magaglio, Student, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

possibilities and backgrounds such that they are able to commit themselves and are willing to take action; to prepare the students to be able to participate, demonstrate mutual responsibility, and understand their rights and duties in a free and democratic society. The daily activities of the school must, therefore, be conducted in a spirit of intellectual freedom, equality, and democracy.”²⁷³ Thereby, the values of ‘folkeskolen’ are broadly speaking consistent with human rights. However, *what* rights and duties students should become familiar with is not explicitly articulated, which could have been framed more precisely.

This is different in the objectives of ‘friskoler’, which defines part of the school’s aim to be “preparing students to live in a society as the Danish with freedom and democracy as well as develop and strengthen the student’s knowledge and respect of basic freedom- and human rights, including gender equality.”²⁷⁴

Nonetheless, this is not transferred into concrete subjects, reflecting that human rights are viewed as an implicit part of teaching democracy and citizenship in the Danish education system.²⁷⁵ Cecilia Decara from the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) explains that human rights education is being perceived as an existing element, which is what is being reported to the Committee of the Rights of the Child – however, she explains that in reality, human rights education is not integrated in the Danish school system: “there is no specification of in which subjects, it is just claimed that human rights education is indeed part of the Danish education system, and then with a referral to the aim of the ‘folkeskole.’”²⁷⁶

In an email-exchange with the Danish ministry of education, I asked for a clarification of to what extent human rights are part of the Danish ‘folkeskole’. The reply focused on the degree of “democracy in ‘folkeskolen’ both through teaching democracy as a system

²⁷³ The Ministry of Children and Education, ‘The Aims of the “Folkeskole”’.

²⁷⁴ Retsinformation, ‘Friskoleloven – Bekendtgørelse af lov om friskoler og private grundskoler mv.’.

²⁷⁵ AI, ‘Menneskerettighedsundervisning i folkeskolen’, 2009, p. 29.

²⁷⁶ Interview with Cecilia Decara, Project Manager, Danish Institute for Human Rights, Copenhagen, 26 April 2012 (own translation from Danish).

and through the entire nature of the school, which builds on a democratic foundation.”²⁷⁷ There is a reference to the fact that the UDHR is a mandatory part of history, but as seen in chapter one, *information* on human rights does not equal human rights education. Furthermore, mandatory inclusion of human rights in history class is not until the 8th grade, which has been criticized for being too late and too little.²⁷⁸ It is far from enough that students gain knowledge on the topic by the end of ‘folkeskolen’. For human rights education to become an integrated part of schooling, it must be implemented from the beginning of children’s school attendance.²⁷⁹

Moreover, teachers are not obliged to teach human rights, though they do get education on how to integrate rights into different subjects through a course called ‘Knowledge on Christianity, Life and Citizenship.’²⁸⁰ However, it is currently being debated to remove the former mandatory subject from the teachers’ educational curriculum, meaning teachers will lack a solid background for teaching human rights.²⁸¹

The DIHR lobbies for a national action plan for human rights education, which has not been realised in spite of international recommendations. “We want to point out that it is not a matter of choice, it is not a matter of like or dislike. Because it is something we are obliged to do.”²⁸² At the moment human rights education is left to an ad hoc approach, dependent on the personal interest of the individual teacher. It is not “institutionalised in relation to policies on bullying, well being, cooperation among schools and parents.”²⁸³ Cecilia underlines the importance of politicians understanding that human rights cannot be left to an unsystematic and coincidental part of education – it has to be an explicit and articulated component of educational policies. This includes recognizing human

²⁷⁷ Email from Jan Liin Jessen, Pedagogical Consultant, The Ministry of Children and Education, 24 April 2012 (own translation from Danish).

²⁷⁸ AI, ‘Menneskerettighedsundervisning i folkeskolen’, 2009, p. 17.

²⁷⁹ Interview with Cecilia Decara, Project Manager, Danish Institute for Human Rights, Copenhagen, 26 April 2012.

²⁸⁰ Translated from Danish: ‘Kristendomskundskab, Livsoplysning og Medborgerskab.’ This course is part of the teacher training in Denmark, i.e. at the BA.

²⁸¹ Interview with Cecilia Decara, Project Manager, Danish Institute for Human Rights, Copenhagen, 26 April 2012.

²⁸² *Ibid.*

²⁸³ *Ibid.*

rights education as something beyond traditional transfer of information. It must be about “dialogical teaching, taking starting point in the values and attitudes of the students and which gives them knowledge, abilities, and opportunities to taking action.”²⁸⁴

In 2009, AI conducted a survey on Danish students’ knowledge of human rights in 8th-10th grade. This revealed that half of the students did not know the UDHR, nor were they able to name a specific human right.²⁸⁵ This is in line with the experience of Ane Fabricius, who finds that human rights education is close to nonexistent in Danish schools. Students “may have heard about people in other countries having different living conditions, or they may have heard that the Danish system is built on democracy and tradition. But concretely, what meaning it has for a society and so on is a lacking dimension in the Danish education system.”²⁸⁶ Though some human rights *themes* are discussed in class, Ane is under the impression that human rights are rarely articulated. If human rights are introduced, it is mostly through a thematic approach, meaning the understanding of basic documents and the indivisibility of rights is missing.²⁸⁷ Ane does find that human rights are part of the political education agenda – although typically as something negative: “the value struggle that was introduced, partly from back when I was in school, that all teachers where leftists, it was as if it was suppressed, you weren’t allowed to say anything and introduce all those [human rights] themes, due to fear of being political and indoctrinating.”²⁸⁸ Furthermore, the former government shifted the discourse and policies to more focus on the measurable subjects (reading, writing, calculating) while a softer pedagogical approach of “sitting and talking with the children about actualities” was not prioritized.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁵ AI, ‘Menneskerettighedsundervisning i folkeskolen’, 2009, p. 18.

²⁸⁶ Interview with Ane Fabricius, School Principal, KonTiki Skolen, Hillerød, 24 April 2012.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

2.2.4 Human Rights Education in Italy

In 2008 a law was adopted in Italy on ‘Cittadinanza e Costituzione’, making it compulsory for teachers to “include objectives related to citizenship and the constitution in the teaching of their subjects or subject areas”²⁹⁰ at all educational levels. Students should gain knowledge of the Italian constitution as well as develop values for active citizenship, hereunder “respect for individuals, without discrimination, civic sense, individual and collective responsibilities, values of liberty, justice, common wellbeing, respect for the environment - all being the roots of the Italian Constitution.”²⁹¹ This education should be an integrated part of history, geography and socio-historical subjects, which is where the assessment takes place. Schools are free to choose how citizenship education should be conducted, however a focus on the relation with local communities is often an integrated part, as “credits or points are awarded for participation in community-oriented out-of-school activities and these are taken into account in the general assessment”.²⁹² No official recommendations for hours to be allocated to citizenship education exist. That is also not the case with human rights education, which is not *per se* compulsory in the Italian legislation.²⁹³ It is, however, widely assumed that human rights are an essential part of the Citizenship and Constitution education.

According to Fabrizia Farci, there is great autonomy in terms of content and teaching method in Italy. She does not believe that human rights education is part of the everyday life at Italian schools in general. If at all, it is through education on citizenship and the Italian constitution (referring to the afore mentioned framework). Moreover, Fabrizia does not find human rights education to be part of the national, nor regional, political agenda. Teaching human rights is up to individual schools or teacher initiative.²⁹⁴

²⁹⁰ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, ‘Citizenship Education in Europe’, 2012, p. 24.

²⁹¹ *Id.*, p. 129.

²⁹² *Id.*, p. 76.

²⁹³ *Id.*, pp. 24-27.

²⁹⁴ Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

Antonio Spinelli is an example of a teacher who has decided to include human rights in his teaching, as he believes they are “the basis of our life as citizens and human beings first of all [and] as students.”²⁹⁵ He explains that human rights are taught as part of history and geography, but “it depends on the teachers and the school. There is not a real curriculum.”²⁹⁶ Teaching human rights is “not simple, because we don’t have real time dedicated to human rights. We have to cut the other hours to teach human rights.”²⁹⁷ While Antonio finds human rights to be important, he acknowledges, “not all the teachers are interested in human rights. Some teacher thinks that there is no time during the lessons to teach human rights [...], or other teachers don’t have information about human rights. They have done university and after that they don’t ask themselves what is really important in a person’s life.”²⁹⁸

Having clarified the aims of the HRFS programme, describing the settings in which it has been implemented and providing an overview of the national legislation and political climate related to human rights education in Denmark and Italy, I will now continue with an analysis of the case study.

²⁹⁵ Interview with Antonio Spinelli, Teacher, Scuola Secondaria di I Grado ‘Davila’, Padova, 2 April 2012.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

2.3 Analysis

This part of the chapter presents an elaborative analysis of the implementation, evaluation and outcome of the HRFS program at KonTiki and Norberto Rosa.

2.3.1 Qualitative Research

The research is based on qualitative interviews and information provided by AI. Qualitative research provides an opportunity to demonstrate a variety of perspectives as this method starts from subjective social meaning. A qualitative approach takes into account that opinions and practises are different, due to various subjective perspectives and social backgrounds.²⁹⁹ The method does come with natural limitations, as conclusions are based on few and subjective points of view and cannot be taken for granted as being the overall picture.

2.3.2 Aims and Limitations of the Present Analysis

I do not seek to evaluate on the design of the HRFS programme as such. Yet, I will point out what participants have found to be its benefits and its shortcomings, as these themes might be useful for designing human rights education in general. Equally I do not seek to conclude which school has ‘done the better job’ at creating a human rights culture, as I am aware of the differing settings and conditions in terms of students’ age, the resources of the school (private vs. public) and the pedagogical tradition. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see which similarities and differences can be found in the implementation of the programme and its apparent outcome.

In Italy, I had the opportunity to talk to both a teacher and a student, which was not the case in Denmark. Therefore, it was not possible to point out differences in students’ and teachers’ perceptions of the impact of the programme at KonTiki. Additionally, as a

²⁹⁹ Flick, 2006, p. 16.

consequence of a language barrier, the interviews conducted in English provide a less accurate and less in-depth insight.

The aim of the analysis is to suggest a model for how to evaluate human rights education in general through doing an ‘evaluation of the evaluation’ conducted of the HRFS programme. Such tool will be useful to outline the impact, as well as proving what now tend to be assumptions of the beneficial outcome of human rights education. This will be valuable for providing argumentation for the added value of human rights education, along with the importance of prioritizing human rights education in national education policies.

2.4 KonTiki Skolen – A Danish Human Rights Friendly School

KonTiki had a beneficial starting point, since the values of a HRFS to a great extent are compatible to those already existing in the school setting. Student participation and parents’ involvement are integrated parts of the everyday life, as is the fact that “the children choose actual topics throughout their education, which means that it is almost always natural for us as a school to talk about the living conditions of people from other places in the world, as well as in Denmark.”³⁰⁰ Thereby, the global outlook and platforms for democratic influence and involvement were already in place. Whether the HRFS concept would have been as successful in a public school with fewer resources, more students and greater social and cultural diversity is unclear. In an interview with Michel Banz, education manager at AI Denmark, he expressed exactly this concern.³⁰¹ Ane Fabricius believes it could be possible, though she points out that the programme does require agreement and will from the school management and the teachers - “perhaps we reached such agreement easier here and found the red thread faster.”³⁰² During the programme period KonTiki were in close contact with AI, who helped

³⁰⁰ Interview with Ane Fabricius, School Principal, KonTiki Skolen, Hillerød, 24 April 2012 (own translation from Danish).

³⁰¹ Phone interview with Michel Banz, Human Rights Education Manager, A4 April 2012.

³⁰² Interview with Ane Fabricius, School Principal, KonTiki Skolen, Hillerød, 24 April 2012 (own translation from Danish).

finding relevant people, provided information on and nuances to human rights issues. Moreover, all teachers were offered a course at the Danish AI education centre before implementing the programme to ensure a basic knowledge on human rights and related teaching methodologies. However, KonTiki emphasized AI was a visiting guest, rather than an organisation to come and ‘do a project’. The programme was kicked off with a meeting to clarify expectations, “where the school made it clear it is our own project, we are going to run it independently.”³⁰³ Besides teaching materials, there has been no economic support related to the programme.

2.4.1 Implementation

At KonTiki, a theme is selected every year to be the basis for all teaching and learning. This theme is partly chosen by students, though having human rights as that year’s theme was decided from above as the cooperation with AI necessitated a formal approval process. ‘Human rights’ and ‘good governance’ were translated into a focus on concrete subject matter planning and a critical examination of students’, teachers’, staffs’ and parents’ opportunity for democratic influence. The implementation had four focal points: content of the teaching, internal work environment, optimizing the students’ council, and the inclusion of parents and community.

The practical part of planning the teaching and its purpose has been the main focus for the implementation. This process involved integrating human rights into existing subjects as well as planning thematic weeks and visits. Thereby, human rights were part of many smaller and bigger projects, running simultaneously in individual classes and at the entire school throughout the year. At KonTiki, the HRFS programme involved students in the age from 6 till 16. The fact that the school has such a great age spread, meant teachers tried to make human rights as concrete as possible, while expanding the complexity of the issues for the older students. Inviting refugees to come and share their story, having students exploring and comparing living conditions in different countries, creating a human rights theatre and building a refugee camp at school as part of a role

³⁰³ *Ibid.*

play, are all examples of how human rights were taught at KonTiki. Moreover, the school invited students from Israel, Uganda, Greenland and Mongolia to Denmark, who were all affiliated with a class and stayed with families. According to both Ane Fabricius and Michel Banz, this was a successful concept, as the students learned a lot from meeting other cultures on such concrete terms. Furthermore, five schools from Copenhagen with students from different ethnical backgrounds were invited to visit KonTiki, which also led to cooperation among the teachers from the various schools.

The second part of the programme has been evaluating and adjusting the opportunities for democratic participation and formulating common values based on human rights. This led to an examination of the general work environment. KonTiki has a horizontal structure with teachers making most decisions, supplemented by a management group and a board. Participating in the HRFS programme resulted in an improvement of staffs' participation in the everyday life and the creation of a teacher group being responsible for daily cooperation. The purpose of such group was to formalize human rights friendly work structures, articulate values and ensure that tools are in place to deal with conflicts and human rights violations.

Though the students at KonTiki have a large degree of influence on the everyday life, there has not been a functioning student council for years. In order to become a school respecting human rights, this was changed and recognized as an important part of democratic learning. The possibility for democratic influence for the student develops over time, as he or she gets older.

Parents' involvement and influence did exist to some extent, as they traditionally run parents' meetings independently. Thus not much was adjusted at this level. The inclusion of the local community was challenging for KonTiki, which is located on the countryside, some kilometres from the nearest city. Therefore, this aspect was interpreted in a broader sense, and became a process of corporation with schools and organisations in the region, as well as internationally. This led to many invitations for external people, to come and teach and carry out smaller projects.

2.4.2 The Challenges and Added Value of Human Rights Education

The interviews conducted demonstrated that the perception of what human rights education is tends to differ among teachers and students. As seen throughout the first chapter human rights education has several dimensions, which must all be included to create a human rights culture. Whereas students first and foremost connect human rights education to content, the teachers interviewed were likely to focus on the teaching methodology as an important element as well. But if this dimension is not articulated, students do not necessarily identify the teaching *form* to be a dimension of human rights learning.

For the students at KonTiki, Ane finds human rights education as being related to gaining knowledge of how people live around the world and learning about basic rights, as “the children don’t really know which human rights exist, nor do they perceive them as some kind of universal truth.”³⁰⁴ Human rights education is about raising awareness of rights as such, as well as human rights issues and violations. Thereby, it also becomes education seeking to explain the causes for oppressing structures and reasons for why human rights are repeatedly disregarded. Exploring the motives for human rights violations makes politics an inevitable component of human rights education. While teaching facts is one thing, teaching the causes for human rights violations can be more complex. The understanding of the underlying reasons for this lack of respect varies and is to a great extent influenced by individual points of view. To Ane, taking political position is a natural part of teaching human rights. However, this (possibly problematic) aspect is not explicitly addressed in human rights education theory. It is crucial for teachers to be aware of how individual opinions are an integrated part of teaching human rights and therefore ensure that human rights education does not become about promoting certain political positions. Reflection on how to work with and around this, has been part of making KonTiki a HRFS. Ane points out “our opinions among the adults are very different – whether we think human rights are violated as a result of the way we have structured society, who makes money on behalf of others,

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

patterns of exploitation. That is difficult to agree on.”³⁰⁵ There must be room for disagreement, which makes it essential for students to encounter various points of view through different teachers. “We tried to make the teaching as nuanced as possible, meaning some [teachers] find explanations in religious causes, some in structural, some in demarcation, some in tribal wars and some on economical grounds [...]. It is evident, that this is more difficult with younger children, which was the case here.”³⁰⁶

Human rights education for very young students does bring forth discussions on how violent issues should be introduced. This dilemma resulted in some clashes between parents and the school. Nevertheless, KonTiki argued to be obliged to introduce students to reality, though this comes with a challenge. The complexity of human rights can be difficult for children to grasp, but “one can plant seeds when they are little, which can be brought in and expanded later on.”³⁰⁷ It is hard for children to understand why a war starts, “but knowing about war and knowing what happens in war”³⁰⁸ is a useful starting point to build on later. Overall, Ane was under the impression that all the students gained from participating in the programme, although for students from ten years and up “the human rights projects might have made a greater impression on them, than other projects they have encountered at school.”³⁰⁹

Creative and dialogical teaching was a great part of becoming a HRFS. These means, however, do not vary much from the everyday life at KonTiki according to Ane, whose teaching is generally based on participation, self-learning, and students’ initiative. Moreover, she started using methods of cooperative learning while being part of the programme, which she found to be useful for human rights education. It is a method based on “students cooperating for the common good, being as active as possible. Though the activities are structured by the adults, the students work very independently.”³¹⁰ The teaching methodology was discussed a lot during the initial

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*

phase of the programme. Hereunder, the dilemma that a teacher can be oppressive while teaching human rights, resulting in a great distance between what is being taught and the reality at school. Ane estimates that the programme as such has met this challenge frequently, due to the many participating countries. Yet, she does not find this has been problematic at KonTiki, as the Danish school system generally is based on a democratic relation among students and teachers.

Ane finds the added value of human rights education to be great and does not doubt its positive impact, though it can be hard to measure. She believes, children in Denmark benefit from knowing that such a privileged society is built on traditions, “it’s not just something given. It’s work, it’s creation, it’s attitudes and values that have caused it.” Moreover, she thinks it is crucial to show that “experiences, will, and values make us able to create the kind of society we want. And that a society can change in the direction we want it to, but there may be big things in a country that make it very difficult.”³¹¹ To her, teaching human rights has not been experienced as something ‘extra’, as the school always works thematically. When teaching, “I can choose a short-story which has a human rights starting point. But I also choose it because it has a *raison d’être* in itself.”³¹² However, Ane does acknowledge that the school as an institution complains about all the new themes and subjects it is constantly asked to introduce. This results in a frustration of questioning “with what adults, which resources, and where should the time be taken from?”³¹³ The prioritisation of human rights education suffers from this fatigue.

2.4.3 Evaluation

The evaluative approach at KonTiki has been mostly formative. Based on interviews with students and teachers, AI has compiled a guide for schools on how to become human rights friendly. The guide reflects the lessons learned at KonTiki and points out what must be taken into account when teaching about, through and for human rights.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*

³¹² *Ibid.*

³¹³ *Ibid.*

Moreover, the evaluation tool to take the human rights temperature was used to provide a 'before and after picture'. KonTiki has also evaluated on a 'sample basis' in connection to the different projects conducted, as well as at the end of the programme.

Summarising KonTiki's main leanings, the following keywords are central: debriefing, rights *and* duties, empathy, involvement of parents, and self-actualisation. When working with human rights, often through sensory-based teaching, it is essential for the students to get the opportunity to talk about their experiences and to articulate emotions. Human rights are connected to duties - students must understand that while being entitled to rights, they also have a duty not to violate the rights of others. This is related to the nourishing of skills of empathy and to taking responsibility for others. Involvement of parents should be based on transparent information and dialogue. Moreover, KonTiki found it useful to encourage parents to discuss human rights at home. Self-actualisation refers to the way human rights are being taught, i.e. it is important to be true to the principles and values one promotes through human rights education.³¹⁴ At KonTiki, concrete short-term aims and more abstract, value-oriented long-term aims were formulated. This gave some more tangible elements to look for when assessing the programme's degree of success.³¹⁵ KonTiki has been involved in defining its own aims and success criteria, though taking starting point in the four main themes AI had formulated.

When taking the initial human rights temperature, Ane was surprised to see that though the school values democratic inclusion, the students did not recognize having a high degree of influence. The survey showed students to have little knowledge on how privileged they are, what human rights are and which words are used when talking about democracy and influence. However, this had changed remarkably when the same survey was conducted by the end of the programme. This demonstrated that the students had acquired knowledge of concepts and a language to articulate how democracy and

³¹⁴ AI, 'KonTikis Læringer', 2012.

³¹⁵ AI, 'Gør Jeres Skole Menneskerettighedsvenlig', 2011.

human rights are and should be part of school life. It showed “great encouragement [to the programme] and though being challenging, being interesting.”³¹⁶

KonTiki evaluated by using both a quantitative and qualitative approach, through questionnaires and discussion fora for students. Active dialogue is helpful to support reflections on the learning process and to making evaluation an integrated part of the learning. However, Ane acknowledges that it is complicated to evaluate on the outcome of education as such and human rights education in particular. An evaluation will always be shaped by the methodology used and its limits, as “you get replies corresponding to the questions asked [...] and the children guess what kind of answers you want.”³¹⁷ Moreover, students may find it very difficult to “see after a process what they have learned, unless there is paid great attention to defining what we knew beforehand. [...] Sometimes it is a process developing over time, recognizing what one has learned.”³¹⁸ Thus, part of the evaluative process at KonTiki was to define indicators showing that something has been learned, by defining the wanted changes. This meant articulating what the best and most democratic school setting ideally would be, and how to estimate whether the school is moving towards such situation. It is a process of “looking after, and then saying when and what we want to see as a result afterwards, indicating it succeeded. However, then you have a tendency to look for this in particular as well as to work with an aim to make it happen.”³¹⁹

When evaluating a transformation of values, the teachers helped students to look for indicators such as “can I leave my stuff where I put it, will my complaints also be dealt with, do I get the same treatment as my classmates. Are there any of those values that have spread to the way in which we are together?”³²⁰ Thereby the evaluation of the HRFS programme at KonTiki focused on changes in values and attitudes and knowledge (language) of human rights and democracy. Students had the opportunity to

³¹⁶ Interview with Ane Fabricius, School Principal, KonTiki Skolen, Hillerød, 24 April 2012 (own translation from Danish).

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*

³²⁰ *Ibid.*

reflect upon their own learning, which roots the learning process internally. According to the interview and accessible data, not much (if any) emphasis was put on evaluating the development of skills to take action for human rights, though it is an essential part of human rights education.

2.4.4 Outcome

The teachers at KonTiki found the programme to have had a very positive outcome, which was summed up in the AI guide. Becoming a HRFS, the students have grown more tolerant towards each other, which has led to a change in the class and school environment, characterised by more respect and listening among both students and teachers. The fact that KonTiki has formulated a set of common values rooted in human rights and thus also ensured a mainstreaming of rules, has resulted in fewer frustrations and a sense of security for the students. This common framework and point of reference has proved useful when discussing and attempting to change behavioural patterns. Moreover, the programme has been beneficial for the less outgoing students who now tend to be more open to learning and engaging in social relations. The increased degree of influence has led to the students being more motivated and more engaged in active learning. The teachers have also developed, as they have been forced to reflect on their role as educators and their teaching methodology. In terms of management, the school has adjusted and reorganised structures to become more inclusive of everyone related to the school life. This involved the relation to the surrounding community as well as parents' participation in decision making and working towards a common goal of shaping a human rights friendly school and culture.³²¹

Two years after the programme ended, the teachers still observe students making references to experiences they had during the human rights year. This was particularly noticeable in the graduation papers, where “about all of them [the students] drew lines back to some of the projects they had experienced that year, [...] especially the refugee

³²¹ AI, 'Gør Jeres Skole Menneskerettighedsvenlig', 2011, p. 6.

camp.”³²² According to Ane, this is remarkable, as the students do not usually refer to former themes, “so I think some of the projects made a greater impact, something to be remembered.”³²³ Especially having children from other countries visiting KonTiki, caused the Danish students to view “the world in a different light through other people, and hear them tell about poor conditions and less rights for children.”³²⁴

Ane believes the programme has contributed to building a culture of human rights, in terms of a raised awareness and the fact that initiatives becomes more intentional, “clearer and with a purpose, an attentiveness to the fact that we do what we do for certain reasons.”³²⁵ The HRFS programme became an opportunity to articulate and recognize the importance of teaching human rights themes and an opportunity for the school to change. Teachers realised that “it *is* very important and we *do* have a responsibility though we live in safe Denmark. [...] We can make a difference which matters for these children’s identity, and for us as a school.”³²⁶ Thereby, the programme allowed room to reflect on values for both students and teachers. The students have now developed a comprehensible use of language related to these values, which Ane found to be a very positive transformation. Moreover, it resulted in a self-confidence and an understanding of the necessary tools to exercise one’s influence. Another dimension was the increased knowledge on how these tools and opportunities are privileges, which not everyone enjoys. In general, “many things were articulated, as we made sure to relate all experiences in Denmark and from the outside world, to how life is here at the school, or how we want it to be here at the school.”³²⁷

Michel from AI Denmark expressed a concern with the fact that KonTiki might had too much focus on human rights during the programme, resulting in a ‘human rights

³²² Interview with Ane Fabricius, School Principal, KonTiki Skolen, Hillerød, 24 April 2012 (own translation from Danish).

³²³ *Ibid.*

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

³²⁵ *Ibid.*

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

overkill’.³²⁸ However, Ane considered the concern to be unfounded, as the learning became rooted and reflected upon the following years. Some students even missed the human rights angle, and expressed “a theme could become a bit flat, without nuances or unproblematic”³²⁹ without the human rights dimension. This caused the older students to take initiative to look for this aspect themselves – “it’s never a process that just ends when the theme does, it follows over a longer period of time.”³³⁰ Ane concludes that after the implementation of the HRFS programme, she has less cases of bullying, vandalism, theft and conflict negotiation to take care of: “I think that the degree of severity is less after that year, also the degree of severity related to conflicts and misunderstandings among adults, among parents.”³³¹ Becoming a HRFS gave rise to frustration among some parents, who found the inclusion of human rights to be difficult, scary, violent, and unnecessary. Therefore, the teachers spent “a lot of time engaging in dialogue with the parents, explaining things.”³³² This has led to an improved relation between teachers and parents, who now tend to ask before getting worried. In that sense, “the project has been good at creating a ripple effect, which has spread to the next years and the general structure and everyday life of the school.”³³³

2.4.5 Shortcomings and Suggested Improvements

Though generally being a success at KonTiki, the HRFS concept would benefit from some adjustments. As mentioned before, the education manager from AI Denmark has expressed doubt on the potential of the concept in a different school setting in Denmark, let alone in more ‘challenging’ countries, as concepts of respect and discipline are contextual. Moreover, Michel emphasised the failure of AI to make the programme as concrete and practical as possible. The concept is characterised by an academic ‘campaigning’ language, and thus to some extent lacking a realistic insight into

³²⁸ Phone interview with Michel Banz, Human Rights Education Manager, AI, 4 April 2012.

³²⁹ Interview with Ane Fabricius, School Principal, KonTiki Skolen, Hillerød, 24 April 2012 (own translation from Danish).

³³⁰ *Ibid.*

³³¹ *Ibid.*

³³² *Ibid.*

³³³ *Ibid.*

everyday life at a school.³³⁴ Notions like human rights, democracy and good governance can be hard to translate into a school context, which Ane also points out: “I would have liked a better link from the academic in order for the project to have had more impact on the participating schools.”³³⁵ Due to this issue and a lack of resources, many schools ended up being a lot less engaged and ambitious. Ane believes this is a common problem of pilot projects, as they are “close to those creating them, whereas there sometimes is a distance to those actually implementing them.”³³⁶ AI being a human rights organisation first of all, does obviously not have the same competences and knowledge on education and learning as teachers.

Another point to take into consideration is the sustainability of the programme. While AI is a valuable knowledge and inspiration resource, it is important that the project is independent, and the motivation and responsibility lies within the school itself. This necessitates a focus on preparing teachers to be competent human rights educators, in accordance with the principles of democratic and transformative learning. A focus on educating educators, rather than providing human rights education for students, will facilitate such sustainability.

Another aim of the HRFS programme was to create a network between the participating schools. This did not succeed, as the communication among the schools has been deficient and the difference between the schools too big. As Ane points out, “it turned out we were at very different places. When we explained what we were doing, it was for most schools completely beyond reach.”³³⁷ Some of the participating schools did not have the necessary support and commitment from teachers, which then resulted in a half-hearted attempt to become a HRFS.

³³⁴ Phone interview with Michel Banz, Human Rights Education Manager, AI, 4 April 2012.

³³⁵ Interview with Ane Fabricius, School Principal, KonTiki Skolen, Hillerød, 24 April 2012 (own translation from Danish).

³³⁶ *Ibid.*

³³⁷ *Ibid.*

2.5 Liceo Norberto Rosa – An Italian Human Rights Friendly School

As part of becoming a HRFS, Norberto Rosa outlined the school's existing human rights initiatives as well as defined the aim of the programme within the Year One Action Plan framework. The plan illustrates that human rights are present in the school's charter, activities and in decision-making processes. Students are involved in class councils and assemblies, giving them the opportunity to discuss general problems related to school life. Especially the teachers teaching humanities were already focusing on human rights in their classes, which the programme aimed to implementing in the scientific subjects as well. Thereby, the basis was in place for Norberto Rosa to become a HRFS. Nonetheless, there was room for improvement and a need for a comprehensive approach to human rights education, connecting already existing initiatives to the HRFS programme. Thus, the objectives were related to strengthening already existing platforms rather than creating new structures, by increasing knowledge and raising awareness on human rights and improving participation. This called for empowerment of students, teachers and staff in representative roles, incorporation of human rights in parents and community relations, and a greater emphasis on human rights in the fundamental values of Norberto Rosa. AI has guided the process, mostly with the help of the organisation's volunteers.³³⁸

2.5.1 Implementation

At Norberto Rosa, mainly one teacher coordinated the programme which first and foremost was implemented as an integrated part of existing subjects, i.e. mostly content-oriented human rights education. The programme has been dependent on the individual teacher's interest and knowledge, as no teacher training was offered before or during the programme to prepare and inspire teachers. Fabrizia Farci explains that the approach was mostly thematic as "a lot of the teachers are interested in lessons dedicated to special subjects, for example death penalty. For example, I do speak about integration, I speak about human rights, e.g. in the work place."³³⁹ At the same time, there is a

³³⁸ AI, 'Human Rights Friendly School – Year One Action Plan Italy' (not public), 2009.

³³⁹ Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012

connection between the local and the global society which she gives an example of related to debating ethical clothing and sweat shops: “In my opinion I think it is important they also know where their jeans come from in order to speak about what happens in the world around them.”³⁴⁰ That illustrates a conscious contextualisation to make human rights themes relevant for the students. All teachers are integrating human rights into their subjects (to a varied extent), which facilitates an interdisciplinary understanding of the themes. According to Fabrizia, most emphasis is placed on the cognitive level of the human rights education through the history of and struggle for human rights, “in order to create a sort of knowledge first of all, then awareness, that nothing can be taken granted but you have to gain everything that you want to.”³⁴¹ At Norberto Rosa, human rights themes are typically connected to the work of AI.

To improve the school environment for students, teachers, and staff, Norberto Rosa has formulated a ‘Co-responsibility Compact’. This document is part of the AI guidelines for the HRFS programme, meant to base the school values on human rights notions. Moreover, it is in line with recommendations by the Ministry of Education.³⁴² Viviana Magaglio explains “Amnesty gave us a document with rules proposed by everyone. We say in this school we want this: we want the teachers to respect us, we want the students to respect the teachers and other students.”³⁴³ According to Fabrizia, the compact has been signed “between students, families, teachers, and the staff, in order to create a collaborative relationship, to create cooperation, respect, and so on.”³⁴⁴ The compact was drafted democratically with the participation of all members of the school community. These rules are part of making Norberto Rosa a HRFS, meant to articulate and agree “upon each person’s rights and responsibilities, values and goals, everyone is equally responsible for upholding them.”³⁴⁵ The fact that a school is a dynamic institution with new students coming every year is reflected in the compact. Fabrizia states that the text is “not something proposed to them [the students] and accepted by

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*

³⁴² AI, ‘Human Rights Friendly School – Year One Action Plan Italy’, (not public).

³⁴³ Interview with Viviana Magaglio, Student, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁴⁴ Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁴⁵ AI, ‘Guidelines for Human Rights Friendly Schools’, (not public), 2009, p. 24.

them passively, it is something they have to modify, to look at, to adjust in some way, to shorten, to add, it is something very, very dynamic.”³⁴⁶ Thereby, the compact becomes an example of teaching human rights through human rights, emphasising democratic governance and ownership. Viviana finds that “this project is useful for guaranteeing the rules, but not rules given to us by somebody else, it’s a way to give ourselves rules for good living.”³⁴⁷

However, not all teachers “accept this compact, because they strongly, firmly believe they are the teachers. There is a great, I think, barrier between them [and the students], so we are working a lot for all the people inside the compact to share the same rules, share the compact in itself and try to modify it in order to fit them completely.”³⁴⁸ Through information and dialogue, a group of teachers attempt to involve those not in favour of the compact. Viviana confirms encountering this reluctance towards the principles of the compact from certain teachers.

The HRFS programme, and in particular the compact, seems to have increased the knowledge of responsibilities among students. However, the rights dimension is less articulated and is hardly mentioned during the interview with Viviana. Though it is important for students to understand rights comes with responsibilities, human rights education must naturally foster an ability to identify and claim rights as well.

The time span of the HRFS programme at Norberto Rosa was two years. In addition to focusing on human rights during lessons and establishing common values through the formulation of the compact, workshops on human rights issues have been held. The students have also approached human rights from a creative perspective, decorating the school and expressing human rights themes through art. Peer-to-peer education has been an important part of the programme, as older students explain to new students “what this project means for our school.”³⁴⁹ Viviana found this approach particularly rewarding.

³⁴⁶ Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁴⁷ Interview with Viviana Magaglio, Student, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁴⁸ Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁴⁹ Interview with Viviana Magaglio, Student, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

AI has provided boards and post-boxes in each classroom for students to convey ideas, proposals, complaints and rewards on good behaviour. It is meant to be a tool for dialogue between students and teachers, where students write “if they have something to say, something to advise, someone to advice about the things. It is a sort of exchange. [...] Some classes use it a lot, some a bit less.”³⁵⁰

During the second year of the programme, there was a focus on the right to freedom of religion. AI was asked to help with the implementation of an alternative to religion class. This was due to changes in the Italian school system, meaning students no longer can choose to be excused from religion class unless the school provides an alternative. Therefore, AI created an e-learning programme focusing on human rights, in order to guarantee students wishing to be free from religion a way of obtaining exam credits.³⁵¹

2.5.2 The Challenges and Added Value of Human Rights Education

As seen in the educational framework of Italy, human rights education is an implicit part of education for citizenship. Fabrizia explains that this is also the case at Norberto Rosa, where “we do history and citizenship together. We try to educate good citizens of the world.”³⁵² Though the two fields are similar, they are not identical. Teachers may think that through focusing on citizenship and democracy, human rights are taught implicitly. But if human rights are not articulated, it cannot be called human rights education.

According to Fabrizia, human rights education at Norberto Rosa is most of all about creating a rights-respecting climate: “what we want to reach is just to gain a different climate, a much more positive climate inside the school, by pointing out important aspects of the human growth in this sense of human rights, we also want the students to gain a great awareness of how hard the path towards where we are today was.”³⁵³ Teaching human rights is a way of giving students the opportunity to “develop [...] behaviour, deepen some examples you gave, make some special research on particular

³⁵⁰ Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁵¹ AI, ‘Internal Evaluation - Second Year’, (not public report), 2010.

³⁵² Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*

subjects linked to human rights development and to Amnesty in general.”³⁵⁴ Human rights education is very much linked to the work of AI at Norberto Rosa: “First of all, in the past we didn’t actually speak of what Amnesty was, I think the majority of our students did not know Amnesty, what they did, how they worked. I think it is an important step to know the reality around us, to know what the world is like, what this kind of organisation does to improve life in general.”³⁵⁵

The methodology used to teach human rights at Norberto Rosa did not vary much from the existing teaching pedagogy, which according to the school’s values should include cooperative learning, peer education and tutoring.³⁵⁶ Additionally, more practical and interactive activities have been included.

Including human rights in the curricular has been challenging to teachers of science subjects. Though a human rights approach might be less obvious in e.g. math and physics, Fabrizia points out that human rights education also can be done by accepting and upholding the compact. This is an example of acknowledging that teaching *about* human rights is just one dimension of human rights education - by conducting rights respecting teaching, students learn *through* human rights. Thus human rights education is not limited to the subjects being taught but becomes the guiding principles for the educational methodology.

Teachers have found it difficult to determine suitable punishment for those not complying with the compact, as the instrument has no accountability mechanisms. The compact is first and foremost founded on trust - choosing to respect the values is up to the individual. The fact that the document explicitly is called ‘co-responsibility’ reflects the idea of respect being a two-way street, demanding effort from students, teachers, and staff.

Another challenge at Norberto Rosa has been to ensure adequate time to teach human rights: “One of the challenges, the greatest difficulty, is how to find time, to insert, to

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁶ AI, ‘Human Rights Friendly School – Year One Action Plan Italy’ (not public), 2009.

speak about human rights and school.”³⁵⁷ The time pressure is a clear obstacle for human rights education to become priority which can only be solved by incorporating human rights education into national legislation.

Viviana has not noticed a change of content in the class, though she does acknowledge, “if they [the teachers] have the opportunity, they talk about it.”³⁵⁸ To her, including human rights is both interesting and relevant as she finds it “more important sometimes to talk about real life, real problems, human rights. It is a real problem. [...] I actually know my rights and the rights of other people. We have to know about them because we live in the same world, and we have to know about each other.”³⁵⁹ Viviana perceives the added value of human rights education to be gaining an outlook to the global world and an understanding of other peoples’ living conditions through self-critical analysis: “I think, in school life, it is important to understand the importance of human rights here in our little world, in order to understand the importance in the whole world. Because maybe here we don’t have big problems, but sometimes human rights are violated also here. And I think this is important to be aware of and understand.”³⁶⁰ Thereby, human rights become an entry point for nourishing skills of empathy, responsibility, and respect.

2.5.3 Evaluation

The evaluation of the programme at Norberto Rosa has mainly been conducted by AI. The Action Plan has been the reference point for both the implementation and the evaluation, stating that “no evaluation is apart or isolated from a training path; the whole project is an evaluation [...] Evaluation is an ongoing process about learning, not just a means to judge a course or a project when it is finished. In this project evaluation is considered both an input and an output.”³⁶¹ Thinking evaluation as part of the learning process implies it must be planned and structured thereafter. To teachers, the

³⁵⁷ Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁵⁸ Interview with Viviana Magaglio, Student, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁶¹ AI, ‘Human Rights Friendly School – Year One Action Plan Italy’ (not public), 2009.

evaluation has been an integrated part of the regular course evaluation. Fabrizia explains that the teachers “don’t want to evaluate with a precise mark as we do with normal school work because actually it is not something evaluable. So we want to speak about the problem [human rights violations], put the problem inside our lessons, inside our subjects, but I don’t think, we don’t think [the outcome of the programme] could be evaluated.”³⁶² As stated, the aim of the HRFS programme is to create a human rights culture. Formulating indicators showing that the school environment has changed is complex, though not impossible. Moreover, neglecting the evaluative part makes it difficult for the school to adjust the shortcomings the programme has. Fabrizia does not find this lacking dimension a “problem actually, because we don’t want to evaluate precisely. Amnesty was for us a sort of help for us, to improve the climate, the relations, and the knowledge of the external world. It is something much more complex than a project to be evaluated. Yes, it is just an opportunity we give to our students in order to know more.”³⁶³

The AI evaluation of the first year was based on discussions with school representatives. The evaluation concluded there was a general lack of knowledge of the compact, as well as difficulties in monitoring the respect for the rules. To overcome this, sessions of peer-to-peer education were organised in order to keep new students informed. Moreover, AI was encouraged to be more visible at the school, resulting in posters in hallways and classrooms illustrating the compact.³⁶⁴

Norberto Rosa has also taken the ‘human rights temperature’, which gave students the opportunity for writing feedback. However, Fabrizia found “the students didn’t actually understand the importance. It was something that was part of the [AI] formalities, and they didn’t appreciate such approach, it was too bureaucratic.”³⁶⁵ This was only done once, so there does not exist comparable data, clarifying what changes the programme has contributed to creating.

³⁶² Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁴ AI, ‘Internal Evaluation - Second Year’, (not public), 2010.

³⁶⁵ Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

2.5.4 Outcome

Fabrizia believes that the most significant contribution of the AI programme has been the compact. This document has changed the school environment “because if you have some contracts with the students you can make reference directly to the compact and say you have to respect this compact [...]. I think it is an important reference point in order to create respect, to create responsibility among the students.”³⁶⁶ She confirms the responsibility goes two ways as the students also refer to the compact when teachers are disregarding their responsibilities. “It is a sort of reference point for everything we do at school together. Because in the compact there are rules about how to behave, how to be a good student, a good teacher, a good member of staff and so on.”³⁶⁷ The significance of the compact is perceived differently by Viviana, who does not find it to have made much of a difference “because in my opinion, we have a good atmosphere in the school and some rules are usually respected. We don’t have big problems, I think. It [the compact] is only a way to place emphasis on it.”³⁶⁸

However, Fabrizia has not experienced any change in social behaviour among the students since the beginning of the programme and now, but she does think “they are much more responsible inside the class, also conflicts has been reduced. I don’t think, actually, that it is directly linked to the Amnesty International project, but I think it helped in some way.”³⁶⁹ The generally transformed environment is partly rooted in the inclusive process of creating such a responsibility and value document. Thus, the compact has been helpful in raising awareness of mutual expectations related to rights-respecting behaviour, as well as improving the relations among students and teachers.

Thereby, Fabrizia believes the AI programme has contributed to creating a culture of human rights: “I think that all the teachers have a sort wish to speak about them [human rights] during their lessons. Before, I think human rights were not as important to me. But since last year, I try to find a moment when to speak about them.”³⁷⁰ Her statement

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁸ Interview with Viviana Magaglio, Student, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁶⁹ Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

reflects a raised awareness of human rights issues and a learning process directed towards the teachers too. She now perceives the inclusion of human rights in her teaching to be “very important first of all to speak about the problem [human rights violations], such an important matter in our life.”³⁷¹ Viviana agrees that the culture at school is characterised by human rights - “I think now yes thanks to Amnesty actually. Because there is more attention now during this project for make more information about human rights.”³⁷²

Judging from the interviews though, the HRFS programme has first of all created an ‘AI culture’, as human rights have become synonymous with Amnesty International at Norberto Rosa. “Yes, now we have more Amnesty information because we are working with Amnesty, but we should have worked with other organisation also. Here we work with information about human rights and if another organisation comes here and talk about it, I think it will be quite the same.”³⁷³ Throughout the programme, there has been no focus on other organisations, let alone the UN: “I know more about Amnesty. But other organisations, yes I know about them by myself but not from the school.”³⁷⁴ Thereby, human rights suffer the risk of being framed as the *raison d’être* of an NGO, rather than as a universal and inherent concept. This illustrates why human rights education should be mainstreamed into national legislation rather than being left to the interest of NGO’s. Only this way, is it possible to ensure a holistic approach to human rights and a thorough overview of human rights mechanisms.

Overall, Fabrizia has found the programme to be a valuable and constructive input to improve life at school and to give the students the opportunity to understand central human rights themes and a connection to the global world: “I think that in the long run it will teach us something very important apart from modifying the climate, apart from what it actually brings to the school. I think in the long run it is a good experience, most

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*

³⁷² Interview with Viviana Magaglio, Student, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

of all for the students. Because I think it is a good point to reflect on, also we are part of a society, not a single school isolated from the world.”³⁷⁵

Viviana also found the programme and its outcome to be positive, as “now we have consciousness about our responsibility and what we have to do.”³⁷⁶ Most of all, she points out the peer to peer education as “a really good way to explain something. From one student to another, making it different to from teacher to student. It was a really good activity.”³⁷⁷ This shows that students gain skills to take action, i.e. teaching for human rights. Moreover, she “ liked the comparte de responsabilidad. I liked to write it and to really understand what respect means. Because I think that writing and talking about it has been really interesting. And I liked today [AI workshop on non-violent resistance], I like these activities because they are more interactive. Not only stay on the chair and listen, I liked it. [...] I liked it because I think it is really important to make opinion about these things.”³⁷⁸

2.5.5 Shortcomings and Improvements

As mentioned earlier, the programme resulted in a noticeable amount of AI branding. The organisation is articulated a lot with no critical reflection on the outcome of such a close link between human rights education and the work of one particular organisation. When AI engages in an education project like HRFS, there will naturally be the hidden agenda of them being dependent on members. To AI, it becomes part of shaping the organisation’s identity and promoting their brand among the students, who most likely will connect AI with something positive (as AI gets an opportunity to present itself as such). Moreover, there is a risk that human rights will be conveyed too thematically, as the focus of the organisation naturally becomes the focus of the human rights education carried out.

³⁷⁵ Interview with Fabrizia Farci, Teacher, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁷⁶ Interview with Viviana Magaglio, Student, Norberto Rosa, Susa, 31 March 2012.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

The evaluative dimension did not have an actual outcome, as the evaluation designed (the human rights temperature tool) by AI was not clear to the students. There has been no effort to demonstrate a transformation in relation to the programme, making it difficult to adjust and improve the human rights teaching. The lack of qualitative evaluation makes it difficult to estimate the students' development on a value, attitude and skills level. Furthermore, having no quantitative data documenting a 'before and after' picture, it is difficult to actually confirm a transformation among students, teachers and staff.

The fact that no teacher training has been provided, makes it complicated to stream line the education on human rights. As Fabrizia explained, not all teachers agree on the values of the compact. This can be rooted in a lack of knowledge on why human rights are an important and useful framework to work within. Some teachers might not have the necessary knowledge and confidence to teach human rights, let alone teach through human rights, which makes it difficult for the programme to live up to its aim of creating a human rights culture.

AI has not put any efforts into co-operating with the national Ministries of Education in Denmark or Italy. Thus there has been no attempt to mainstream the human rights education which ought to be the natural extension and result of a programme like the HRFS. Engaging in advocacy work for the implementation of human rights education has the potential to have a more long-term sustainable effect, than a narrow 'one-school' approach. Here, focus must be the education of the educators and the prioritizing of human rights in national, educational frameworks. The allocation of time and resources for human rights education is a crucial signal to send to students, teachers, and parents and presents a fundamental part of creating a human rights culture.

Chapter III

Evaluation Design

The aim of this final chapter is to outline a possible evaluation design for human rights education by connecting the theory to the lessons learned from the HRFS programme. Based on the analysis of the interviews, I will seek to design a feasible evaluation method to clarify the actual outcome of human rights education. Subsequently, I will explore the added value of teaching human rights, leading to valid argumentation for the importance of prioritizing human rights in the respective national curricula.

3.1 Evaluating Human Rights Education

The significance of evaluation has been outlined in Chapter I. Evaluation has several dimensions. It is part of the learning process, making it possible for students to comprehend personal progress. Evaluation is the only way to ensure relevant adjustment and improvements of an education programme. For these reasons, evaluation must be viewed as an on-going and integrated process, which cannot be limited to a summative approach. Moreover, evaluation will articulate and concretize the added value of learning. This dimension facilitates useful arguments for *why* human rights education must be prioritised.

3.1.1 Evaluating Different Learning Dimensions

Human rights education is learning that installs knowledge, values, and skills. These dimensions are crucial to acknowledge when assessing its outcome and must be guiding for the evaluation process. Whereas the evaluation of knowledge can be addressed in the same way as ‘traditional schooling’, evaluating whether values have transformed and skills to take action are obtained is a more complex matter. This multidimensional learning process calls for a combination of evaluation methods.

Quantitative questionnaires cannot stand alone when evaluating the outcome of human rights education. The ‘human rights temperature’ tool AI had developed to assess the impact of the HRFS programme, did not provide a comprehensive overview of what students had learned during the programme implementation. Though the tool was helpful to establish students’ initial knowledge and to summarize the progress, it was mainly designed to focus on a single dimension of the learning process – *knowledge about* human rights. Neglecting values and skills in the evaluation gives these dimensions less opportunity to be learned. Therefore, a greater emphasis must be put on methods that have the potential to clarify whether human rights education does have an effect on values and skills. This calls for a participatory and educationally evaluative approach, giving students the opportunity to act according to values and principles in compliance with human rights, which can be done through focus group interviews, discussions, teacher observation and role plays.

For students to recognize the relevance of evaluation, the latter has to be articulated and to be conducted in a meaningful way. Students must understand the objectives of teaching human rights, both in terms of content and of methodology.

3.1.2 Evaluating Knowledge

Quantitative data based on tests gives an insight into the extent to which students *memorize* human rights history, concepts and issues. For such assessment to be didactic, it should be framed in a way that allows students to elaborate on their *understanding* of human rights notions. Asking students to go beyond repeating facts will evoke an articulated conceptualisation of human rights. In so doing, the evaluation becomes a continuation of the learning process.

When claiming that the evaluation should be an integrated process, it implies flexibility from the teacher and a continuous critical dialogue with and among the students. By using discussions actively while teaching, permitting interruptions and changes of direction, the human rights educator becomes a *facilitator*, giving the students ownership of their learning process. Allowing students to challenge their own perceptions and ideas will lead to the next learning dimension – education for values.

3.1.3 Evaluating Values

As seen earlier, values can be established through discussions that allow questioning points of view and the forming of opinions. Though a change of values is difficult to validate, indicators suggesting such a shift can be identified. The transformation of values is a component of a human rights culture, the main objective of human rights education. A human rights culture is characterised by respect for one self and others, valuing dignity and welcoming diversity, gender equality, active and meaningful participation, and an education system where learning is based on dialogue. For the purpose of learning and evaluation, these concepts can be made more tangible by defining concrete objectives, indicating a change in social behavioural patterns and an improved school environment. In the HRFS context, KonTiki and Norberto Rosa have (unconsciously) translated this to encompass increased respect between students and teachers characterised by e.g. active listening, a willingness to learn, and less bullying among students. Furthermore, a human rights culture was in the case study manifested in students' perception of access to justice and democratic decision making, fair and equal treatment, and fewer conflicts between students, teachers, and parents.

The school principal at KonTiki pointed out that it can be very difficult for students to recognize *how* they have developed and *what* has been learned – especially while still in the process of learning. It is, therefore, essential that teachers facilitate awareness of such transformation by encouraging students to reflect upon personal behaviour and how that is related to the development of an improved school environment. To understand the outcome of the learning process, it is important to clarify objectives and indicators showing progress beforehand. The process of defining such signs must involve both students and teachers, as discussing what kind of change is wanted makes for a valuable point of reference. This entails a needs assessment, establishing which human rights related issues the school has and how to meet those challenges.

KonTiki provided an example of this by identifying an ideal to strive for, debating what it takes for a school to be as human rights friendly and democratic as possible. Though this was a constructive starting point for the teachers, the students were not part of the discussions, making it difficult for them to be deliberately involved in reaching such

school environment and conditions. The same was the case at Norberto Rosa in relation to the Year One Action Plan, which was drafted exclusively by the teachers and AI. Yet, these principles were to a certain extent reflected in the compact which students did contribute to. Hence, the ideal school became a common vision at Norberto Rosa reflecting broadly founded values. Articulating the model school environment for teachers as well as students enables everyone to actively participate in reaching such objective.

To evaluate whether there has been a transformation of values calls for allocating time and resources to involve all stakeholders in the process. Qualitative assessments would be useful for the evaluation, combining focus group interviews and class/group discussions with informal teacher observation. As the success of this type of evaluation is dependent on a high degree of participation, it is crucial to convince teachers and students that it is an important element of the learning process. Behavioural change in the school setting will also reflect whether students have obtained skills to act for human rights – at least at a micro level. Improvement and change can only take place through continuous, critical reflection on the outcome.

3.1.4 Evaluating Skills

Gaining skills to act for human rights is the third dimension of human rights education. As pointed out in the first chapter, learning is a process that goes beyond schooling. Though a human rights culture is not limited to school life, that is the case with the possibility to evaluate students' obtained skills. When evaluating the transformation of values and the development of skills, it is possible to identify indicators suggesting that students do act according to human rights principles, at least in the school setting. However, being only a fragment of students' lives, the behaviour and skills demonstrated at school do not ensure consistent human rights behaviour outside of the classroom. Evaluating this dimension thoroughly is a long-term research project, encompassing an extensive comparative study of both students who do and those who do not participate in human rights education. Such research would have to take students' lives into consideration after schooling has ended – interesting observations

would be the extent to which students of human rights engage in civil society, level of political participation and their ability to act according to the principles of human rights in their everyday life.

Assuming that a rights respecting behaviour is the result of a change in the values and the acquirement of certain skills, it is possible to evaluate this dimension in a qualitative as well as quantitative manner. Although role plays and case studies are artificial setups, observations of such exercises will provide an understanding of students' ability to act according to human rights values, their lines of arguments and underlying motivations for their actions. While such study is an opportunity to conduct a qualitative assessment of values and skills, it also has an educational effect and should be an integral element of human rights education programmes. To ensure that both students and teachers realize why activity-based exercises are valuable to the learning process, it is important that teachers facilitate critical reflections and articulate what has been learned.

As human rights skills ideally are also reflected in the students' behaviour outside of school life, it is relevant to involve the parents in the evaluation. This could be an integrated part of the contact between the school and the parents. Questions to be taken into consideration are the student's ability to transfer the concepts, values and skills learned into family life. This means that the parents become involved in the human rights learning process which makes it essential for teachers to encourage parents to respect and articulate human rights at home. Thereby, the creation of a human rights culture becomes a dimension going beyond school life, as does the learning process.

3.1.5 Learning *about, through* and *for* Human Rights

As human rights education is learning about, through, and for human rights, this must be taken into consideration when planning and evaluating an educational programme. The interviews suggest that teachers are more aware of this holistic approach, whereas students mainly understand human rights education as being content-oriented. This shift in teaching method calls for a clear articulation of the purpose and the wanted outcome of the teaching. Thus, students need to understand the concept of human rights education.

While the learning *about* and *for* human rights is evaluated by examining knowledge and skills, learning *through* human rights calls for a shift in the teaching methodology. Teachers must communicate this clearly, as it cannot be taken for granted that students reflect over such change without guidance. Moreover, this gives students the possibility to hold teachers accountable for their teaching methods. Thus human rights educators should be open towards an on-going evaluation of their methodology, allow changes, student participation and influence.

3.1.6 Summary

For human rights education to have the wanted impact, it is essential to recognize the value of evaluation. Ideally, evaluation of human rights education should be a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. That way, the collected data can be validated in a cross-cutting manner. The notions of a human rights culture can be difficult to translate into a school setting, which has been confirmed by both KonTiki and Norberto Rosa. Indicators of improvement must first of all be the result of the school's critical self-examination, involving all relevant stakeholders. Such goals have to be articulated in the creation of a common vision for change. Nonetheless, a successful human rights education programme should formulate guiding principles for teachers and students to take into consideration when evaluating the impact of the educational efforts. These can take a qualitative and a quantitative approach; a reduction of bullying and conflicts, students' participation in class, the way in which conflicts are handled, student discipline and methods of punishment, number of meetings held in class concerning the general climate, numbers of parents participating in meetings related to human rights issues and democracy at school, and number of references to human rights elements in the school's value document.

3.2 Why Human Rights Education Matters

Besides being part of international regulation, there are numerous reasons for integrating human rights education in the national curricula. The interviews confirmed that the HRFS programme did indeed contribute to creating a human rights culture. Interviewees agreed that human rights education does bring positive changes to the general school environment. Summarising the impact of the programme at the two schools, this was manifested in many ways; becoming an HRFS resulted in improved social relations characterised by more tolerance and respect in the classroom which benefited the less outgoing students as well. The human rights friendly atmosphere was concretely expressed through cases of bullying and conflicts becoming less severe. Formulating common values brought a mainstreaming of rules and an awareness of the human rights responsibility that all students and teachers have. Additionally, the programme contributed to engaging and motivating the students and gave them trust and confidence in being able to change structures that do not comply with human rights. Human rights learning caused a global curiosity and awareness as well as an understanding for the relevance of and for our connection to global human rights issues. Moreover, teachers have also been subject to development as the programme has caused them to reflect upon the content and the methodology of their teaching.

All this indicates that many of the assumptions being made on the impact of human rights education can be validated. Human rights education contributes to a better school environment, beneficial for both the personal development and the learning process of the students. Whether the human rights culture is transferred to life outside of school, only time can show. This will necessitate a long-term, comprehensive study going beyond the kind of evaluation possible to conduct in a school setting. Nonetheless, it has been confirmed that education for human rights does have a considerable impact and is essential to support the shaping of active and participating citizens dedicated to the fundamental values of democracy and human rights.

3.2.1 Added Value – Not Added Work

A clear obstacle for the implementation of human rights education is the lack of time and resources in everyday school life. It is understandable that teachers are reluctant to add on to an already overloaded curriculum and time pressured schedule. It is, therefore, essential to *change* the discourse on human rights education and shift focus from being a matter of added work to being a matter of improving the general school environment, from which both teachers and students will benefit.

Revising teaching methods and integrating human rights issues into the content of teaching will seem extensive at first. Nevertheless, the analysis of the HRFS programme suggests that a short term extra effort will pay off in the long run. As stated above, human rights education contributes to an improved learning environment where less time is spent on dealing with conflicts, bullying, lack of discipline and respect. Thus it becomes rewarding for all aspects of school life – social relations, participatory learning processes and the democratisation of school structures.

Implementing human rights by no means has to be done at the expense of the quality of the teaching. As Ane Fabricius at KonTiki Skolen explained, human rights can become a natural part of traditional subjects. With some subjects, such content-oriented approach might seem problematic. But that does not leave out the opportunity to teach human rights, like exemplified by Fabrizia Farci at Norberto Rosa. When not teaching about human rights, an educator can always teach *for* and *through* human rights, dimensions which are equally important to the creation of a human rights culture.

3.3 Advocacy and Recommendations

International instruments have provided a useful framework for the concept and methodology of human rights education. Yet, the implementation remains a national responsibility. The main value of prioritising human rights in national education policies is that this would lead to the allocation of time and resources, making it easier for teachers to initiate human rights education. However, a top-down approach cannot stand alone. For human rights education to be a success there must be a closer cooperation between those formulating policies, principles and objectives and those meant to conduct such visions in practice.

3.3.1 Stakeholders

Both politicians and teachers must be recognized as crucial stakeholders to be targeted in the advocacy process. Through reforming educational policies, ministries of education have a crucial role to play. Imposing human rights education from above is an important start. This includes being honest about the extent to which such education is an already existing part of mandatory schooling.

Teachers need to realize the positive outcome human rights education has, as they have the main power and ability to change the content and method of teaching in practice. There must, therefore, be a shift in discourse from a macro to a micro focus on *why* educating in human rights is valuable. Not only is the implementation a component of international regulations. Human rights education has the potential to affect the general school environment positively and influence relations between students, teachers, and parents. Such environment will optimize the teaching and learning process. Thus teachers must be on board, in order for human rights education to be viewed as valuable input.

Up until now, NGOs have been a central task force in conducting human rights education. The efforts of these organisations to raise awareness of human rights principles are extremely valuable, especially in the reality of no better alternative.

However, there is a risk connected to providing services that states are in fact *obliged* to. This gives ministries of education a greater leeway to claim that their responsibility to ensure human rights education is indeed met. Thus, NGOs should focus their efforts on advocacy, in order for human rights education to become mandatory, mainstreamed and quality assured.

Below are listed recommendations targeting the main stakeholders:

3.3.2 Ministries of Education

- For human rights education to become a mandatory part of children's schooling, human rights must be explicitly articulated in the objectives of national education. Only by creating a common value vision for our educational institutions founded in human rights, the creation of a human rights culture is possible.
- It is necessary to integrate human rights into both the content and the methodology of teaching. Clear guidelines must be formulated in cooperation with teachers, setting realistic and relevant objectives for how teachers should approach human rights in the everyday life at school.
- A clear distinction must be made between education for democracy, for citizenship and for human rights. Assuming that one is an implicit part of the other brings the risk of neglecting human rights education in terms of economic resources and time prioritisation.
- Efforts must be put into integrating human rights into teaching materials. Such mainstreaming will ensure that students understand human rights as being universal, inalienable, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. Moreover, it can be assured that students get introduced to a broad spectre of human rights issues.

- Currently teachers do not have sufficient knowledge to teach about, through and for human rights. This obstacle can only be met by prioritising the education of educators. Human rights issues and teaching methodology must be an integrated part of the teachers' training curricula.

3.3.3 Schools

- Many issues will benefit greatly from integrating a human rights dimension. In doing so, students will gain responsibility and respect for human rights.
- Human rights education implies the implementation of human rights in organisational structures. It is thus important to challenge power structures in order to show students that democratic change is possible while also remembering that to delegate more responsibility to students is not the same as losing control and overview.
- Promote human rights values by embracing dignity, diversity and debates in everyday life so that teachers can be positive role models and agents for change.

3.3.4 NGOs

- For NGOs to make a long-term sustainable difference, efforts must be put into advocating for the mainstreaming of human rights education initiatives. This implies targeted lobbying in the national ministries of education.
- Though international guidelines defining human rights education do exist, an obstacle for a successful impact is the lack of coordination between crucial stakeholders. Human rights education must become a matter of joint effort between policy makers, school leaders, teachers and competent providers of material, insight, and knowledge from civil society. This coordination could be facilitated by NGOs, acting as a mediator between various stakeholders that strive to make worldwide human rights education reality.

Appendix

Interview Questions

Questions for the interviews at KonTiki Skolen and Liceo Norberto Rosa.

Opening Questions

- What age group and subject do you teach?
- Could you briefly describe your school in terms of size, public/private and characteristics of the students and the local setting?
- How is the relation among students and teachers in the everyday life?
- What characterizes your school in terms of human rights?
- Are there any particular human rights issues of relevance in the school context – e.g. integration of immigrants, students with diverse social and cultural backgrounds, disabled students, students with a minority background?

Questions related to the Human Rights Friendly School

- Why and how did your school decide to participate in the Amnesty International programme?
- Can you describe how the concepts of human rights and good governance have been ‘translated’ and implemented at your school?
- How have the different phases of the project differed from one another – were some more successful and if so why?
- Have you experienced any difference in the social behavior of the students and teachers in daily life after participating in the HRFS programme?
- To what extent do you think the programme has contributed to creating a ‘human rights culture’?
- What kind of evaluation has been conducted during and after the programme?
- What are the shortcomings of the programme and how do you believe it can be improved?

Questions about human rights education

- What does human rights education mean to you as a teacher? And what do you think it means to the students learning?
- What kind of challenges have you met while working on the inclusion of human rights in the curriculum and the daily school life?

- What methodology did you use while teaching human rights? Did this differ from your normal approach to teaching?
- What do you believe is the added value of human rights education?
- How do you think it is possible to evaluate the outcome of human rights education?
- To what extent do you think human rights education is part of the teaching and everyday life in Danish/Italian schools?
- How is human rights education part of the national political agenda here in Denmark/Italy?

Questions to Cecilia Decara, Danish Institute for Human Rights

- Please begin by explaining what you do as a project leader of the education department at the Danish Institute for Human Rights?
- One of the Institute's responsibilities is to "promote human rights education at all levels" – how do you find the institute meets that responsibility?
- What do you believe human rights education is? And what do you think students understand by human rights education?
- What challenges have you meet related to teaching human rights to children and young people?
- What do you believe is the added value of teaching human rights?
- How do you think human rights education can be evaluated?
- How do you evaluate your teaching here at the Institute?
- What is the effect of short-term human rights education (i.e. workshops) vs. long-term human rights education?
- To what extent is human rights education part of the teaching and the everyday life at Danish schools?
- Do you find human rights education to be part of the political agenda in Denmark?

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